

Immigrants in California

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January 2017

➤ **California has more immigrants than any other state.**

California is home to more than 10 million immigrants—about one in four of the foreign-born population nationwide. In 2015, the most current year of data, 27% of California's population was foreign born, about twice the US percentage. Foreign-born residents represented more than 30% of the population in eight California counties; in descending order, they are Santa Clara, San Mateo, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Alameda, Imperial, Orange, and Monterey. Half of California children had at least one immigrant parent.

➤ **Most immigrants in California are documented residents.**

Almost half (49%) of California's immigrants are naturalized US citizens, and another 26% have some other legal status (including green cards and visas). According to the Center for Migration Studies, about 25% of immigrants in California are undocumented.

➤ **Net immigration to California has slowed.**

In the 1990s, California's immigrant population grew by 37% (2.4 million). But in the first decade of the 2000s, that growth slowed to 15% (1.3 million), and in the past 10 years, the increase was 11% (just over 1 million). The decline in international immigration has been a contributing factor in the slowdown of California's overall population growth.

➤ **The majority of recent arrivals are from Asia.**

The vast majority of California's immigrants were born in Latin America (52%) or Asia (39%). California has sizeable populations of immigrants from dozens of countries; leading countries of origin are Mexico (4.3 million), China (914,000), the Philippines (859,000), India (581,000), and Vietnam (507,000). However, most (53%) of those arriving between 2011 and 2015 came from Asia; only 22% came from Latin America.

➤ **Most immigrants in California are working-age adults.**

Eight of every ten immigrants (80%) in California are working-age adults (age 18 to 64), compared to four of every seven (57%) US-born California residents. This means that more than a third (34%) of working-age adults in the state are immigrants.

➤ **California's immigrants have both very low and very high levels of education.**

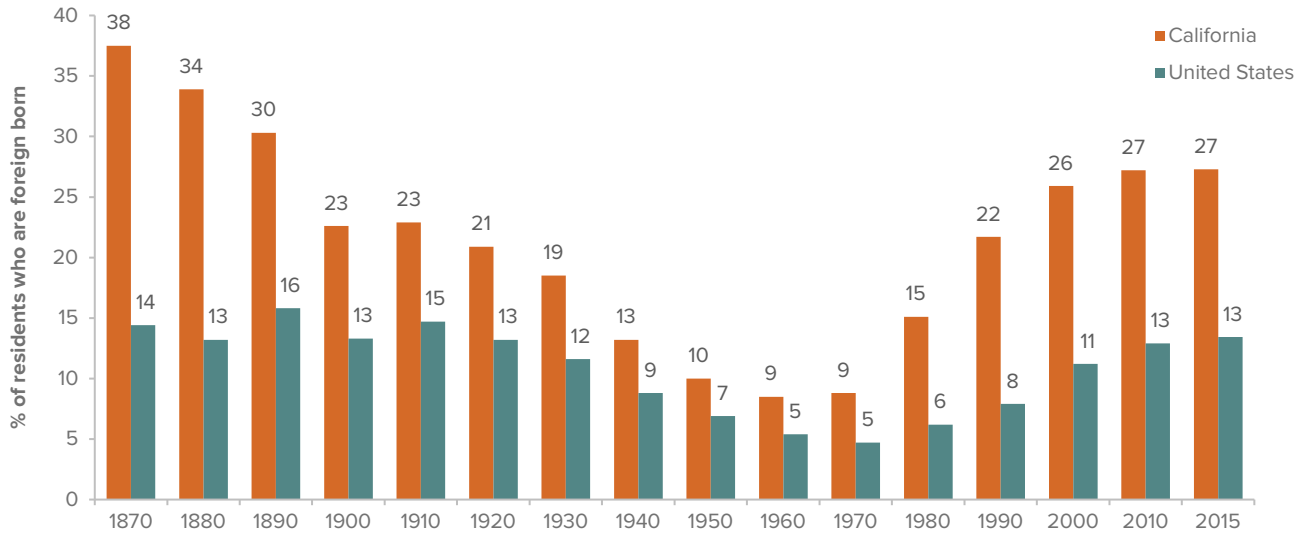
In 2015, 34% of California's immigrants age 25 and older had not completed high school, compared with 8% of US-born California residents. Twenty-eight percent of California's foreign-born residents had attained at least a bachelor's degree, compared to 35% of US-born residents. Foreign-born residents accounted for 71% of state residents without a high school diploma and 31% of college-educated residents. But recent immigrants and immigrants from Asia tend to have very high levels of educational attainment. More than half (52%) of foreign-born residents who came to the state between 2011 and 2015—and 58% of those who came from Asia—had attained at least a bachelor's degree.

➤ **Immigrants are as likely to be working as the US-born—but they make less money.**

California's foreign-born residents are about as likely to be in the labor force as are US-born residents: in 2015, 64% of immigrants were in the labor force, compared to 63% of the US-born. They are also slightly more likely to be employed (60% compared to 58%). However, the median income in 2015 for households with foreign-born householders was 14.8% lower than that for households with US-born householders (\$52,850 compared to \$62,042). Foreign-born residents are also about as likely as US-born residents to live in poverty (17% and 16%, respectively).

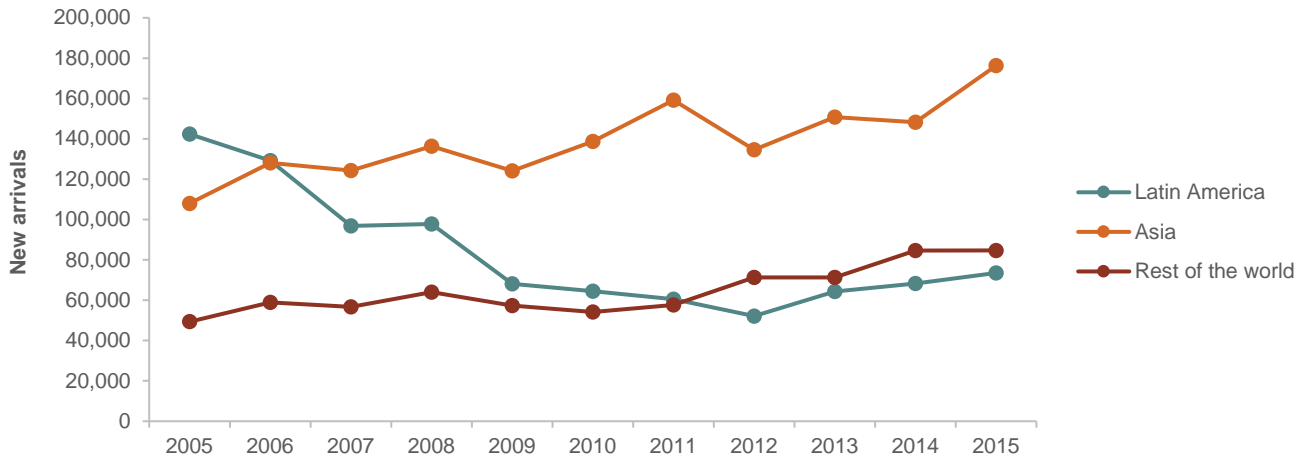


California has had high shares of foreign-born residents for decades



Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Censuses and the American Community Survey.

Asia has surpassed Latin America as the leading source of recent immigrants to California



Source: American Community Survey.

Note: New arrivals are based on the place of residence one year prior to the survey.

Sources: American Community Survey and Decennial Census data from US Census Bureau and IPUMS: Steven Ruggles, Katie Genadek, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, and Matthew Sobek. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 6.0 (University of Minnesota 2015); Center for Migration Studies.

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