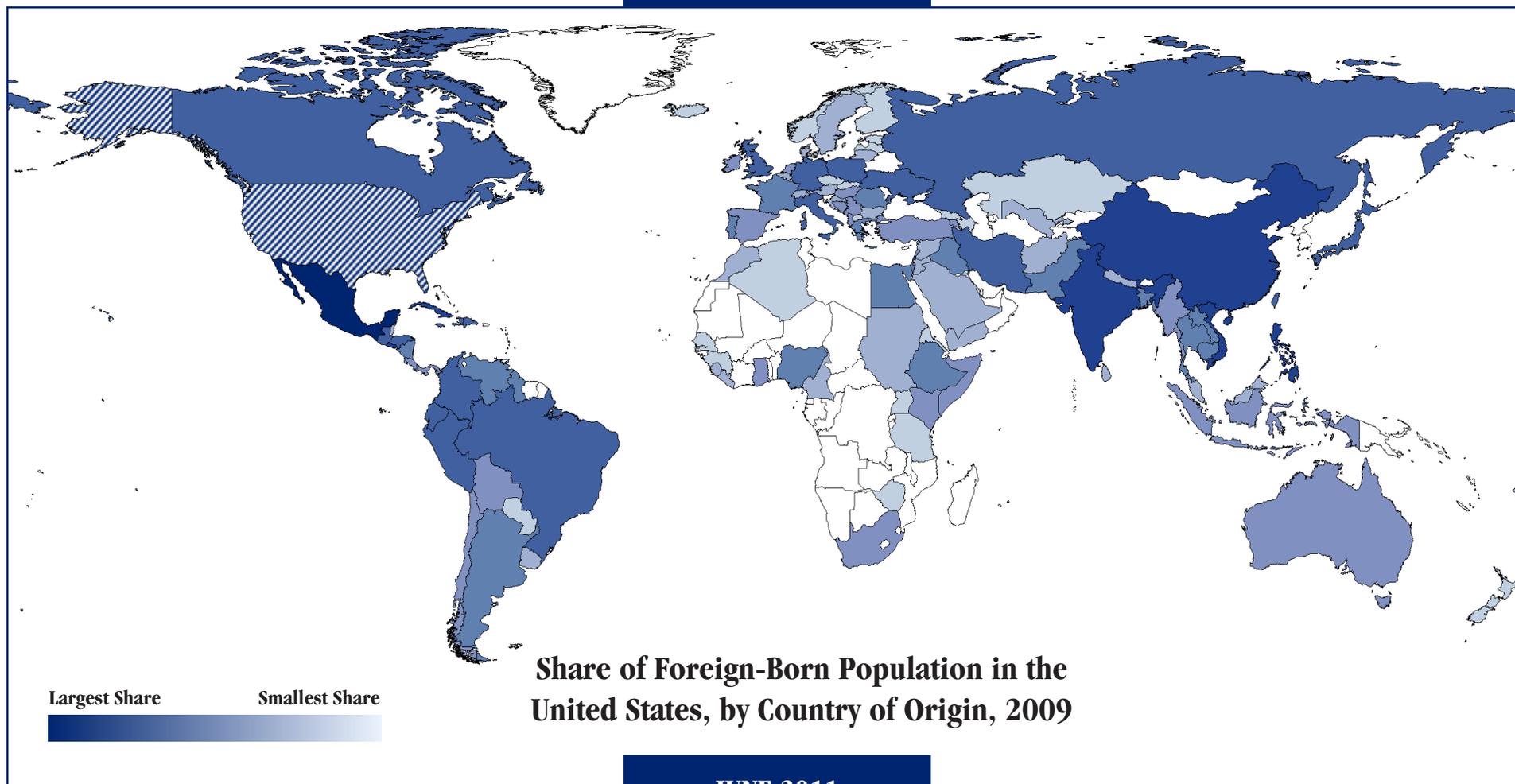


# CBO

## A Description of the Immigrant Population: An Update







# **A Description of the Immigrant Population: An Update**

June 2011

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## Notes and Definitions

Unless otherwise noted, all years referred to are calendar years. Numbers in the text and exhibits may not add up to totals because of rounding.

**Foreign born:** Born outside the United States (or one of its territories) to parents who are not U.S. citizens.

**Immigrant:** In this report, a synonym for foreign born.

**Legal permanent resident:** A noncitizen of the United States authorized to live, work, and study in the United States permanently. Such status is granted to immediate relatives of U.S. citizens, including spouses, minor children, and parents. It can also be granted for family-sponsored preferences (for example, to extended family members such as aunts or cousins), employment-based preferences, and diversity preferences, although there is an annual cap on the number of people who can receive such grants. In addition, legal permanent resident status can be granted to people who are classified as refugees or asylum seekers. After becoming a legal permanent resident, a noncitizen immigrant receives a permanent resident card, commonly called a “green card,” which serves as proof of permission to live and work in the country.

**Legal temporary resident or visitor:** A noncitizen of the United States who is admitted to the country with a temporary visa or who is allowed to enter without a visa. People in those categories include visitors who are in the United States for short periods and temporary residents who are in the United States for longer, although time-limited, stays.

**Native born:** Born in the United States or one of its territories or, if born abroad, to at least one parent who is a U.S. citizen.

**Naturalized citizen:** A foreign-born individual who has become a U.S. citizen by fulfilling requirements set forth in the Immigration and Nationality Act, including, in most cases, having resided in the United States for at least five years.

**Unauthorized resident:** A noncitizen of the United States who is in the United States without legal authorization. This group includes people who enter the country illegally and people who enter the country with valid visas but overstay their authorized time in the country.

**Source data:** Much of the information on immigration in this document comes from the Current Population Survey (CPS), a monthly survey of U.S. households conducted by the Census Bureau. The survey of people living in households excludes the roughly 3 percent of the resident U.S. population living in barracks, prisons, nursing homes, and other group quarters. Among other questions, respondents are asked where they and their parents were born. Those who were born in another country are asked when they came to the United States to stay and whether they have become citizens by naturalization. All information is reported by respondents and is not validated against other sources. No one is asked about legal immigration status. To increase the statistical accuracy of the estimates in this document, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) combined unduplicated samples from all 12 months of the 2009 CPS (known as the Outgoing Rotation Group files). CBO used the American Community Survey (ACS) for estimates of the total population, decade of arrival, and rates of fertility and the March 2009 CPS (also known as the Annual Social and Economic Supplement) for information on annual earnings, income, and poverty status. CBO did not attempt to adjust the estimates from the CPS or the ACS to account for the possibility that some foreign-born people should have been counted in those surveys but were not. For estimating the size of the unauthorized population, the Department of Homeland Security has assumed that the ACS's undercount rates range from 2.5 percent for noncitizens who are legal permanent residents, refugees, or have been granted asylum to 10 percent for noncitizens without authorization to be in the United States. Those estimates suggest that the ACS and CPS undercount the overall foreign-born population by about 5 percent.

**Categories of regions:** The foreign-born population from Mexico and Central America differs significantly from the remaining foreign-born population with respect to educational attainment and the likelihood of becoming naturalized citizens; consequently, that group is identified separately in this report. The foreign-born population from other parts of the world is divided into four regions, generally corresponding to continents. Oceania includes Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands. Russia, which lies both in Europe and in Asia, is grouped with European countries, as is Canada.

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## Preface

Foreign-born people represent a large and growing share of the U.S. population. The native- and foreign-born populations differ in a variety of characteristics, such as age, fertility, educational attainment, occupation, earnings, and income. Among the foreign born, naturalized citizens differ from noncitizens, and people from some parts of the world differ from people from other parts on most of those characteristics.

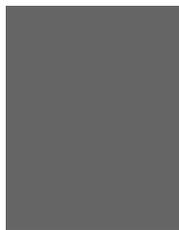
In November 2004, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) published *A Description of the Immigrant Population*, which included data through 2003. This update contains information through 2009. It relies on a set of data sources that differ slightly from those used for the original paper.

Nabeel Alsalam and Jonathan Schwabish of CBO's Health and Human Resources Division wrote the document with guidance from Greg Acs, Joyce Manchester, and Bruce Vavrichek (formerly of CBO). CBO staff member Sarah Axeen provided research assistance, and the work benefited from the comments of Molly Dahl, Robert Dennis (formerly of CBO), Peter Fontaine, Patrice Gordon, Priscila Hammett, Jimmy Jin, Melissa Merrell, Jonathan Morancy, Paige Piper/Bach, Brian Prest, David Rafferty, and Robert Shackleton Jr. Helpful comments also came from William Kandel of the Congressional Research Service, Rakesh Kochhar of the Pew Hispanic Center, and Jennifer Van Hook of Pennsylvania State University. (The assistance of external reviewers implies no responsibility for the final product, which rests solely with CBO.) In keeping with CBO's mandate to provide objective analysis, this document makes no recommendations.

Kate Kelly and Sherry Snyder edited the document. Maureen Costantino and Jeanine Rees prepared the document for publication, Monte Ruffin produced the printed copies, and Linda Schimmel handled the print distribution. An electronic version is available from CBO's Web site ([www.cbo.gov](http://www.cbo.gov)).

Douglas W. Elmendorf  
Director

June 2011



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# A Description of the Immigrant Population: An Update

In 2009, about 39 million foreign-born people lived in the United States, making up more than 12 percent of the U.S. population—the largest share since 1920. Naturalized citizens (foreign-born people who have fulfilled the requirements of U.S. citizenship) accounted for about 17 million of the total. Noncitizens (foreign-born people authorized to live and work in the United States either temporarily or permanently and people who are not authorized to live or work in the United States) accounted for about 22 million of the total. About half of the noncitizens were people without authorization to live or work in the United States, either temporarily or permanently.

