

# The Foreign-Born Population in the United States: 2010

Issued May 2012

## American Community Survey Reports

ACS-19

### INTRODUCTION

This report presents a portrait of the foreign-born population in the United States. The U.S. Census Bureau uses the term *foreign born* to refer to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth. This includes naturalized citizens, lawful permanent residents, temporary migrants (such as foreign students), humanitarian migrants (such as refugees), and undocumented migrants. The term *native born* refers to anyone born in the United States, Puerto Rico, or a U.S. Island Area, or those born abroad of at least one U.S. citizen parent.<sup>1</sup>

Information on the demographic, social, economic, and housing characteristics presented in this report is based on data from the 2010 American Community Survey (ACS).<sup>2</sup>

In this report, data on the foreign born are presented by broad region of birth, including Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Northern America, and Oceania. More detail is shown for Latin America and the Caribbean—including Mexico, Other Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. For this report, the category Other Central America excludes Mexico but includes the remaining countries of Central America.<sup>3</sup> In the graphs displaying information by nativity and place

of birth, data on the total, native, and foreign-born populations as well as the regions of birth are shown in light green, while the areas within Latin America are shown in light blue.<sup>4</sup>

Data are shown for population (e.g., age, marital status, occupation) and household (e.g., size, type, income) characteristics. A household is a person or a group of people who occupy a housing unit as their current residence. College residence halls, military barracks, correctional facilities, and other group quarters are not included. A householder is usually the person, or one of the people, in whose name the home is owned, being bought, or rented. A family household consists of a householder and one or more people living together in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. It may also include people unrelated to the householder. The nativity status and place of birth of a household are determined by the nativity status and place of birth of the householder. A household with a foreign-born householder may also contain native residents, and a household with a native householder may also contain foreign-born residents.

The 2010 ACS estimated the number of foreign born in the United States to be

By  
Elizabeth M. Grieco,  
Yesenia D. Acosta,  
G. Patricia de la Cruz,  
Christine Gambino,  
Thomas Gryn,  
Luke J. Larsen,  
Edward N. Trevelyan,  
and  
Nathan P. Walters

<sup>1</sup> The terms *native* and *native born* are used interchangeably in this report. U.S. Island Areas include Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

<sup>2</sup> Additional information about the ACS is available on the Census Bureau's Web site at [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/).

<sup>3</sup> Other Central America includes the countries of Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama.

<sup>4</sup> The term *Latin America and the Caribbean* includes countries in Central and South America and the Caribbean. Throughout the remainder of this report, the term *Latin America* is used to refer to all of these areas. A complete list of the countries included in the regions and subregions is available on the Census Bureau's Web site at [www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/data\\_documentation/CodeLists/Foreign\\_Country\\_Code\\_List\\_062310.pdf](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/data_documentation/CodeLists/Foreign_Country_Code_List_062310.pdf).

Table 1.

**Population by Nativity Status and Citizenship: 2010**

(Numbers in thousands. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))

Nativity and citizenship	Population <sup>1</sup>	Margin of error <sup>2</sup> (±)	Percent	Margin of error <sup>2</sup> (±)
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>309,350</b>	<b>(X)</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>(X)</b>
Native .....	269,394	115	87.1	—
Foreign born .....	39,956	115	12.9	—
Naturalized citizen .....	17,476	82	5.6	—
Noncitizen .....	22,480	120	7.3	—

(X) Not applicable.

— Represents or rounds to zero.

<sup>1</sup> Population as of July 1, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. A margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error in relation to the size of the estimates, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90 percent confidence interval.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

Table 2.

**Foreign-Born Population by Region of Birth: 2010**

(Numbers in thousands. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))

Region of birth	Population	Margin of error <sup>1</sup> (±)	Percent	Margin of error <sup>1</sup> (±)
<b>Total</b> <sup>2</sup> .....	<b>39,956</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>(X)</b>
Africa .....	1,607	33	4.0	0.1
Asia .....	11,284	47	28.2	0.1
Europe .....	4,817	44	12.1	0.1
Latin America and the Caribbean .....	21,224	90	53.1	0.1
Mexico .....	11,711	83	29.3	0.2
Other Central America .....	3,053	46	7.6	0.1
South America .....	2,730	42	6.8	0.1
Caribbean .....	3,731	42	9.3	0.1
Northern America .....	807	16	2.0	—
Oceania .....	217	10	0.5	—

(X) Not applicable.

— Represents or rounds to zero.

<sup>1</sup> Data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. A margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error in relation to the size of the estimates, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90 percent confidence interval.

<sup>2</sup> Excludes 181 persons who reported they were born at sea.

Note: Percentages do not sum to 100.0 due to rounding.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

nearly 40 million, or 13 percent of the total population (Table 1).<sup>5</sup>

The foreign-born population from Latin America was the largest region-of-birth group, accounting for over half (53 percent) of all foreign born (Table 2). By comparison, 28 percent of the foreign born were born in Asia, 12 percent in Europe, 4 percent in Africa, 2 percent in Northern America, and less than 1 percent in Oceania.<sup>6</sup> Among the 21.2 million foreign born from Latin America, 11.7 million, or over half (55 percent), were born in Mexico. Of the total foreign-born population, 29 percent were born in Mexico.

