

## **From Many Shores: Asians in Census 2000**

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Census 2000 documents a 69% growth of the Asian population in the United States in the last ten years, up to over 12 million persons. The Asian presence in this country was once symbolized by Chinatowns in major cities; there are now as many as six distinct Asian national-origin groups with more than a million residents. And whereas Asians have often been thought of uniformly as a single “model minority,” it is time to recognize the very large differences that exist between the Chinese, Indians, Filipinos, and other major Asian groups.

This report summarizes briefly what we know about America’s Asian minorities at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: their origins and growth, their heterogeneity in social background and economic achievement, and trends in their location within the country.

### **Growth in the 1990-2000 decade**

In the last decade the total Asian population increased from 7.2 million to 12.3 million. The Asian share of the total population rose from 2.9% to 4.4%, still much smaller than the country’s African American or Hispanic minorities, but a much more considerable presence today than in the past, and very prominent in some states and metro areas.

Table 1 shows that the Chinese remain the largest single national-origin group, now about 2.7 million and nearly a quarter of the Asian total. They are followed by Filipinos (who maintained about a 20% share), now 2.4 million. Asian Indians are the fastest growing group – fifth largest in 1990 but now third, more than doubling in the decade, and reaching 1.9 million in 2000.

Three other groups have more than a million residents, and each represents about a tenth of Asians. Of these, the Japanese have the longest history in the country, but their growth has been modest. The other two are Koreans (up by half) and Vietnamese (who doubled since 1990).

**Table 1. Asian Population in the US, 1990 and 2000.**

<b>Population</b>	<b>1990</b>		<b>2000</b>		<b>Population Growth</b>
<b>All Asians</b>	7,273,662		12,275,972		69%
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	
<b>Chinese</b>	1,645,472	22.6	2,734,841	22.3	66%
<b>Filipinos</b>	1,406,770	19.3	2,364,815	19.3	68%
<b>Japanese</b>	847,562	11.7	1,148,932	9.4	36%
<b>Indians</b>	815,447	11.2	1,899,599	15.5	133%
<b>Koreans</b>	798,849	11.0	1,228,427	10.0	54%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	614,547	8.4	1,223,736	10.0	99%
<b>Other</b>	1,145,015	15.7	1,306,330	13.5	14%

### Variations in nativity: the emergence of U.S.-born Asians

One important characteristic of these largely immigrant groups is their nativity, shown in Table 2. For information from ten years ago we use data from the 1990 Census. For 2000, since the census has not yet released comparable data, we use estimates drawn from the 1998 and 2000 Current Population Surveys. A striking finding is that the share of the foreign-born is declining in every case. Population growth, therefore, stems more from child-bearing by the Asian population already in the country than from immigration.

	<b>1990 Foreign-born</b>	<b>1998-2000 Foreign-born</b>	<b>Second Generation</b>	<b>3rd + Later Generation</b>
<b>Asian total</b>	66.8%	49.2%	23.7%	27.1%
<b>Chinese</b>	70.4%	47.1%	19.5%	33.4%
<b>Filipinos</b>	68.5%	49.5%	29.1%	21.4%
<b>Japanese</b>	35.2%	22.7%	22.2%	55.2%
<b>Asian Indians</b>	77.0%	41.1%	13.1%	45.9%
<b>Koreans</b>	82.2%	52.4%	21.9%	25.7%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	81.8%	75.9%	23.5%	0.6%
<b>Other Asians</b>	70.0%	41.8%	57.8%	0.4%

This process has advanced the farthest for Japanese. Already in 1990 only 35% of Japanese in the U.S. were foreign-born. By 2000 this share had dropped to 23%. In fact, more than half the Japanese population was of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and later generations in 2000. These statistics reflect the long-standing Japanese presence in the country, as well as their low rate of recent immigration.

At the other extreme are the Vietnamese, who first arrived in large numbers at the close of the Vietnam War. In 1990 fully 82% of Vietnamese were first-generation, and this group's very high rate of immigration kept this figure up to 76% in 2000.

Other groups fall in between these two. They had large majorities in the first generation in 1990 (typically 70-80%), falling to half or less than half by 2000. In these cases, immigrants still outnumber the second generation by about a 2:1 ratio, but the U.S.-born group members (combining all generations) are fast becoming the predominant portion. And among Indians, the 3<sup>rd</sup> and later generation members by themselves already outnumber the immigrants.