In 2009, about 38 percent of foreign-born people in the United States were from Mexico or Central America; the next-largest group came from Asia and accounted for 27 percent of the total foreign-born population. In that year, about one-fifth of naturalized U.S. citizens were from Mexico or Central America; more than one-third were from Asia. About half of the noncitizens living in the United States in 2009 were from Mexico or Central America, and about one-fifth were from Asia. An estimated 62 percent of noncitizens unauthorized to live in the United States were from Mexico and another 12 percent were from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.

## Legal Permanent Residents

From 2000 to 2009, more than 10 million people were granted legal permanent resident (LPR) status in the United States. Legal permanent residents are permitted to live, work, and study in the United States, and receiving LPR status is an important milestone on the path to U.S. citizenship. As a percentage of the U.S. population, grants of LPR status were down somewhat from the 1990s, but otherwise they were higher than at any time since the 1920s.

Over the past two centuries, the main nations of origin of legal permanent residents in the United States have changed. Until the past few decades, most people who came to the United States arrived from Europe and Canada; in the early part of the 20th century, 90 percent or more arrived here from those areas. By the early part of the 21st century, however, only about 15 percent of legal permanent residents were European or Canadian by birth; more than 30 percent were from Asia and another 22 percent were born in Mexico or Central America. The origins of people granted legal permanent residence in the United States largely translate into the origins of naturalized citizens some years later as those noncitizens become citizens. (One criterion for naturalized citizenship is a five-year period of residence on a permanent visa.) In 2009,

37 percent of naturalized citizens were from Asia, 21 percent were from Mexico and Central America, and 18 percent were from the Caribbean and South America; only 21 percent were from Europe and Canada.

## Demographic Characteristics of Foreign-Born and Native-Born Populations

Foreign-born people live throughout the United States, and in some states they represent a substantial fraction of the population. In 2009, more than 1 in 4 people in California and more than 1 in 5 people in New York and New Jersey were born in another country. Conversely, in 31 states, fewer than 1 person in 20 was foreign born. The foreign-born share of the population increased in all but three states between 1999 and 2009, rising by 2.4 percentage points for the nation as a whole. New Jersey experienced a particularly large increase: The share of that state's population that was foreign-born increased from 15 percent in 1999 to more than 21 percent in 2009. The four states with the highest concentrations of unauthorized residents in 2009 were Nevada, California, Texas, and Arizona. Almost half of all unauthorized residents of the United States were living in those states.

Foreign-born people as a group differ in several important ways from their native-born counterparts. In particular, compared with the native-born population, relatively few foreign-born people are under the age of 25. In 2009, only 15 percent of the foreign-born population was under that age, compared with 37 percent of the native-born population. In contrast, nearly three-quarters of the foreign-born population was of working age (between 25 and 64 years old), compared with about half of the native-born population. Marriage and fertility rates are generally higher among young foreign-born women than among their native-born counterparts. In 2009, 20 percent of foreign-born women ages 15 to 24 were (or had been) married, compared with 9 percent of native-born women; 68 percent of foreign-born women ages 25 to 34 were (or had been) married, compared with 57 percent of native-born women. The fertility rate (the expected number of births) among foreign-born women between the ages of 15 and 49 was 2.6, compared with a fertility rate of 2.0 for native-born women in the same age range.

Educational attainment also differs considerably among foreign-born people, who overall have somewhat less education than do native-born people. In 2009, 29 percent of the foreign-born population between the ages of 25 and 64 had not completed high school, compared with 8 percent of the native-born population. Some groups of foreign-born people, however, had more education than did their native-born counterparts. About

55 percent of people from Asia had at least a bachelor's degree, as did 47 percent of people from Europe and Canada; just 32 percent of the native-born population had earned at least a bachelor's degree. More than half of the people from Mexico and Central America, 56 percent, had not finished high school, but only about 10 percent of people from Asia and 6 percent of people from Europe and Canada had less than a high school education.

### **Labor Market Characteristics of the Foreign-Born and Native-Born Populations**

Foreign-born men are more likely to be working or looking for work (that is, to be in the labor force) than are native-born men. Foreign-born women, however, are less likely than native-born women to be in the labor force. In 2009, 93 percent of men ages 25 to 64 from Mexico and Central America were in the labor force, compared with 88 percent of men from Asia and 85 percent of native-born men. Conversely, 57 percent of women in that age group from Mexico and Central America were in the labor force in 2009, as were 67 percent of Asian women, both significantly below the 74 percent of native-born women in the labor force in that year.

Workers from Mexico and Central America are concentrated in a different set of occupations than are people from other regions of the world. In 2009, 21 percent of workers from that region

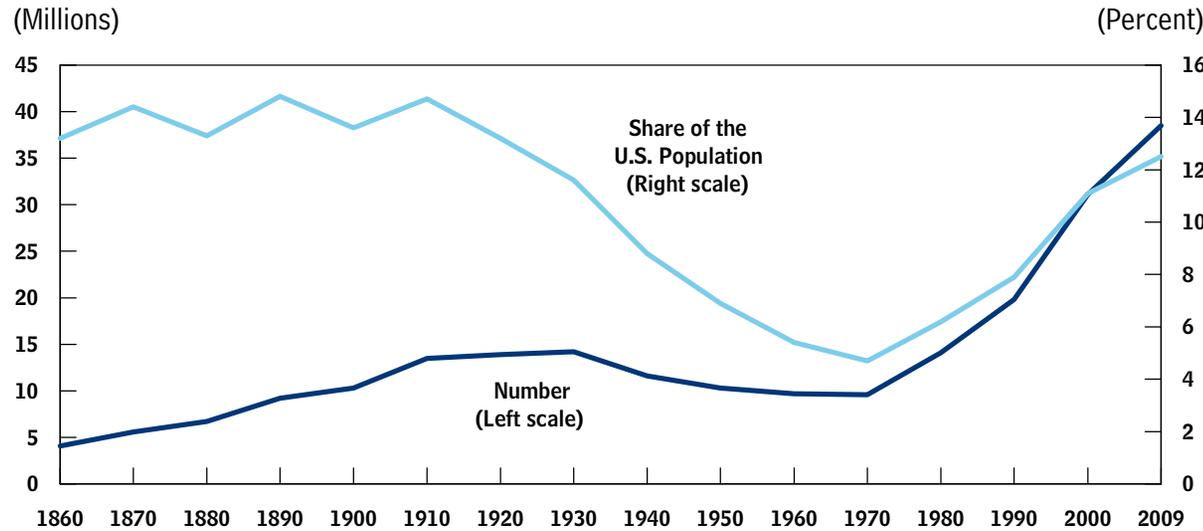
were in construction, mining, agriculture, or related occupations, compared with 5 percent of native-born workers. Reflecting their high level of educational attainment, 39 percent of workers from Asia were in the professional or technical occupations, compared with 30 percent of native-born workers in those occupations.

The differences in educational attainment, labor force participation, and concentration in particular occupational groups were reflected in the differences in the annual earnings of foreign-born workers, which also were strongly associated with citizenship status. The amount and distribution of annual earnings were similar for naturalized and native-born citizens, but earnings tended to be much lower among noncitizens. The amount of annual earnings among foreign-born workers also varied greatly by country of origin. For example, in 2009 the median annual earnings of male workers from Mexico and Central America was \$22,000. Among male workers from Asia, the median was \$48,000; among male workers from Europe and Canada, it was \$53,000; and among native-born male workers, it was \$45,000.

Noncitizens tended to live in families with much lower family income than native-born or naturalized citizens and, as a consequence, were more likely to have family income below the poverty threshold (about \$22,000 for a family of four in 2009). In 2009, 25 percent of noncitizens lived in poverty, compared with 11 percent of naturalized citizens and 14 percent of native-born people. ♦

**Exhibit 1.**

**Foreign-Born Population in the United States, 1860 to 2009**



Sources: Congressional Budget Office based on data from Campbell J. Gibson and Emily Lennon, *Historical Census Statistics on the Foreign-Born Population of the United States: 1950–1990*, Working Paper 29 (Census Bureau, Population Division, February 1999); Nolan Malone and others, *The Foreign-Born Population: 2000*, Census 2000 Brief (Census Bureau, December 2003); and Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009.

From 1860 to 1910, between 13 percent and 15 percent of people in the United States were born somewhere else. After 1910, that share of the population began a steady decline, falling to less than 5 percent by 1970, when the trend reversed. Between 1970 and 2000, the foreign-born population increased from 9.6 million to 31.5 million. In the 1970s, the rate of increase was about 0.4 million people per year; in the 1980s, the rate was about 0.6 million people per year; and in the 1990s, the rate was about 1.1 million people per year. The rate of increase slowed slightly during the 2000s, when about 0.8 million foreign-born people were added to the U.S. population each year. By 2009, 38.5 million people were foreign born. That group constituted roughly 12.5 percent of the U.S. population, about the same percentage as in the early part of the 20th century. ♦

**Exhibit 2.****Naturalized Citizens, by Period of Arrival in the United States and Birthplace, 2009**

Birthplace	Percentage of Naturalized Citizens from the Birthplace, by Period of Arrival				Number (Millions)	As a Percentage of:		
	Before 1990	1990-1999	2000-2009	Total		Naturalized Citizens in the United States	Foreign-Born Population in the United States	
							from the Birthplace <sup>a</sup>	Population of the Birthplace <sup>b</sup>
Mexico and Central America	74	19	7	100	3.5	21	24	2.3
Mexico	75	18	7	100	2.6	15	23	2.3
El Salvador	74	20	6	100	0.3	2	28	4.5
Asia	61	30	9	100	6.2	37	58	0.2
China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan	60	30	10	100	1.2	7	60	0.1
Philippines	64	27	9	100	1.1	7	66	1.2
India	51	39	10	100	0.8	4	45	0.1
Vietnam	54	38	8	100	0.9	5	75	1.0
Korea	74	20	6	100	0.6	3	56	0.8
Caribbean and South America	67	24	9	100	3.0	18	50	0.7
Cuba	78	16	6	100	0.6	3	58	5.0
Dominican Republic	60	31	9	100	0.4	2	48	3.9
Europe and Canada	70	24	6	100	3.4	21	59	0.4
Canada	81	15	4	100	0.4	2	45	1.1
Africa and Oceania <sup>c</sup>	44	38	18	100	0.7	4	42	0.1
<b>All Areas</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>16.8</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>0.3</b>

Sources: Congressional Budget Office based on data from Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009; and Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook* (2009).

