

JUNE 2008

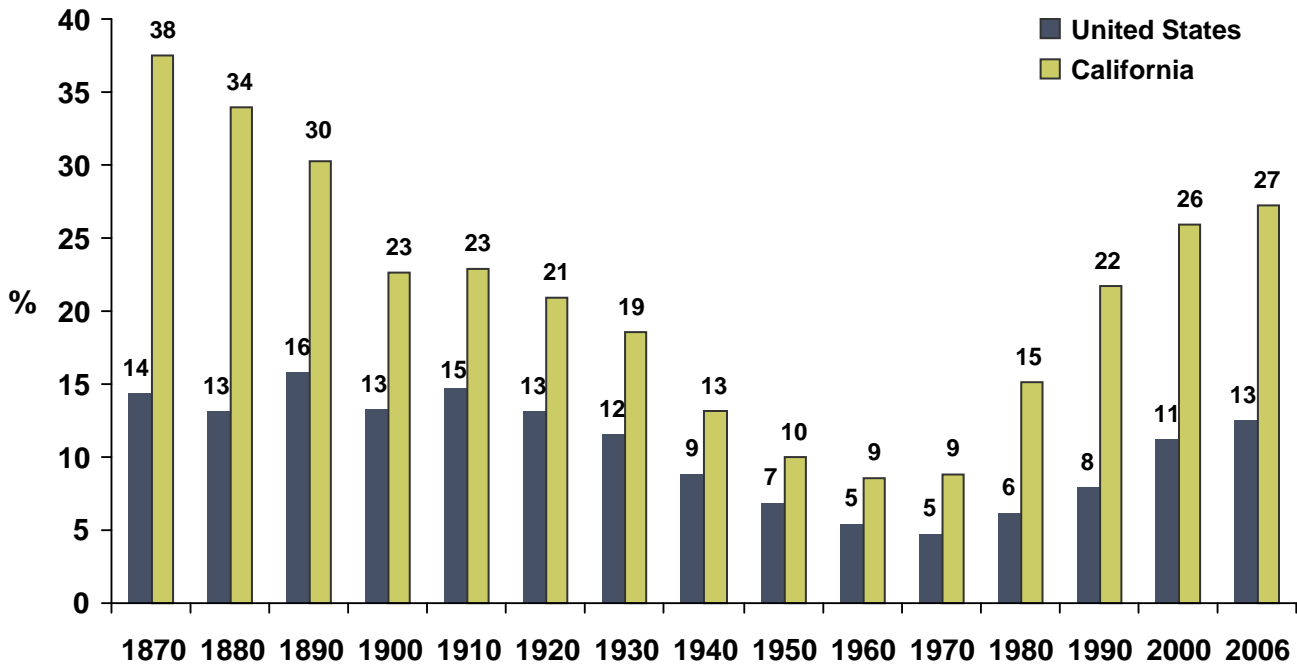
- **CALIFORNIA'S IMMIGRANT POPULATION HAS INCREASED RAPIDLY IN RECENT DECADES.**  
Between 1970 and 2006, the number of California residents born abroad has increased more than fivefold, from 1.8 million to 9.9 million. Immigrants, or foreign-born residents, include those who have become [naturalized U.S. citizens](#).
- **ONE IN FOUR CALIFORNIANS IS AN IMMIGRANT, A HIGHER PROPORTION THAN IN ANY OTHER STATE.**  
The proportion of the state's population that is foreign-born is at its highest level since 1890. California has a much higher share of immigrants in its population than the United States as a whole (27% vs. 13%) or the state with the next highest share of immigrants, New York (22%). Another 22% of Californians have at least one immigrant parent.
- **MOST OF CALIFORNIA'S IMMIGRANTS ARE FROM LATIN AMERICA OR ASIA.**  
The vast majority of California's immigrants (90%) are from Latin America (56%) or Asia (34%). California has sizeable populations of immigrants from dozens of countries. The leading countries of origin are Mexico (4.4 million), the Philippines (750,000), and China (659,000).
- **CALIFORNIA IS THE PRIMARY DESTINATION FOR IMMIGRANTS ENTERING THE UNITED STATES.**  
California is home to 27% of the nation's immigrants, compared to only 10% of the nation's U.S.-born population. Although California is still the leading state of destination, its dominance has declined. Between 2005 and 2006, California received 17 percent of the immigrants arriving in the United States.
- **SIX CALIFORNIA CITIES HAVE MAJORITY IMMIGRANT POPULATIONS.**  
Immigrants represent a majority of citizens in six cities with populations of at least 60,000 residents: Union City, Alhambra, Daly City, Glendale, Santa Ana, and El Monte. Immigrants constitute at least 10% of the population in 36 of the state's 58 counties. The counties with the highest percentages are Santa Clara (36%), San Francisco (36%), and Los Angeles (35%).
- **IMMIGRANTS IN CALIFORNIA ARE CONCENTRATED IN THE [WORKING AGES](#).**  
Three of every four immigrants in California is between the ages of 25 and 64, compared to less than half (45%) of U.S.-born residents in the state. Two of every five Californians between the ages of 25 and 44 is an immigrant.
- **IMMIGRANTS ACCOUNT FOR A LARGE SHARE OF CALIFORNIA'S POPULATION GROWTH.**  
Immigration has directly accounted for 40% of the state's population growth since 2000, with the rest of the state's growth (60%) due to natural increase (more births than deaths). Over 40% of births in the state are to immigrant mothers.

**ADDITIONAL JUST THE FACTS ON IMMIGRANTS IN CALIFORNIA**

[Illegal Immigrants](#) \* [The Immigration and Citizenship Process](#)  
[English Proficiency](#) \* [Education](#) \* [Crime](#) \* [Health](#) \* [Labor Markets](#)



## Percent Foreign-Born, 1870-2006



## Leading Countries of Origin of Immigrants in California, 2006

Country	Number of immigrants in California
Mexico	4,396,000
Philippines	750,000
China	659,000
Vietnam	446,000
El Salvador	396,000
Korea	323,000
India	303,000
Guatemala	241,000
Iran	182,000
Taiwan	163,000
Canada	134,000
United Kingdom	126,000

**Sources:** Decennial censuses. American Community Survey. California Department of Finance.

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