<sup>5</sup> This report discusses data about residents of the United States, including the 50 states and the District of Columbia; it does not include data about residents of Puerto Rico. Population totals shown in this report are as of July 1, 2010.

<sup>6</sup> The majority of the foreign born from Northern America were from Canada (99 percent). About two-thirds of the foreign born from Oceania were from Australia and New Zealand (48 percent) and Fiji (18 percent).

---

## SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS

### Geographic Distribution

While the foreign born resided in every state in 2010, over half lived in just four states: California, New York, Texas, and Florida. Over one-fourth of the total foreign-born population lived in California. California, New York, and New Jersey had the highest foreign-born proportions in their total populations. Over 1 in 4 residents of California and over 1 in 5 residents of New York and New Jersey were foreign born.

### Age, Marital Status, Fertility, and Household Size and Type

Half of the foreign born were between the ages of 18 and 44, compared with about one-third of the native born. The foreign born were also more likely than natives to be married and less likely to be divorced. Foreign-born households were, on average, larger than native households and were more

likely to be family households, to include children under 18, and to be multigenerational. Foreign-born women were more likely to have given birth in the last 12 months than native women.

### Year of Entry, Naturalization Rate, and English-Speaking Ability

Over half of the foreign born came to live in the United States since 1990, with about one-third entering the country in 2000 or later. Overall, about 2 in 5 foreign born were naturalized citizens. For those foreign born who entered before 1980, about 4 of 5 were naturalized citizens. About half of all foreign born either spoke only English at home or spoke a language other than English at home and spoke English “very well.”

### Educational Attainment, Labor Force Participation, and Occupation

Compared with the native-born population, the foreign born were

less likely to be high school graduates. However, over 2 in 3 foreign born were high school graduates and more than 1 in 4 aged 25 years and older attained at least a bachelor’s degree. The foreign born were more likely than the native born to be in the labor force. Over one-fourth of the foreign born worked in management, business, science, and art occupations with an additional one-fourth working in service occupations.

### Household Income, Health Insurance Coverage, and Percent in Poverty

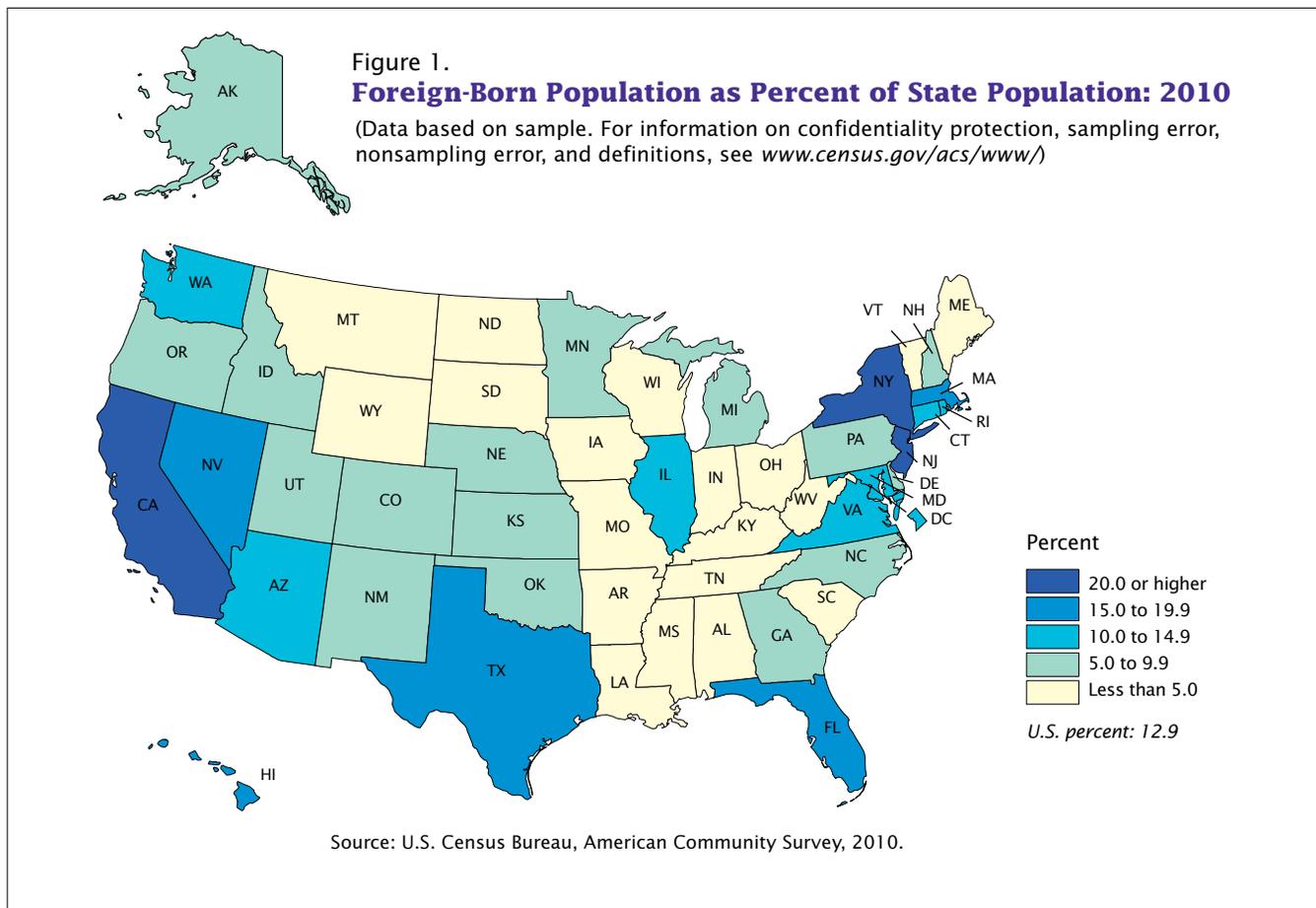
About two-thirds of the foreign born had some form of health insurance coverage and, of those, three-fourths were covered by a private insurer. The median income of foreign-born households was less than that of native households, and the foreign born were more likely than the native born to live in poverty.