Note: The resident U.S. population in 2009 was about 307 million. The countries shown, including the group consisting of China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, accounted for the largest shares of the total foreign-born U.S. population in 2009.

- The foreign-born population is the sum of the naturalized and noncitizen populations (see Exhibit 3 for the noncitizen population).
- The birthplace population is the naturalized population as a share of the population of the region or country in which they were born.
- Includes Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands.

In 2009, nearly 17 million people in the United States were naturalized citizens (that is, they were foreign-born people who became citizens by meeting the requirements of citizenship). That group constituted less than half of the total U.S. foreign-born population. Naturalized citizens accounted for nearly 60 percent of the foreign-born population from Asia and from Europe and Canada but less than a quarter of the population from Mexico and Central America. In 2009, two-thirds of all naturalized citizens in the United States had arrived before 1990. About 80 percent of naturalized citizens from Cuba and Canada, but only 44 percent of those from Africa and Oceania, had arrived before 1990.

In 2009, one-fifth of all naturalized citizens were from Mexico and Central America; a much larger share (one-half) of all noncitizens were from those countries (see Exhibit 3). Another 37 percent of all naturalized citizens came from Asia, a proportion much larger than the 20 percent share of noncitizens who were from that region.

Overall, in 2009, naturalized citizens constituted only 0.3 percent of the population of their countries of birth. However, naturalized citizens from Cuba, El Salvador, and the Dominican Republic constituted 5.0 percent, 4.5 percent, and 3.9 percent, respectively, of the populations of those countries. ♦

**Exhibit 3.****Noncitizens, by Period of Arrival in the United States and Birthplace, 2009**

Birthplace	Percentage of Noncitizens from the Birthplace, by Period of Arrival				Number (Millions)	As a Percentage of:		
	Before 1990	1990-1999	2000-2009	Total		Naturalized Citizens in the United States	Foreign-Born Population in the United States	
							from the Birthplace <sup>a</sup>	Population of the Birthplace <sup>b</sup>
Mexico and Central America	24	35	41	100	10.9	50	76	7.1
Mexico	25	35	40	100	8.9	41	77	8.0
El Salvador	25	33	42	100	0.8	4	72	11.6
Asia	12	22	66	100	4.4	20	42	0.1
China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan	8	27	65	100	0.8	4	40	0.1
Philippines	15	20	65	100	0.6	3	34	0.6
India	5	19	76	100	0.9	4	55	0.1
Vietnam	16	29	56	100	0.3	1	25	0.3
Korea	15	24	61	100	0.4	2	44	0.6
Caribbean and South America	19	28	53	100	3.0	14	50	0.7
Cuba	20	25	55	100	0.4	2	42	3.6
Dominican Republic	23	33	44	100	0.4	2	52	4.3
Europe and Canada	29	25	46	100	2.4	11	41	0.3
Canada	35	26	39	100	0.4	2	55	1.3
Africa and Oceania <sup>c</sup>	10	21	68	100	0.9	4	58	0.1
<b>All Areas</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>21.6</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>0.3</b>

Sources: Congressional Budget Office based on data from Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009; and Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook* (2009).

Note: The resident U.S. population in 2009 was about 307 million. The countries shown, including the group consisting of China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, accounted for the largest shares of the total foreign-born U.S. population in 2009.

- The foreign-born population is the sum of the naturalized and noncitizen populations (see Exhibit 2 for the naturalized population).
- The birthplace population is the noncitizen population as a share of the population of the region or country in which they were born.
- Includes Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands.

In 2009, 22 million people in the United States were noncitizens in one of three categories: legal permanent residents on the path to U.S. citizenship, legal temporary residents here for a limited time, and people here without authorization. (Authorized visitors, such as tourists, are not counted in the foreign-born population.)

In 2009, about half of all the noncitizens living in the United States had arrived after 1999. About 40 percent of all noncitizens from Canada, Mexico, and Central America had arrived after 1999, but about two-thirds of all noncitizens from Asia and from Africa and Oceania have arrived since then.

Overall, in 2009, noncitizens living in the United States constituted only 0.3 percent of the population of their countries of birth. However, noncitizens from Mexico and Central America constituted more than 7.0 percent of the population in those countries, including 8.0 percent of the Mexican population and 11.6 percent of the population of El Salvador. The noncitizen population in the United States from Cuba and the Dominican Republic constituted 3.6 percent and 4.3 percent, respectively, of the populations of those countries. ♦

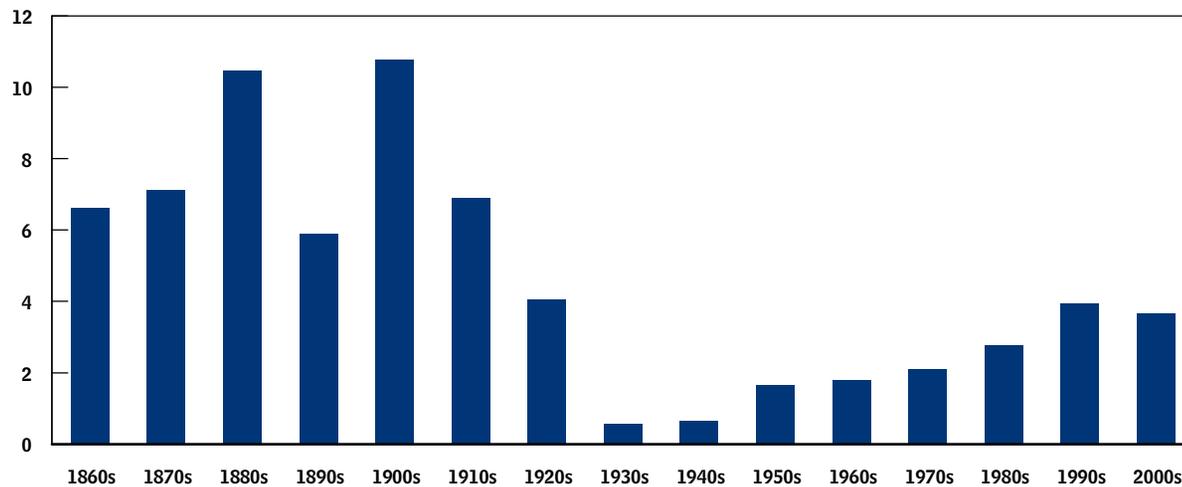


**Grants of Legal Permanent Resident Status**



**Exhibit 4.****Grants of Legal Permanent Resident Status During the Decade as a Percentage of the U.S. Population in the First Year of the Decade, 1860 to 2009**

(Percent)



Source: Congressional Budget Office based on data from Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics, *2009 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (August 2010).

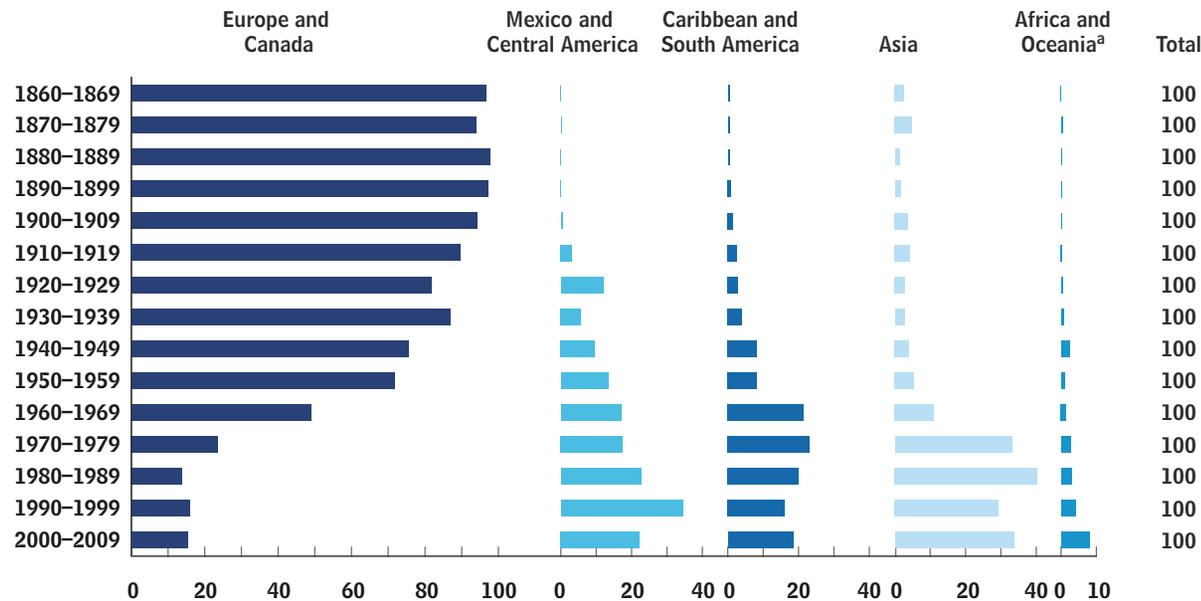
Between 2000 and 2009, 10.3 million people, or 3.7 percent of the U.S. population, became legal permanent residents of the United States, either as new arrivals or because of an adjustment in their status. (Legal permanent residents are noncitizens who are authorized to live, work, and study in the United States permanently.) That percentage is about the same as it was during the 1920s, before the enactment of a series of laws that placed restrictions and quotas on the immigration of people from various countries.

