Census Profile: Asian American Population in Manhattan

Asian American Federation of New York Census Information Center

Introduction
This profile uses 2000 and 1990 U.S. census information to describe attributes and trends characterizing Manhattan’s growing Asian population.¹ It presents facts on population size and growth, immigration, citizenship status, educational attainment, English ability, income, poverty, and housing. Comparisons with Manhattan’s total population add perspective.²

Manhattan’s Asian population grew substantially from 1990 to 2000. In addition, in relation to Manhattan residents overall, the borough’s Asian population in 2000 had lower incomes, less education, greater senior-citizen poverty and higher language barriers.

Population
From 1990 to 2000, the Asian population in Manhattan climbed by 42 percent, from 110,362 to 156,710 – exceeding a 3 percent increase for the borough overall.

Manhattan Asian American Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asian Group</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>% Growth from 1990</th>
<th>% Growth from 1990</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian Indian</td>
<td>7,395</td>
<td>14,630</td>
<td>97.8%</td>
<td>17,592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>819</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
<td>1,204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodian</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>-11.8%</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese (w/o Taiwanese)</td>
<td>71,312</td>
<td>86,085</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>90,518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>8,116</td>
<td>8,654</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>10,223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmong</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
<td>453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>10,820</td>
<td>14,325</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
<td>16,116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>6,183</td>
<td>10,848</td>
<td>75.4%</td>
<td>11,851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laotian</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-34.2%</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysian</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>54.5%</td>
<td>675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>952</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>1,402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lankan</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>64.3%</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwanese</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>889</td>
<td>116.3%</td>
<td>1,070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thai</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>828</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
<td>1,003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>787</td>
<td>1,370</td>
<td>74.1%</td>
<td>1,684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asian</td>
<td>2,178</td>
<td>4,021</td>
<td>84.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>110,362</td>
<td>144,538</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>156,710</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Manhattan’s five largest Asian ethnic groups in 2000 were Chinese¹ (90,518), Indians¹ (17,592), Japanese (16,116), Koreans (11,851) and Filipinos (10,223).³

Asian groups experiencing the most growth in the last decade percentage-wise were Hmong (450 percent), Taiwanese (160 percent), Bangladeshis (155 percent), Indians (138 percent) and Malaysians (133 percent).⁶ From 1990 to 2000, Chinese and Indians had the greatest increases in raw numbers, adding 19,206 and 10,197 people, respectively.

By age, 14 percent (22,007) of Asian Manhattanites were children (age 17 and younger), 76 percent (118,918) were working-age adults (age 18 to 64), and 10 percent (15,626) were senior citizens (age 65 and older). Similarly, the total borough population was comprised of 17 percent children, 71 percent working-age adults and 12 percent seniors.

Immigration and Citizenship
Close to three-fourths, or 72 percent (113,349), of Manhattan’s Asian population in 2000 was foreign-

² Asian population growth rate for Manhattan (42.0%) exceeded the overall city rate (71.0%).
³ Asian groups experiencing the most growth in Manhattan: Hmong (450%), Taiwanese (160%), Bangladeshis (155%), Indians (138%) and Malaysians (133%).
⁴ Asian population growth rate for New York City (71.0%) exceeded the overall state rate (35.0%).
⁵ Asian population growth rate for the state of New York (35.0%) exceeded the overall U.S. rate (20.0%).
⁶ Asian groups experiencing the most growth in the U.S.: Hmong (132%), Taiwanese (114%), Bangladeshis (112%), Indians (111%) and Malaysians (107%).
⁷ Asian population growth rate for the U.S. (111.0%) exceeded the overall world rate (75.0%).
⁸ Asian groups experiencing the most growth in the world: Hmong (150%), Taiwanese (130%), Bangladeshis (125%), Indians (120%) and Malaysians (115%).
One third of Asian Americans in Manhattan have not earned a high school diploma.

Of Manhattan’s Asian immigrants as of the 2000 census, 40 percent (45,666) were naturalized U.S. citizens – the same percentage as for the borough’s total immigrant population. According to 2000 census data, 26 percent of foreign-born Asian Manhattanites became citizens within 20 years, surpassing 23 percent of immigrants borough-wide.

Educational Attainment

Manhattan Asians in 2000 had less education than the general borough population across the academic spectrum.

Among all Asian adults in Manhattan, 33 percent (37,793) were not high school graduates, compared with 21 percent of adults borough-wide. Also, 26 percent (29,403) of all adult Asian Manhattanites had not completed ninth grade – double the 13 percent rate for all borough adults.

At the upper end of the educational continuum, 56 percent (63,247) of Asian adults in Manhattan had some form of post-secondary education, compared with 65 percent of adults borough-wide.

More than three-quarters of school-age Asian children in Manhattan (79 percent, or 15,098) attended New York City public schools, slightly exceeding 75 percent of all borough children.

English Proficiency

In 2000, Manhattan’s Asian population had higher degrees of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) – both overall and by age group.

Almost half, or 47 percent (70,593), of Asians in Manhattan spoke English “well,” “not well” or “not at all” – more than two times the 20 percent rate for the borough’s entire population. By age, 44 percent (52,510) of Asian working-age adults and 76 percent (11,801) of elderly Asians had limited English skills, contrasted with 19 percent and 25 percent of the respective borough-wide age groups.

Income

By all Census 2000 income gauges, Asians in Manhattan earned less than the general borough population.