### **Variations in socio-economic standing**

Information on the socioeconomic standing of each Asian group is provided in Table 3, reflecting all group members in 1990 and group members in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> generation in 1998-2000. Indians stand out in both years for their high level of education (measured for people aged 25 and above), almost equivalent to a college degree for the average group member. Most other groups are clustered together at about 14 years. Vietnamese, the newest of the major Asian groups, are the exceptional case with only about a high school education on average in both 1990 and 2000.

	<b>Average Education</b>	<b>% Unemployed</b>	<b>% Below Poverty</b>	<b>% Public Assistance</b>	<b>Avg. Personal Income</b>
<b>1990, all group members</b>					
Chinese	13.7	4.8%	14.2%	4.1%	\$14,445
Filipinos	13.5	5.0%	5.9%	3.9%	\$13,537
Japanese	13.6	2.6%	7.1%	1.4%	\$18,775
Asian Indians	15.2	5.7%	9.8%	2.1%	\$16,725
Koreans	13.5	5.1%	13.9%	3.4%	\$10,933
Vietnamese	12.1	8.4%	25.5%	10.9%	\$8,871
Other Asians	12.6	8.3%	29.5%	11.5%	\$7,900
<b>1998-2000, 1st and 2nd generation only</b>					
Chinese	14.1	4.4%	10.6%	0.4%	\$22,915
Filipinos	13.9	4.7%	5.8%	0.8%	\$21,960
Japanese	14.3	1.1%	12.6%	0.0%	\$22,738
Asian Indians	15.6	3.6%	8.7%	0.1%	\$31,732
Koreans	14.1	3.8%	10.8%	0.4%	\$19,932
Vietnamese	12.1	3.0%	17.1%	1.9%	\$15,758
Other Asians	13.2	5.7%	24.7%	4.8%	\$17,611

Other indicators confirm the weaker economic position of the Vietnamese. One is their high unemployment in 1900 (though about average in 1998-2000 when compared only to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> generation members of other groups. They show the highest rates of poverty and receipt of public assistance (though currently no Asian group is very dependent on public assistance). And they have the lowest income levels in 1990 and in 2000. Many Vietnamese, it should be remembered, were resettled in the United States as refugees. Their economic situation continues to reflect this history.

Indians' high educational level translates into relatively high incomes, especially in 2000 (a personal income of over \$30,000 typically translates in a household income of \$60,000 or more). They were outmatched in income in 1990 by the Japanese, perhaps reflecting the high share of Japanese born in the U.S. But Japanese immigrants and their adult children – the two generations for which we have current data – now earn considerably less than do Indians.

With some variations, these figures leave Chinese, Koreans, and Filipinos in a middle position. While the Koreans are well known to be the most entrepreneurial of the Asian immigrant groups, this activity apparently does not translate into higher incomes.

Another common marker of success in the United States is suburbanization. While they do not match non-Hispanic whites' suburbanization levels, a majority or near majority of every Asian group lives in suburbia – the most for Indians and Koreans, and about 50% for Chinese and Vietnamese. Asians are more likely than Hispanics, and much more likely than African

Americans, to live in suburbs, and many Asian enclaves have now been established outside of central cities.

	1990	2000
<b>Asian Total</b>	46.6	51.3
<b>Asian Indians</b>	57.5	60.1
<b>Chinese</b>	43.3	50.0
<b>Filipinos</b>	51.7	57.5
<b>Japanese</b>	53.5	56.9
<b>Korean</b>	54.7	58.9
<b>Vietnamese</b>	45.2	49.6

Are Asians a model minority, demonstrating success in the American setting? These data suggest rather that they are several distinct minorities, differing greatly in their recency of arrival, their educational attainment, economic standing, and metropolitan location.

**States with the largest Asian population.**

Asians are spread very unequally around the country. Table 5 lists their 1990 and 2000 populations in the ten states where they are most numerous. One state, California, by itself accounts for 35% of all Asians (4.3 million), and California also has the largest number of each of the six main national-origin groups – almost half the Filipinos. Indians are the group that is least concentrated here, but they were the state’s fastest growing Asian minority in the last decade, more than doubling in number. And nearly one in five Indians in the U.S. is California.