In the 1930s, the proportion of people granted LPR status declined to less than 1.0 percent of the total U.S. population, in part as a result of the Great Depression. In the 1940s, the rate at which LPR status was granted to people began to rise, and it continued to do so through the 1990s, before falling off slightly in the 2000s. The most recent decline may be the result of increased scrutiny of applications stemming from concerns about national security. ♦

**Exhibit 5.**

**Percentage of Grants of Legal Permanent Resident Status, by Birthplace and Decade, 1860 to 2009**

(Percent)



Source: Congressional Budget Office based on data from Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics, *2009 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (August 2010).

Note: Data represent the sum over each decade.

a. Includes Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands.

For much of the nation’s early history, most people who emigrated to the United States came from Europe and Canada. Beginning in the 1920s, however, and continuing until the 1960s, various quotas and preferences were put in place, so that by the end of the 20th century, the nation’s grants of legal permanent resident status went to people from a broader cross section of the world’s countries. As the proportion of people arriving from Europe and Canada declined between the 1930s and the 1980s, grants of LPR status to people from Asia, Mexico, and Central America steadily increased. Since the 1970s, the largest proportion of new legal permanent residents have come from Asia. In fact, between the 1960s and the 1980s, the share of people granted LPR status from Asia nearly tripled.

In the 1990s, the proportion of people from Mexico and Central America who were granted LPR status jumped because of provisions enacted in the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. That legislation granted LPR status to some agricultural workers and unauthorized residents who could prove they had been in the country continuously since at least 1982.

The most notable change in the first decade of the 21st century was a decrease of about one-third (from 35 percent to 22 percent) in the share of people from Mexico and Central America granted LPR status. Over the most recent decade, one-third of all people granted LPR status were from Asia. ♦

**Exhibit 6.****Grants of Legal Permanent Resident Status, by Time and Major Category of Admission, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2009**

	2004		2009		Percentage Change, 2004 to 2009
	Number (Thousands)	Percentage of Total	Number (Thousands)	Percentage of Total	
<b>Time of Admission</b>					
First-Time Admission to the U.S.	374	39	463	41	24
Admitted Previously, Status Changed to Legal Permanent Resident	584	61	668	59	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>958</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,131</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Category of Admission</b>					
Uncapped					
Immediate relatives of U.S. citizens	418	44	536	47	28
Humanitarian <sup>a</sup>	120	13	191	17	59
Capped					
Family-sponsored preferences	214	22	212	19	-1
Employment-based preferences	155	16	144	13	-7
Diversity Program <sup>b</sup>	50	5	48	4	-4
<b>Total</b>	<b>958</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,131</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>18</b>

Source: Congressional Budget Office based on data from Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics, *2009 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (August 2010).

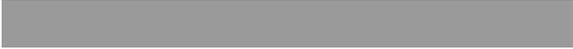
- a. Primarily consists of grants to refugees and asylum seekers.
- b. The program grants legal permanent resident status to up to 50,000 people annually who are randomly selected from all applicants from countries with low rates of immigration to the United States and who meet strict eligibility requirements. See Congressional Budget Office, *Immigration Policy in the United States: An Update* (December 2010).

In fiscal year 2009, more than 1.1 million people, about 60 percent of whom were already in the country, were granted LPR status. Annual grants to immediate relatives of U.S. citizens (including spouses, parents, and minor children) and humanitarian grants to asylum seekers and refugees are not capped by federal law, although the President sets the limit on the number of refugees who can enter the United States each year. In contrast, annual grants to people in the family-sponsored and employment-based categories and under the Diversity Program are capped. In 2009, almost half of all grants of LPR status (47 percent) went to immediate relatives of U.S. citizens. About 19 percent were awarded under the family-sponsored preference system (which includes other close relatives of U.S. citizens and immediate and close relatives of legal permanent residents), 17 percent were awarded on humanitarian grounds (to refugees and asylum seekers), 13 percent were awarded on the basis of employment preferences, and 4 percent were awarded under the Diversity Program.

Between 2004 and 2009, the two uncapped categories grew significantly. Grants of LPR status to immediate relatives of U.S. citizens increased by 28 percent, and grants to refugees and asylum seekers increased by 59 percent. Despite that latter increase, however, in 2009 more grants went to people with family-sponsored preferences (212,000 people) than to refugees or asylum seekers (191,000 people). ♦