The Asian median household income of $40,073 and median family income of $37,672 were below corresponding borough-wide figures of $47,030 and $50,229. Asian per capita income of $29,583 also was lower than the overall Manhattan figure of $42,922.

Poverty

2000 census data show that compared with the total Manhattan population, Asians in the borough overall and Asian senior citizens had greater poverty, while the contrary was true for children.

Of all Asian Manhattanites, 23 percent (34,917) lived below the poverty line, compared with 20 percent of all borough residents. The difference was much wider for senior citizens, with 33 percent (5,061) of elderly Asians, as opposed to 19 percent of all Manhattan seniors, living in poverty.

In the other direction, 30 percent (6,407) of the borough’s Asian children lived in poverty, compared with 32 percent of all Manhattan children. (Three-quarters, or 4,685, of Manhattan’s Asian children below the poverty line lived in two-parent families, surpassing 27 percent of all borough children in poverty.)

Housing

Averaging 2.25 people, Asian households in Manhattan in 2000 tended to be somewhat larger than households borough-wide, which averaged 2 people.

Renting was slightly more common for Asians in Manhattan than for borough residents overall. According to the census, 84 percent of Asian Manhattanites rented and 16 percent owned their
Distribution of the Asian American Population in Manhattan

Population in 2000

- 0
- 1 - 99
- 100 - 249
- 250 - 499
- 500 - 999
- 1000 - 2499
- 2500 - 4999
- 5000 +
- Landmarks (With No Population)

Produced by the Asian American Federation of New York.
Source: 2000 U.S. Census Bureau Summary File One.
"Single Race Alone or in Combination" Category.
Nearly half of Asian Americans in Manhattan have limited English proficiency.

Footnotes
1 All numbers are from the Summary Files (SF) One, Two, Three and Four of the U.S. census. However, SF One and SF Two refer to information collected from a 100 percent U.S. population survey whereas SF Three and Four data represent results from a sample survey of 1 in 6 Americans.
2 Rates and percentages for each data section are derived from the data universe related to the topic at hand. Therefore, population tallies for one particular topic will not necessarily correspond with those for another topic.
3 In 2000, Chinese population numbers did not include the Taiwanese population.
4 The U.S. Census Bureau uses “Asian Indian” to mean people indicating their race as Asian Indian, Bengalese, Bharat, Dravidian, East Indian or Goanese. This profile uses “Indian” for this population group, based on the population’s preference.
5 Based on “Asian Alone” categories, the five largest Asian groups in Manhattan in 2000 were Chinese (86,085), Indians (14,630), Japanese (14,325), Koreans (10,848) and Filipinos (8,654).
6 Based on “Asian Alone” categories, the five Asian groups with the highest growth rates percentage-wise were Taiwanese (116 percent), Hmong (100 percent), Indians (98 percent), Koreans (75 percent) and Vietnamese (74 percent).
7 For education tabulations, adults were defined as individuals age 25 and older.
8 Limited English Proficiency in this profile refers to individuals speaking English “well,” “not well” or “not at all.”
9 Household income refers to the income of all occupants of a housing unit. Family income refers to the earnings of a group of two or more people (one of whom is the householder) related by birth, marriage or adoption and residing together.
10 In the 2000 census, families and individuals were classified as below the poverty line if their total family income or unrelated individual income was less than the poverty threshold specified for the applicable family size, age of householder, and number of related children younger than 18 present in 1999. For these thresholds, please see http://www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/threshld/thresh99.html.

Technical Note

Race Categories
The 2000 census was the first decennial census in which respondents were allowed to mark more than one race. As a consequence, Census 2000 race information is far more complicated than such data from previous censuses. For example, 2000 data include results for single-race as well as multiple-race responses. “Asian Alone” corresponds to the respondents who reported exactly one Asian group and no other race category. “Alone” should be considered the minimum population size in any analysis that uses Census 2000 data. To be as inclusive as possible, this profile uses “Asian Alone or in Any Combination” numbers.

“Alone or in Any Combination” corresponds to the responses (not respondents) that included the selected Asian group, either alone or in any combination with other Asian groups or other race categories. If a respondent selected an Asian group and another racial group (e.g., Korean and black), that individual, while excluded from the “Asian Alone” count, was tallied in the “Alone or in Any Combination” count for the Asian group and the other racial group. Hence, some overlap in the “In Combination” numbers occurred. “Alone or in Any Combination” should be considered the maximum population size in any analysis that uses Census 2000 data.

About This Profile
This is one of a series of population profiles prepared by the Asian American Federation of New York Census Information Center (CIC) to increase understanding of the rapidly-growing and diverse Asian American population in the New York metropolitan area.

The Asian American Federation of New York, a nonprofit leadership organization that works to advance the civic voice and quality of life of Asian Americans in the New York metropolitan area, was selected by the U.S. Census Bureau to operate the only Asian American-focused CIC in the Northeast. Established in 2000, the center provides census information, conducts data and policy analysis, and encourages census participation. Data citations from this profile should include the following acknowledgment: “Data derived from analysis by the Asian American Federation Census Information Center.”

For More Information
For more information regarding this profile, please contact the data manager, Asian American Federation of New York Census Information Center, at (212) 344-5878, ext. 19 or cic@aafny.org, or visit www.aafny.org/cic/.

Funding support for this profile series has been provided generously by the Citigroup Foundation and the C.J. Huang Foundation.

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5/05

Asian American Federation of New York
120 Wall Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10005
Tel.: (212) 344-5878 | Fax: (212) 344-5636
E-mail: info@aafny.org | Website: www.aafny.org