California’s 12.6% Asian minority is unusually high, but it is not the highest in the country. Two-thirds of the Hawaiian population is Asian – not counting native Hawaiians who are classified as Pacific Islanders. Asians in this state are mainly people of Japanese and Filipino origin (more than 20% each) or Chinese (14%). There was growth among all these groups in the last decade, especially among the Chinese who more than doubled.

New York had about the same number of Asian residents in 1990 as did Hawaii, but has experienced faster growth and now New York’s 1.2 million Asian population is second only to California’s. Although New York is among the top five states for every Asian group, it is more heavily weighted toward Chinese, Indians, and Koreans than is California, while Filipinos, Japanese, and Vietnamese are relatively under-represented in New York.

Several other states deserve special mention as among the top three locations for at least one Asian minority. Texas has the second largest Vietnamese population: more than 10% of Vietnamese live in Texas, now reaching nearly 150,000. Illinois has the third largest Filipino

population, over 100,000. Washington has the third largest Japanese population (56,210). And New Jersey has the third largest Indian (181,000) and Korean (69,000) minorities.

The high degree of concentration in a few states is evident, even though there has been a modest trend of spreading out among more states in the last ten years. Of the total Asian population, a 35% share is in California and 61% in the largest five. Least concentrated is the relatively affluent Indian population (19% in California and 59% in the top five). Most concentrated are the Filipinos (46% in California and 70% in the top five).

### **Metropolitan regions with the largest Asian population in 2000**

The majority of Asians are similarly concentrated in a relatively small number of metro areas. Generally the top ten or twelve metro areas for each group includes as much as 50% of the group's total population in the country. These metro areas and their Asian populations are listed in Table 6.

The largest single cluster of Asians is found in Los Angeles (about 11% of the national total), with even more in the greater LA region including Orange County (3.5%) and Riverside (1.4%). New York by itself has close to 8% of the nation's Asians, with another 3% in neighboring Newark and the suburban regions of Long Island and Middlesex-Somerset-Hunterdon). The Bay Area in Northern California (combining San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose) has over 11%. Though these figures demonstrate very high concentration, the trend over time is to spread more broadly around the country. In 1990 the largest 8 metro areas had 47% of the Asian population. The same metro areas were in the top 8 in 2000, but now have only 41%.

These few metropolitan regions account for the lion's share of most individual Asian groups, although as we saw at the state level, each one has a somewhat distinctive regional distribution. The New York metro area has the largest number of Chinese and Indians, and the second largest share of Koreans. LA has the most Filipinos and Koreans, and second largest number of Chinese and Japanese, while adjacent suburban Orange County has the most Vietnamese (followed by San Jose). Honolulu has the most Japanese and second most Filipinos. Washington, DC is an important center of Indians and Koreans (number three for each group). Other specific foci are Chicago (the second-most Indians) and San Diego (third-most Filipinos). Finally, a location that isn't usually thought of for its Asian population is Houston, but it has over 5% of the nation's Vietnamese and 3% of the Indians.

### **The diversity of Asian Americans**

The main point of this report is that Asians are a diverse population category that includes both newer and older, as well as relatively affluent and relatively impoverished groups. Diversity also is increasing as a result of the rapid growth of Indians and Vietnamese – perhaps the two most dissimilar Asian national origin categories and found in very different parts of the country.

We should expect, therefore, that Asians will become incorporated into American society in different ways and at different rates, reflecting these differences in each group's experiences and social location.

We can expect that a future report will analyze in detail Asians' segregation from other groups. While levels of separation are not as high for them as for African Americans and Hispanics, Census 2000 has shown that Asians are often found in residential enclaves that have intensified in the last decade. We can expect that continued growth of each Asian group will make them a more visible minority in new parts of the country. It is in and around these enclaves that their integration into American society is most often challenged, as their growth and concentration have sometimes been accompanied by resentment or hostility. By identifying more clearly the situation of each individual Asian group and noticing the trends in their locations, it is more likely that we will be able to understand and anticipate how and where such issues arise.