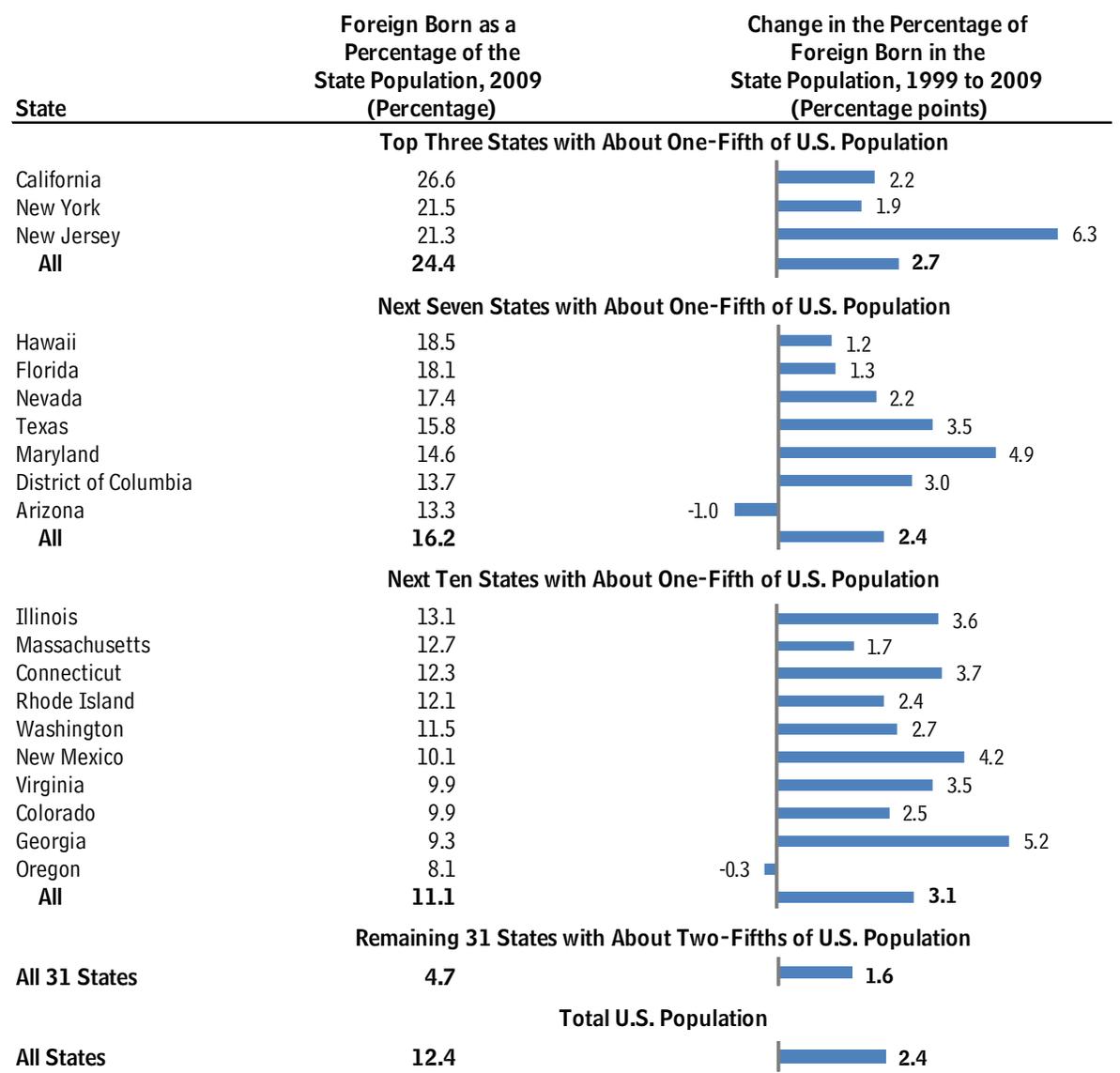


# **Demographic Characteristics of the Foreign-Born and Native-Born Populations**



**Exhibit 7.**

**Foreign-Born Population, by State of Residence, 1999 to 2009**



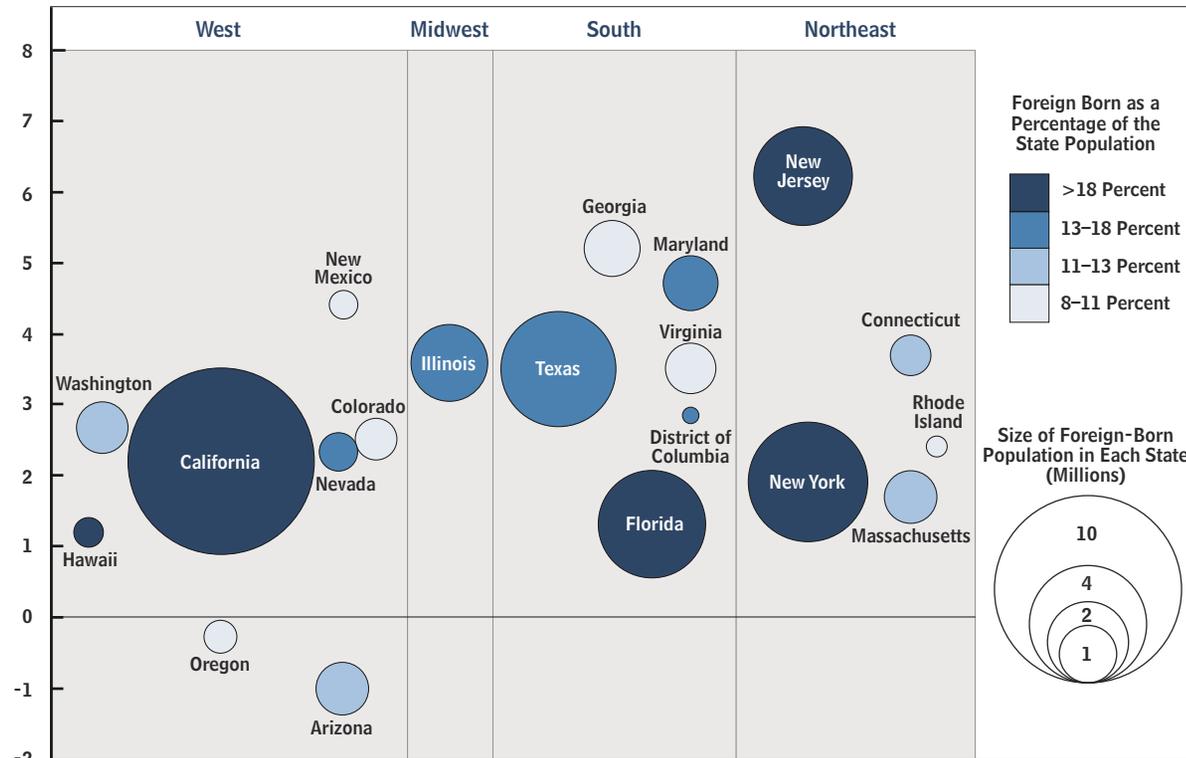
In 2009, three states—California, New York, and New Jersey—which account for more than one-fifth of the nation’s population, had a foreign-born population that exceeded 20 percent of the state’s total population. In another 17 states, accounting for 39 percent of the U.S. population, foreign-born people made up between 8 percent and 19 percent of the state’s total. In the remaining 31 states, mostly in the center of the country, fewer than 1 in 20 people was foreign born. Illinois was the exception among the Midwestern states; its foreign-born population made up about 13.1 percent (about 1 in 8 people) of the state’s population in 2009. Among the 20 states with the largest proportion of foreign-born people, that proportion was 17.5 percent in 2009, up by 2.6 percentage points since 1999. (Data for the combined 20 states are not shown in the exhibit.) ♦

Source: Congressional Budget Office based on monthly data from Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Outgoing Rotation Groups, 1999 and 2009.

**Exhibit 8.**

**Twenty States with the Highest Shares of Foreign-Born People, by Region, 2009**

(Change in the percentage of foreign-born residents in the state population, 1999 to 2009)



Source: Congressional Budget Office based on monthly data from Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Outgoing Rotation Groups, 1999 and 2009.

Note: The larger the circle, the greater the state's population in 2009. The higher the circle is on the scale, the more its foreign-born population increased (or the less it decreased) as a percentage of the state's total population from 1999 to 2009. The darker the circle, the greater the state's foreign-born population as a share of its total population in 2009.

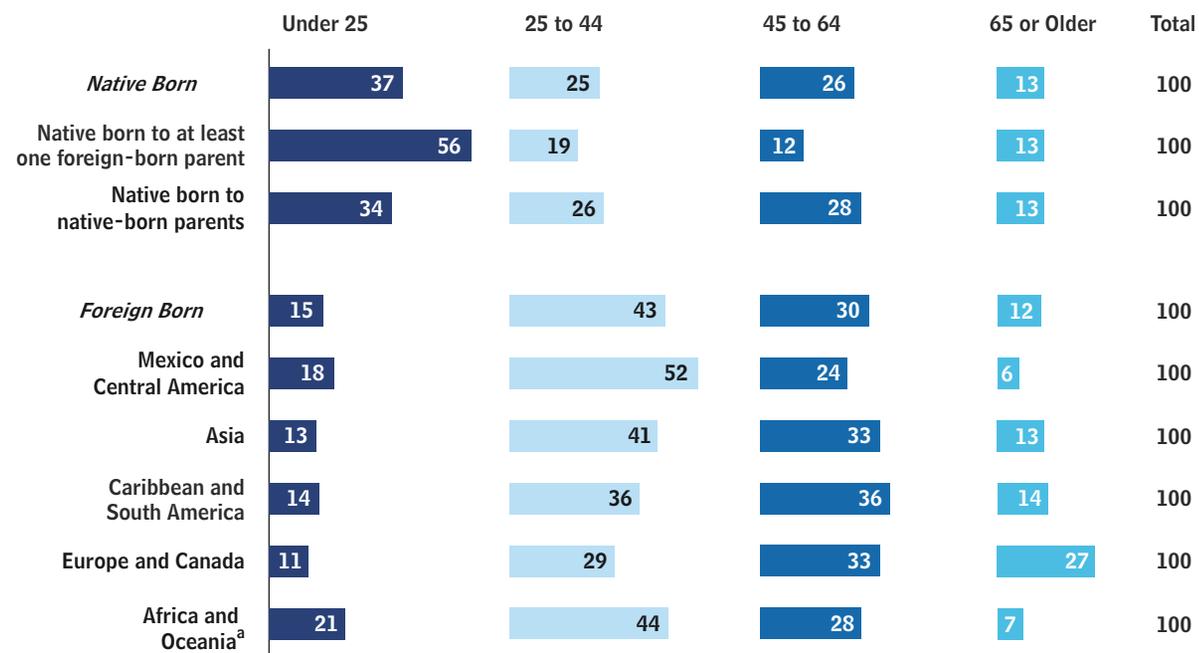
Between 1999 and 2009 some states realized dramatic increases in the proportion of their population that was foreign born, others showed modest growth, and the share declined in some states. For example, over that decade the foreign-born share of New Jersey's population increased by 6 percentage points. In 2009, the number of foreign-born people there had reached more than 1.8 million, or about 21 percent of the state's population, well above the national average of 12.4 percent. Georgia and Maryland also experienced significant growth in the foreign-born shares of their population, which in each state rose by about 5 percentage points over the decade. By 2009, foreign-born people in Georgia numbered almost 900,000, and their share of the state's population had risen above 9 percent; in Maryland, foreign-born people numbered about 800,000, almost 15 percent of that state's population.

During the decade, the foreign-born population of all western states exhibited slower growth than the foreign-born population of New Jersey, Maryland, or Georgia. In two states, Arizona and Oregon, the population of foreign-born people declined as a percentage of the total population. In Arizona, about 900,000 foreign-born people were living in the state in 2009, accounting for about 13 percent of the state's population, a decline of 1 percentage point from the share of the foreign-born population in 1999. ♦

**Exhibit 9.**

**U.S. Population, by Age and Birthplace, 2009**

(Percent)



Source: Congressional Budget Office based on monthly data from Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Outgoing Rotation Groups, 2009.

a. Includes Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands.

Foreign-born people are less likely to be under the age of 25 and more likely to be of working age than native-born people. In 2009, 15 percent of foreign-born people were younger than 25, compared with 37 percent of native-born people. In that year, almost three-quarters of the foreign-born population was in the working-age category (between 25 and 64), compared with slightly more than half of the native-born population. Among the native born, those with at least one foreign-born parent are likely to be young: In 2009, over half of that group was under the age of 25 and less than a third was in the working-age category.

The percentage of the foreign-born population age 65 or older varied significantly by region of origin. For example, 27 percent of U.S. residents born in Europe and Canada were 65 or older, but just 6 percent of people from Mexico and Central America were in that age group.

Because people tend to arrive in the United States when they are young, immigrants from regions that have been the source of most recent immigration tend to be younger than those from regions that were the primary sources of immigration in earlier periods (see Exhibit 3). In 2009, 52 percent of foreign-born residents from Mexico and Central America, 41 percent from Asia, and 36 percent from the Caribbean and South America were between ages 25 and 44, as contrasted with 29 percent of those from Europe and Canada. ♦

**Exhibit 10.****Fertility Rates and Marital Status for Native-Born and Foreign-Born Women Ages 15 to 49, 2009**

Age	All Women		Birthplace of Foreign-Born Women				
	Native Born	Foreign Born	Mexico and Central America	Asia	Caribbean and South America	Europe and Canada	Africa and Oceania <sup>a</sup>
<b>Fertility Rate<sup>b</sup></b>							
15 to 24	0.6	0.7	1.3	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.4
25 to 34	1.0	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.8
35 to 49	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.8
<b>Total, 15 to 49</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>
<b>Percentage with One or More Children in the Household</b>							
15 to 24	11	16	27	7	10	7	8
25 to 34	52	55	66	46	50	44	49
35 to 49	66	74	70	73	71	69	72
<b>Percentage Ever Married<sup>c</sup></b>							
15 to 24	9	20	28	15	14	12	10
25 to 34	57	68	67	72	62	69	65
35 to 49	83	87	84	91	83	91	86

Source: Congressional Budget Office based on data from Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009.

- Includes Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands.
- The expected number of births to a woman in a particular age range if, at each age within the range, the likelihood that she gave birth was equal to the share of women at that age who bore a child during the survey year.
- Consists of all women who are married, divorced, separated, or widowed.

Fertility rates (the expected number of births) were higher among foreign-born women than among native-born women (2.6 births versus 2.0 births, respectively) between the ages of 15 and 49 in 2009. Those rates varied considerably, however, depending on the country of birth, with a high of 3.3 for women from Mexico and Central America and a low of 2.0 for women from Europe and Canada.

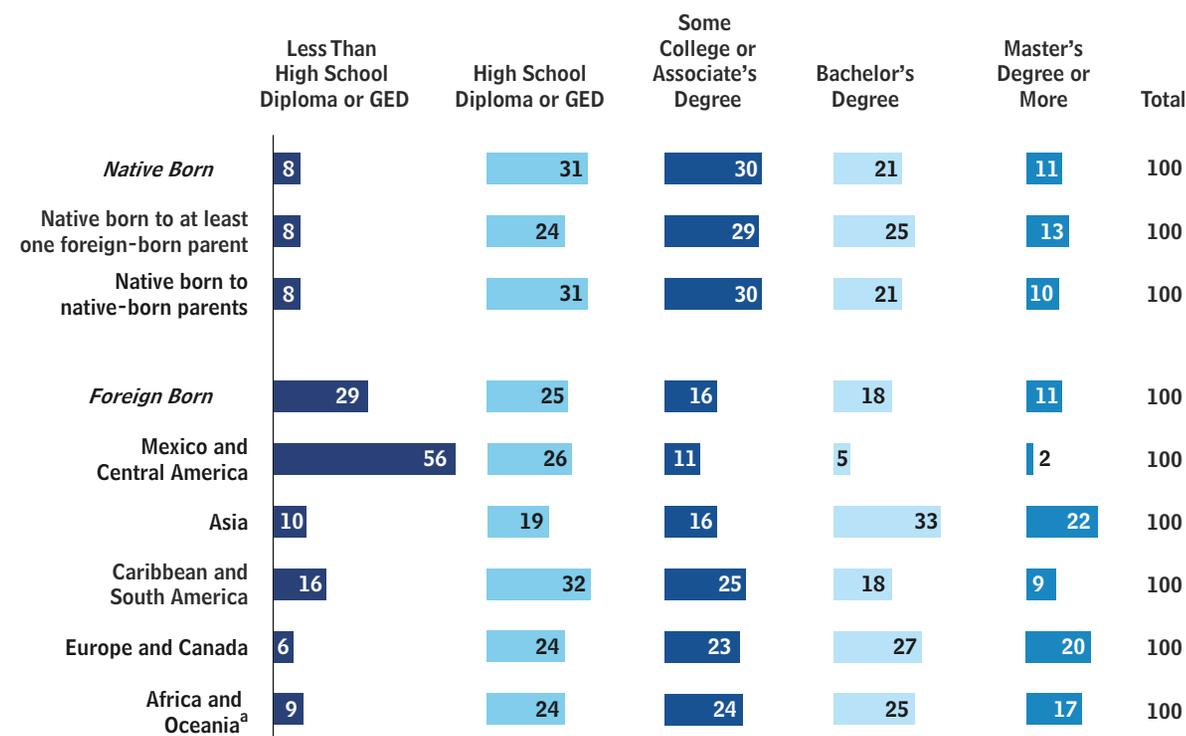
Among the youngest group (ages 15 to 24), women from Mexico and Central America had the highest fertility rate (1.3 births per woman) and the largest share (27 percent) with at least one child. That group of women also had the highest marriage rate—about 28 percent were, or had been, married. Fertility rates among native-born women (0.6 births per woman) were somewhat higher in that age group than among women from Asia or women from Europe and Canada (0.3 births per woman). Women born in Africa or Oceania had a relatively low rate of childbirth in the youngest group, but between the ages of 25 and 34, their fertility rate was comparatively high, at 1.8 births per woman.

Foreign-born women from any region were more likely than native-born women to marry before age 25 or between the ages of 25 and 34. Between the ages of 35 and 49, those gaps had narrowed, and native-born women were about as likely as women from Mexico and Central America or the Caribbean and South America to have married. ♦

**Exhibit 11.**

**Educational Attainment of People Ages 25 to 64, by Birthplace, 2009**

(Percent)



Source: Congressional Budget Office based on monthly data from Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Outgoing Rotation Groups, 2009.

a. Includes Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands.

Overall, the foreign-born population tends to have completed less education than the native-born population, although some groups match or exceed native-born citizens' attainment. In 2009, 29 percent of the foreign-born population between the ages of 25 and 64 had not completed high school or received a GED, compared with about 8 percent of the native-born population. However, the percentages of people who had completed a bachelor's degree or more were similar: Twenty-nine percent of the foreign-born population and 32 percent of the native-born population had at least a bachelor's degree.

The educational attainment of foreign-born people in the United States varies considerably by region of birth. In 2009, people from Mexico and Central America, as a group, had completed less education than had native-born people or people from other regions. A majority, about 56 percent, of people from Mexico and Central America had less than a high school diploma or GED, and only 7 percent had a bachelor's degree or more. By contrast, about 10 percent of people from Asia had less than a high school diploma or GED, and 55 percent had completed a bachelor's degree or more; 6 percent of people from Europe and Canada had less than a high school diploma or GED, and 47 percent had completed a bachelor's degree or more. ♦

**Exhibit 12.**

**Unauthorized Foreign-Born Population, by Birthplace and Age, 2000 and 2009**

	2000		2009		Average Annual Percentage Change, 2000 to 2009
	Population (Millions)	Percentage of Total	Population (Millions)	Percentage of Total	
<b>All</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3</b>
Birthplace					
Mexico	4.7	55	6.7	62	4
El Salvador	0.4	5	0.5	5	2
Guatemala	0.3	3	0.5	4	6
Honduras	0.2	2	0.3	3	8
Other countries	2.9	34	2.8	26	-1
Age (Years)					
Under 18	n.a.	n.a.	1.3	12	n.a.
18 to 24	n.a.	n.a.	1.4	13	n.a.
25 to 34	n.a.	n.a.	3.7	34	n.a.
35 to 44	n.a.	n.a.	2.9	27	n.a.
45 to 54	n.a.	n.a.	1.0	10	n.a.
55 or older	n.a.	n.a.	0.4	4	n.a.

Source: Congressional Budget Office based on data from Michael Hoefler, Nancy Rytina, and Bryan C. Baker, "Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: January 2009," *Population Estimates* (Department of Homeland Security, January 2010).

Notes: To estimate the number and characteristics of the unauthorized foreign-born population, the Department of Homeland Security begins with a count of the total foreign-born population and then subtracts the legal foreign-born population (legal permanent residents, asylum seekers, refugees, and nonimmigrants). The department then adjusts the estimates for mortality and emigration and for undercounts in the number of legal permanent residents and other groups of foreign-born people. It follows a similar process for estimating the distribution of the unauthorized foreign-born population in various subcategories.

n.a. = not available.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has estimated that, in 2009, about 10.8 million U.S. residents were in the country without legal authorization—about 2.3 million more than in 2000. DHS arrived at its estimate by calculating the difference between the total foreign-born population and the authorized foreign-born population. The numbers that form the basis of DHS’s estimate came from a variety of sources, and they involved various assumptions. Moreover, because they do not reflect actual population counts, the resulting estimates are subject to considerable uncertainty. (The Pew Hispanic Center has issued a slightly different estimate of the unauthorized population in 2009—about 11.1 million people.)

According to DHS, in 2009 about 62 percent of the unauthorized foreign-born population in the United States was from Mexico. That population from Mexico had grown by an average of 4 percent per year between 2000 and 2009. The unauthorized foreign-born population is predominantly of working age: In 2009, DHS estimated that 71 percent were between the ages of 25 and 54; by comparison, 54 percent of naturalized citizens and 39 percent of native-born citizens were in that same age group. (Data for naturalized and native-born citizens by age group are not shown in this exhibit.) ♦

**Exhibit 13.****Unauthorized Foreign-Born Population, by State of Residence, 2000 and 2009**

State of Residence	2000		2009		Average Annual Percentage Change, 2000 to 2009
	Population (Millions)	Percentage of State Population	Population (Millions)	Percentage of State Population	
California	2.5	7	2.6	7	0
Texas	1.1	5	1.7	7	5
Florida	0.8	5	0.7	4	-1
New York	0.5	3	0.6	3	0
Illinois	0.4	4	0.5	4	2
Georgia	0.2	3	0.5	5	9
Arizona	0.3	7	0.5	7	4
North Carolina	0.3	4	0.4	4	4
New Jersey	0.4	4	0.4	4	0
Nevada	0.2	9	0.3	10	5
All Other States	1.8	1	2.7	2	5
<b>United States</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

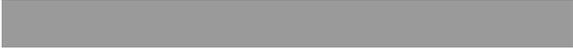
Sources: Congressional Budget Office based on data from Michael Hoefer, Nancy Rytina, and Bryan C. Baker, "Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: January 2009," *Population Estimates* (Department of Homeland Security, January 2010); and monthly data from Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Outgoing Rotation Groups, 2000 and 2009.

Note: To estimate the number and characteristics of the unauthorized foreign-born population, the Department of Homeland Security begins with a count of the total foreign-born population and then subtracts the legal foreign-born population (legal permanent residents, asylum seekers, refugees, and nonimmigrants). It then adjusts the estimates for mortality and emigration and for undercounts in the number of legal permanent residents and other groups of foreign-born people. It follows a similar process for estimating the distribution of the unauthorized foreign-born population in various subcategories.