**Table 5. States with more than 250,000 Asians in 2000.**

**Group % in parenthesis.**

States	Year	Total population	All Asians	Chinese	Filipinos	Japanese	Indians	Koreans	Vietnamese
California	1990	29760021	2845659 (9.56)	704850 (2.37)	731685 (2.46)	312989 (1.05)	154122 (0.52)	259941 (0.87)	280223 (0.94)
	2000	33871648	4270748 (12.61)	1046775 (3.09)	1098321 (3.24)	394896 (1.17)	360392 (1.06)	375571 (1.11)	484023 (1.43)
New York	1990	17990455	693760 (3.86)	284144 (1.58)	62259 (0.35)	35281 (0.20)	132801 (0.74)	95648 (0.53)	15555 (0.09)
	2000	18976457	1191050 (6.28)	442975 (2.33)	95144 (0.50)	45237 (0.24)	296056 (1.56)	127068 (0.67)	27105 (0.14)
Hawaii	1990	1108229	685236 (61.83)	68804 (6.21)	168682 (15.22)	247486 (22.33)	870 (0.08)	24454 (2.21)	5468 (0.49)
	2000	1211537	814181 (67.20)	169747 (14.01)	275728 (22.76)	296674 (24.49)	3145 (0.26)	41352 (3.41)	10040 (0.83)
Texas	1990	16986510	319459 (1.88)	63232 (0.37)	34350 (0.20)	14795 (0.09)	54285 (0.32)	31775 (0.19)	69634 (0.41)
	2000	20851820	657664 (3.15)	112950 (0.54)	75226 (0.36)	28060 (0.13)	142689 (0.68)	54300 (0.26)	143352 (0.69)
New Jersey	1990	7730188	272521 (3.53)	59084 (0.76)	53146 (0.69)	17253 (0.22)	79367 (1.03)	38540 (0.50)	7330 (0.09)
	2000	8414350	531258 (6.31)	103229 (1.23)	95063 (1.13)	18830 (0.22)	180957 (2.15)	68990 (0.82)	16707 (0.20)
Illinois	1990	11430602	285311 (2.50)	49936 (0.44)	64224 (0.56)	21831 (0.19)	62810 (0.55)	41506 (0.36)	10309 (0.09)
	2000	12419293	481645 (3.88)	81919 (0.66)	100338 (0.81)	27702 (0.22)	133978 (1.08)	56021 (0.45)	21212 (0.17)
Washington	1990	4866692	210958 (4.33)	33962 (0.70)	43799 (0.90)	34366 (0.71)	7965 (0.16)	29697 (0.61)	18696 (0.38)
	2000	5894121	409428 (6.95)	70949 (1.20)	91765 (1.56)	56210 (0.95)	28614 (0.49)	56438 (0.96)	50697 (0.86)
Florida	1990	12937926	154302 (1.19)	30737 (0.24)	31945 (0.25)	8505 (0.07)	29117 (0.23)	12404 (0.10)	16346 (0.13)
	2000	15982378	340651 (2.13)	56877 (0.36)	71282 (0.45)	18002 (0.11)	84527 (0.53)	23790 (0.15)	37086 (0.23)
Virginia	1990	6187358	159053 (2.57)	21238 (0.34)	35067 (0.57)	7931 (0.13)	20440 (0.33)	30164 (0.49)	20693 (0.33)
	2000	7078515	310762 (4.39)	41482 (0.59)	59374 (0.84)	14613 (0.21)	54781 (0.77)	50468 (0.71)	40500 (0.57)
Massachusetts	1990	6016425	143392 (2.38)	53792 (0.89)	6212 (0.10)	8784 (0.15)	18885 (0.31)	11744 (0.20)	15449 (0.26)
	2000	6349097	270043 (4.25)	89521 (1.41)	11661 (0.18)	13997 (0.22)	48588 (0.77)	19469 (0.31)	36685 (0.58)