According to estimates published by the Department of Homeland Security, in 2009 about 4 percent of the total U.S. population of 307 million people consisted of unauthorized residents, and about three-quarters of them lived in 10 states. In 2009, unauthorized residents made up about 10 percent of the population of Nevada and about 7 percent of the population of California, Texas, and Arizona. Almost half of all unauthorized residents lived in those four states. Their share of the population in the other 41 states not listed in the exhibit came to about 2 percent of the total population of those states. ♦



**Labor Market Characteristics of the  
Foreign-Born and Native-Born Populations**



**Exhibit 14.****Labor Force Status of Men and Women Ages 16 to 64, by Age and Birthplace, 2009**

Birthplace	Men			Women		
	Percentage in the Labor Force	Percentage Employed	Unemployment Rate	Percentage in the Labor Force	Percentage Employed	Unemployment Rate
<b>Ages 25 to 64</b>						
Native Born	85	77	8.7	74	69	6.7
Foreign Born	90	82	9.4	65	60	8.5
Mexico and Central America	93	82	11.0	57	51	11.3
Asia	88	82	7.3	67	63	5.7
Caribbean and South America	89	80	9.8	74	67	9.1
Europe and Canada	87	81	6.3	69	65	6.8
Africa and Oceania <sup>a</sup>	90	80	10.9	73	66	9.8
<b>All</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>7.0</b>
<b>Ages 16 to 24 and Not in School</b>						
Native Born	82	64	21.7	74	62	16.2
Foreign Born	88	75	14.8	57	48	16.3
Mexico and Central America	92	80	13.3	51	42	18.4
Asia	82	75	9.1	54	46	15.0
Caribbean and South America	81	57	30.2	72	61	14.8
Europe and Canada	73	64	12.4	82	74	9.8
Africa and Oceania <sup>a</sup>	82	67	18.8	46	37	19.5
<b>All</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>16.2</b>

Source: Congressional Budget Office based on monthly data from Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Outgoing Rotation Groups, 2009.

Note: The labor force includes people with jobs and those looking for work. The unemployment rate is the percentage of the labor force looking for work.

a. Includes Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands.

Foreign-born men are more likely and foreign-born women are less likely than their native-born counterparts to be in the labor force. In 2009, 90 percent of foreign-born men ages 25 to 64 were in the labor force, compared with 85 percent of native-born men. The corresponding proportions were 65 percent and 74 percent for foreign- and native-born women. Foreign-born men and women ages 25 to 64 appear to have had more difficulty than native-born people finding and keeping work, as shown by their unemployment rates. The rate for working-age, foreign-born men was 9.4 percent, compared with 8.7 percent for native-born men; the rate for foreign-born women was 8.5 percent, compared with 6.7 percent for native-born women.

Similarly, among young people out of school, foreign-born men are more likely and foreign-born women are less likely than their native-born counterparts to be employed. Young men (ages 16 to 24) from Mexico and Central America who were not enrolled in school were more likely to be employed than were their native-born counterparts or young men from other parts of the world. In 2009, 80 percent of the 16- to 24-year-old unenrolled men from Mexico and Central America were employed, compared with 64 percent of their native-born counterparts and 75 percent of young men from Asia. In contrast, 42 percent of the 16- to 24-year-old unenrolled women from Mexico and Central America and 46 percent from Asia were employed, compared with 62 percent of their native-born counterparts and 74 percent of the same group of women from Europe and Canada. ♦

**Exhibit 15.****Percentage of Workers Ages 25 to 64 in Various Occupational Groups, by Birthplace, 2009**

(Percent)

Occupational Group	Foreign-Born Workers (By birthplace)						
	All Workers		Mexico and		Caribbean	Europe and	Africa
	Native Born	Foreign Born	Central America	Asia	and South America	Canada	and Oceania <sup>a</sup>
Personal Services <sup>b</sup>	11	16	16	14	19	12	21
Professional <sup>c</sup>	24	15	5	23	16	23	24
Construction and Extraction (Mining); Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	5	10	21	2	7	6	2
Production	5	9	13	7	6	5	7
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	3	9	15	2	9	4	3
Sales and Related	11	8	6	11	8	9	8
Management	13	8	4	11	8	16	7
Office and Administrative Support	14	8	6	9	11	9	7
Transportation and Materials Moving	5	8	11	3	9	4	11
Technical <sup>d</sup>	6	7	1	16	4	10	8
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	4	3	4	2	4	3	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Congressional Budget Office based on monthly data from Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Outgoing Rotation Groups, 2009.

Note: Occupational groups—as defined in the 2002 census and derived from the 2000 Standard Occupational Classification System—are ordered by the percentage of foreign-born workers employed in them.

- Includes Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands.
- Includes food preparation and service, personal care and service, health care support, and protective service.
- Includes business and financial operations; community and social service; law; education, training, and libraries; arts, design, entertainment, and sports; and health care practice and technical occupations.
- Includes working with computers and mathematical science; architecture and engineering; and life, physical, and social sciences.

To some extent, concentration in various occupational groups coincides with the region of birth among foreign-born workers. In 2009, for example, 21 percent of workers from Mexico and Central America were employed in construction, mining, agriculture, or related occupations, compared with 5 percent of native-born workers and 2 percent of workers from Asia. Similarly, 39 percent of workers from Mexico and Central America were employed in production, building and grounds cleaning and maintenance, or in transportation and materials moving. That proportion among foreign-born workers from Asia was 12 percent. By contrast, only 5 percent of workers from Mexico and Central America were employed in jobs in the professional category, including business and financial operations, community and social services, law, and medicine, which generally require more education than is needed for employment in some other occupations. More than one-fifth of native-born workers (24 percent) and workers from Asia (23 percent), Europe and Canada (23 percent), and Africa and Oceania (24 percent) were in jobs classified as professional. Foreign-born workers from Asia were the most likely to be employed in technical occupations, in jobs that include working with computers and mathematical science; architecture and engineering; and life, physical, and social sciences. ♦

**Exhibit 16.****Percentage of Workers Ages 25 to 64 in Various Industries, by Birthplace, 2009**

(Percent)

Industry	All Workers		Foreign-Born Workers (By birthplace)				
	Native Born	Foreign Born	Mexico and	Asia	Caribbean	Europe and	Africa
			Central America		and South America		Canada
Education and Health Services	25	18	9	23	25	23	32
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	19	17	15	19	19	15	20
Manufacturing	11	13	15	13	8	12	10
Professional and Business Services	11	12	12	13	11	14	9
Leisure and Hospitality	6	12	15	11	9	8	8
Construction	7	10	17	2	8	8	3
Personal and Other Services <sup>b</sup>	4	7	8	6	8	5	6
Financial Activities	8	5	2	6	6	8	6
Public Administration	6	2	1	3	3	3	5
Information	3	2	1	2	2	3	2
Agriculture, Mining, and Logging	2	2	5	*	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Congressional Budget Office based on monthly data from Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Outgoing Rotation Groups, 2009.

Notes: Major industry groups—as defined in the 2002 census and derived from the 2000 North American Industry Classification System—are ordered by the percentage of foreign-born workers employed in them.

\* = between zero and 0.5 percent.

- a. Includes Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands.
- b. Includes repair and maintenance, personal and laundry services, membership associations and organizations, and private households.

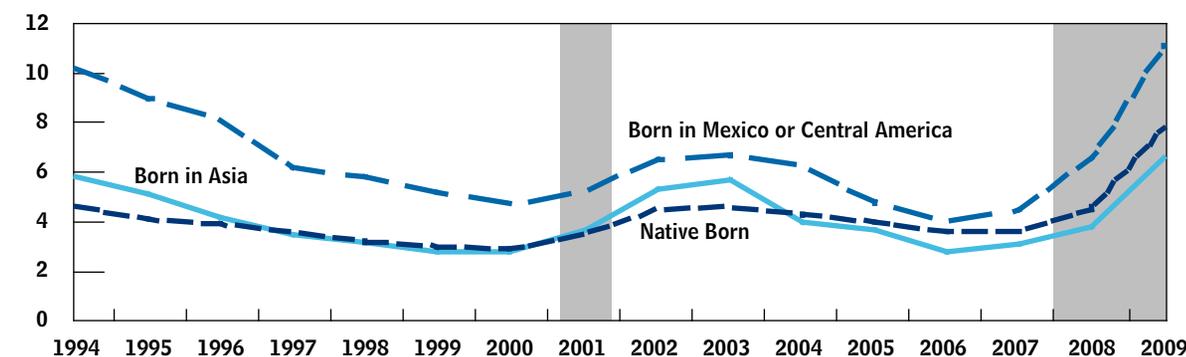
The distribution of workers among industries varies by country of birth. In 2009, a larger fraction of foreign-born than native-born workers was employed in the leisure and hospitality industry. About 6 percent of all native-born workers between the ages of 25 and 64 worked in such jobs, compared with about 15 percent of workers from Mexico and Central America and about 11 percent of workers from Asia. Workers from Mexico and Central America were more than twice as likely as native-born workers to have jobs in leisure and hospitality; construction; or agriculture, mining, and logging. In contrast, workers from Mexico and Central America were less than half as likely to be employed in education and health services, financial activities, and public administration than were native-born workers.

Workers from Asia, from Europe and Canada, and from the Caribbean and South America, by contrast, showed patterns of employment that were generally similar to those of native-born workers. For example, at least 23 percent of workers from Asia, the Caribbean and South America, or Europe and Canada were employed in the education and health services industries, and at least 15 percent were employed in the trade, transportation, and utilities industries—in both cases, about the same as native-born workers. However, workers from Asia were much less likely to have jobs in construction than were native-born workers, and workers from the Caribbean and South America were more likely to have jobs in personal and other services than were native-born workers. ♦

**Exhibit 17.**

**Unemployment Rate of People Ages 25 to 64, by Birthplace, 1994 to 2009**

(Percent)



	Change (Percentage points)									
	1990s		2000s				1994-2009			
	1994	1997	2000	2003	2006	2009	1994-2000	2000-2003	2003-2006	2006-2009
Native Born	4.6	3.6	2.9	4.6	3.6	7.8	-2	2	-1	4
Foreign Born	7.6	5.3	3.7	6.2	3.5	9.1	-4	3	-3	6
Mexico and Central America	10.2	6.2	4.7	6.7	4.0	11.1	-6	2	-3	7
Asia	5.8	3.5	2.8	5.7	2.8	6.6	-3	3	-3	4
Caribbean and South America	8.1	7.2	4.0	6.6	3.9	9.5	-4	3	-3	6
Canada and Europe	4.8	3.7	2.6	5.0	3.0	6.5	-2	2	-2	4
Africa and Oceania <sup>a</sup>	7.0	7.2	3.8	6.4	4.3	10.5	-3	3	-2	6
<b>All</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>4</b>

Source: Congressional Budget Office based on monthly data from Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Outgoing Rotation Groups, 1994 to 2009.

Note: Shaded bars indicate periods of recession, which extend from the peak of a business cycle to its trough. On the basis of monthly data, the National Bureau of Economic Research has determined that the most recent recession ended in June 2009. The estimated unemployment rates, calculated annually, identify the proportion of the workforce that is jobless but available for and actively seeking work.

a. Includes Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands.

Unemployment rates vary with the growth rate of the economy and the rate of job creation. However, economic fluctuations result in larger changes in the unemployment rate among foreign-born than among native-born people. Unemployment rates declined more among the foreign born than among the native born between 1994 and 2000 and between 2003 and 2006, when the economy was growing quickly. Conversely, the unemployment rate rose more among foreign-born than native-born workers between 2000 and 2003 and between 2006 and 2009, when the economy was shrinking or growing slowly.

Between 1994 and 2009, unemployment rates among people from Mexico and Central America, the Caribbean and South America, and Africa and Oceania generally were higher than they were among native-born people or those from Asia, regardless of the pace of economic growth. For people from Mexico and Central America, that pattern could be partly attributable to lower average educational attainment and to a relatively higher concentration in construction and other industries that tend to add jobs rapidly when the economy is growing rapidly and to lose jobs quickly when economic growth is slow or stalled (see Exhibits 11, 15, and 16).

The unemployment rates among people from Asia and from Canada and Europe generally were closer to the unemployment rate among native-born workers than was the unemployment rate among people from Mexico and Central America. After 2003, unemployment rates among people from Asia and from Canada and Europe were lower than among native-born people. ♦

**Exhibit 18.****Annual Earnings of Workers Ages 25 to 64, by Sex, Citizenship, Birthplace, and Earnings Percentile, 2009**

Citizenship and Birthplace	Workers' Annual Earnings (Thousands of 2009 dollars)			Percentage Difference in Earnings from Native-Born Workers		
	10th Percentile	50th Percentile	90th Percentile	10th Percentile	50th Percentile	90th Percentile
<b>Men</b>						
Native Born	13	45	105	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Foreign Born	10	30	90	-23	-33	-14
Citizenship						
Naturalized	14	40	105	9	-10	0
Noncitizen	9	25	73	-31	-44	-30
Birthplace						
Mexico and Central America	8	22	50	-38	-51	-52
Asia	14	48	120	8	7	14
Caribbean and South America	12	32	85	-8	-29	-19
Europe and Canada	17	53	130	31	17	24
Africa and Pacific Islands <sup>a</sup>	10	32	90	-20	-29	-14
<b>Women</b>						
Native Born	8	30	71	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Foreign Born	7	25	71	-13	-17	0
Citizenship						
Naturalized	10	30	80	19	0	13
Noncitizen	5	19	60	-33	-37	-15
Birthplace						
Mexico and Central America	5	16	38	-36	-46	-46
Asia	9	33	90	6	10	27
Caribbean and South America	9	25	60	13	-17	-15
Europe and Canada	8	35	82	5	17	15
Africa and Oceania <sup>a</sup>	6	25	80	-25	-17	13

Source: Congressional Budget Office based on data from Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, March Supplement, 2010.

Notes: For each group by citizenship and birthplace, the percentiles were calculated by arranging workers' earnings in 2009 from the lowest amounts and proceeding upward. The bottom 10 percent of workers earns less than the amount that delineates the 10th percentile; at the 50th percentile (also called the median), half of all workers earn more and half earn less; and at the 90th percentile, 90 percent of the workers earn less.

n.a. = not applicable.

a. Includes Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands.

In 2009, native-born workers and workers who were naturalized citizens earned considerably more than noncitizens at equivalent points in the earnings distribution. Median annual earnings (that is, earnings at the 50th percentile, or the amount at which half of a group earns more and half earns less) for native-born men were \$45,000, or \$5,000 above the median for men who were naturalized citizens and \$20,000 above the median for those who were noncitizens. In 2009, median earnings for native-born women were \$30,000, the same as for women who were naturalized citizens but considerably more than the \$19,000 median earnings for those who were noncitizens. For naturalized citizens in the low (10th percentile) and high (90th percentile) earnings groups, earnings were about equal to or somewhat higher than those of native-born workers. Men who were naturalized citizens with earnings at the 10th percentile, for example, earned \$14,000 in 2009, as compared with the \$13,000 earned by their native-born counterparts.

Workers born in Mexico and Central America typically earned less than their counterparts from other regions of the world. Men from Europe and Canada earned somewhat more than men from Asia, but men and women from both areas generally earned more than their counterparts from other regions of the world. ◆

**Exhibit 19.****Median Family Income and Other Selected Characteristics, by Type of Family, Citizenship, and Birthplace, 2009**

Citizenship and Birthplace	Median Family Income, by Type of Family (Thousands of 2009 dollars)				Percentage in Married-Couple Families	Average Number in the Family
	All	Married Couple	Other	Not in a Family		
Native Born	55	76	32	24	62	3.1
Foreign Born	45	57	36	19	66	3.3
Citizenship						
Naturalized	58	70	45	25	69	3.1
Noncitizen	36	47	31	18	63	3.4
Birthplace						
Mexico and Central America	33	40	32	15	64	3.8
Asia	65	76	50	24	75	3.2
Caribbean and South America	44	60	38	20	55	3.0
Europe and Canada	58	75	43	25	69	2.5
Africa and Oceania <sup>a</sup>	43	58	31	24	62	3.3
<b>All</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>3.1</b>

Source: Congressional Budget Office based on data from Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, March Supplement, 2010.

Note: Median family income is the 50th percentile of family income for all members of a group such as native-born members of married-couple families. In the calculation of that median, a particular family's income is counted once for each member of the family in the group. For example, in the calculation of the median family income of native-born members of married-couple families, the income of a married-couple family is counted once for each native-born family member. One result of that approach is that the income of a large family influences the calculation of the median more than does the income of a small family.

a. Includes Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands.

On average, in 2009, native-born people and naturalized citizens lived in smaller families that had higher income than was often the case for noncitizens. Native-born people and naturalized citizens lived in families that averaged 3.1 members; noncitizens' families averaged 3.4 members. In 2009, the median family income among native-born people was \$55,000, compared with \$58,000 among naturalized citizens and \$36,000 among noncitizens. The median family income of people from Mexico and Central America was \$33,000; for people from Asia, median family income was \$65,000.

Median family income among foreign-born people in 2009 was \$57,000 for people in married-couple families, higher than the \$36,000 median for people in other types of families and the \$19,000 median for people who were not in families (that is, who lived alone or shared housing with nonrelatives). Within married-couple families, differences in family income between noncitizens and native-born and naturalized citizens were large; noncitizens' median family income was \$47,000, compared with \$76,000 for native-born people and \$70,000 for naturalized citizens. ♦

**Exhibit 20.****Percentage of the Population Living in Families with Income Below the Poverty Threshold, by Age, Sex, and Citizenship, 2009**

Age (Years)	Total U.S. Population	Native Born	Foreign Born		
			All	Naturalized Citizen	Noncitizen
<b>All Males and Females</b>					
Under 18	21	20	32	17	36
18 to 64	13	12	19	10	24
65 or Older	9	8	15	13	21
<b>All Ages</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Males</b>					
Under 18	20	20	30	16	33
18 to 64	11	10	17	10	22
65 or Older	7	6	13	9	21
<b>All Ages</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Females</b>					
Under 18	21	21	33	17	38
18 to 64	15	14	20	11	27
65 or Older	11	10	17	15	21
<b>All Ages</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>28</b>

Source: Congressional Budget Office based on data from Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, March Supplement, 2010.

In 2009, 14 percent of native-born people in the United States had an annual income below the poverty threshold of about \$22,000 for a family of four. By contrast, 11 percent of naturalized citizens and 25 percent of noncitizens were in such families. In 2009, 20 percent of native-born children (under the age of 18) lived in families whose income was below the poverty threshold, compared with 17 percent of foreign-born children who had become naturalized citizens (that group includes children who were adopted from abroad) and 36 percent of those who were noncitizens. (If children born in the United States and living in a family headed by a noncitizen are grouped instead with children who are noncitizens, the poverty rate among native-born children falls to 19 percent and the poverty rate among noncitizen children rises to 39 percent.) ♦