**Table 6. Metropolitan regions with more than 200,000 Asians in 2000.**

**Group % in parenthesis.**

Metropolitan Regions	Year	Total population	All Asians	Chinese	Filipinos	Japanese	Indians	Koreans	Vietnamese
Los Angeles-Long Beach, CA	1990	8862948	954460 (10.77)	245033 (2.76)	219640 (2.48)	129731 (1.46)	43829 (0.49)	145431 (1.64)	62593 (0.71)
	2000	9519338	1284112 (13.49)	334764 (3.52)	296708 (3.12)	138080 (1.45)	71265 (0.75)	195150 (2.05)	89080 (0.94)
New York, NY	1990	8542326	556277 (6.51)	246790 (2.89)	49089 (0.57)	26418 (0.31)	106262 (1.24)	74626 (0.87)	9044 (0.11)
	2000	9314235	956071 (10.26)	386313 (4.15)	72352 (0.78)	34350 (0.37)	228437 (2.45)	97203 (1.04)	13874 (0.15)
Honolulu, HI	1990	836231	526459 (62.96)	63265 (7.57)	120029 (14.35)	195149 (23.34)	864 (0.10)	22646 (2.71)	5231 (0.63)
	2000	876156	619253 (70.68)	135464 (15.46)	191393 (21.84)	230044 (26.26)	2390 (0.27)	36069 (4.12)	9358 (1.07)
San Jose, CA	1990	1503904	261640 (17.40)	65061 (4.33)	61535 (4.09)	26588 (1.77)	20184 (1.34)	15589 (1.04)	54213 (3.60)
	2000	1682585	472530 (28.08)	122790 (7.30)	87806 (5.22)	35124 (2.09)	70159 (4.17)	23670 (1.41)	105259 (6.26)
Oakland, CA	1990	2082914	269566 (12.94)	90691 (4.35)	77198 (3.71)	21477 (1.03)	21633 (1.04)	13478 (0.65)	16732 (0.80)
	2000	2392557	461028 (19.27)	152439 (6.37)	123705 (5.17)	30516 (1.28)	60570 (2.53)	21985 (0.92)	32186 (1.35)
San Francisco, CA	1990	1603678	329599 (20.55)	162636 (10.14)	88560 (5.52)	23682 (1.48)	8531 (0.53)	10416 (0.65)	12451 (0.78)
	2000	1731183	435082 (25.13)	218469 (12.62)	114433 (6.61)	30243 (1.75)	20800 (1.20)	15377 (0.89)	17035 (0.98)
Orange County, CA	1990	2410556	249192 (10.34)	41403 (1.72)	30356 (1.26)	29704 (1.23)	15212 (0.63)	35919 (1.49)	71822 (2.98)
	2000	2846289	434778 (15.28)	61174 (2.15)	60000 (2.11)	41767 (1.47)	30464 (1.07)	58564 (2.06)	141164 (4.96)
Chicago, IL	1990	7410858	253416 (3.42)	43551 (0.59)	60577 (0.82)	18921 (0.26)	58384 (0.79)	36526 (0.49)	8133 (0.11)
	2000	8272768	429533 (5.19)	72512 (0.88)	93033 (1.12)	23395 (0.28)	122435 (1.48)	48767 (0.59)	17458 (0.21)
Washington, DC-MD-VA-WV	1990	4218645	204432 (4.85)	39286 (0.93)	27084 (0.64)	9976 (0.24)	35908 (0.85)	40195 (0.95)	23558 (0.56)
	2000	4923153	379949 (7.72)	68227 (1.39)	47350 (0.96)	15714 (0.32)	80154 (1.63)	60895 (1.24)	46791 (0.95)
San Diego, CA	1990	2498016	198311 (7.94)	19686 (0.79)	95945 (3.84)	17869 (0.72)	5039 (0.20)	6722 (0.27)	21118 (0.85)
	2000	2813833	303204 (10.78)	36660 (1.30)	145132 (5.16)	29028 (1.03)	12145 (0.43)	14404 (0.51)	36512 (1.30)
Seattle-Bellevue-Everett, WA	1990	2033156	137804 (6.78)	27580 (1.36)	29525 (1.45)	23134 (1.14)	5926 (0.29)	16422 (0.81)	12638 (0.62)
	2000	2414616	272961 (11.30)	56111 (2.32)	57015 (2.36)	35288 (1.46)	21487 (0.89)	31575 (1.31)	35742 (1.48)
Houston, TX	1990	3333295	126754 (3.80)	29349 (0.88)	13419 (0.40)	3694 (0.11)	25744 (0.77)	7074 (0.21)	33109 (0.99)
	2000	4177646	245418 (5.87)	48294 (1.16)	24692 (0.59)	5963 (0.14)	55011 (1.32)	11167 (0.27)	64272 (1.54)