**The foreign born represented 13 percent of the U.S. population. By state, the percentage of foreign born ranged from just over 1 percent in West Virginia to 27 percent in California.**

- The states with the highest percentage of foreign born in their populations were California (27 percent), New York (22 percent), and New Jersey (21 percent).
- In 14 states and the District of Columbia, the percentage of foreign born was equal to or greater than the national average of 13 percent. With the exception of Texas, Florida, and Illinois, these states were primarily in the western and northeastern parts of the country.
- With the exception of Illinois (14 percent), the percentage of foreign born in all states of the Midwest region was below 8 percent, including North Dakota and South Dakota, each with about 3 percent.<sup>7</sup>
- South Central states also tended to have relatively low proportions of foreign born in their populations. With the exception of Texas and Oklahoma, all states in this division had less than 5 percent foreign born.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> The Midwest region includes the states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

<sup>8</sup> The South Central Census division includes Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas.



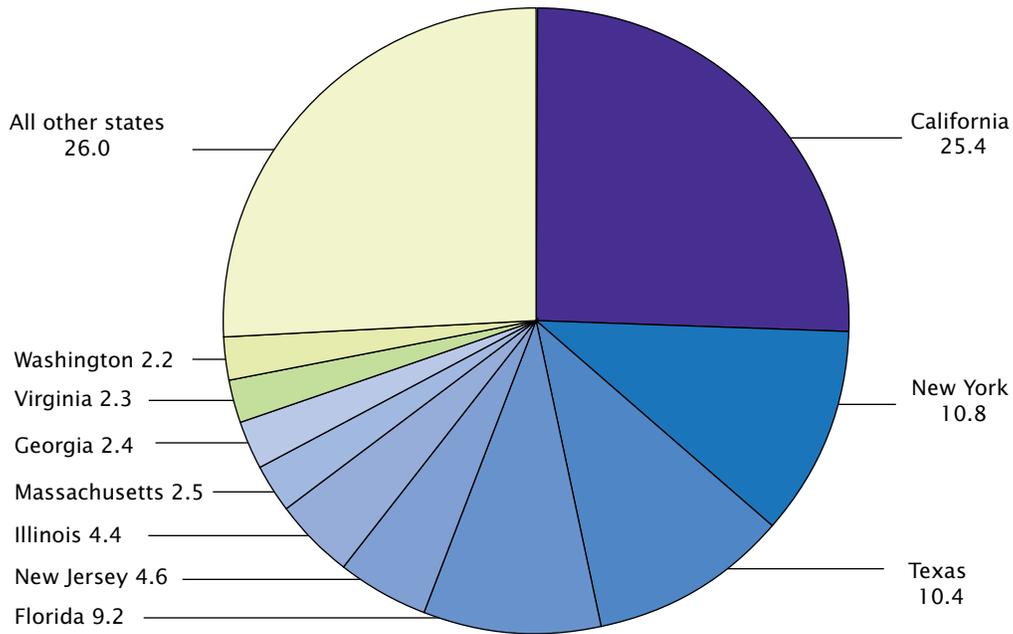
**One-fourth of the foreign-born population was concentrated in a single state, while over half was distributed among just four states.**

- In 2010, more than 1 in 4 foreign-born residents lived in California.
- New York, Texas, and Florida accounted for 30 percent of the foreign-born population. Including California, these four states were home to more than half of all foreign born.
- About 74 percent of all foreign born lived in 10 states. The remaining 26 percent was dispersed among 40 states and the District of Columbia, each with 2 percent or less of the foreign-born population.
- The four states with the largest proportions of the foreign-born population were also the four states with the largest proportions of the total population, regardless of nativity.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> In 2010, the states with the largest total populations included California (37.3 million), Texas (25.3 million), New York (19.4 million), and Florida (18.8 million). Together, their populations represented 33 percent of the total U.S. population.

Figure 2.  
**Foreign-Born Population by State: 2010**

(Percent distribution. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



Note: Percentages do not sum to 100.0 due to rounding.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

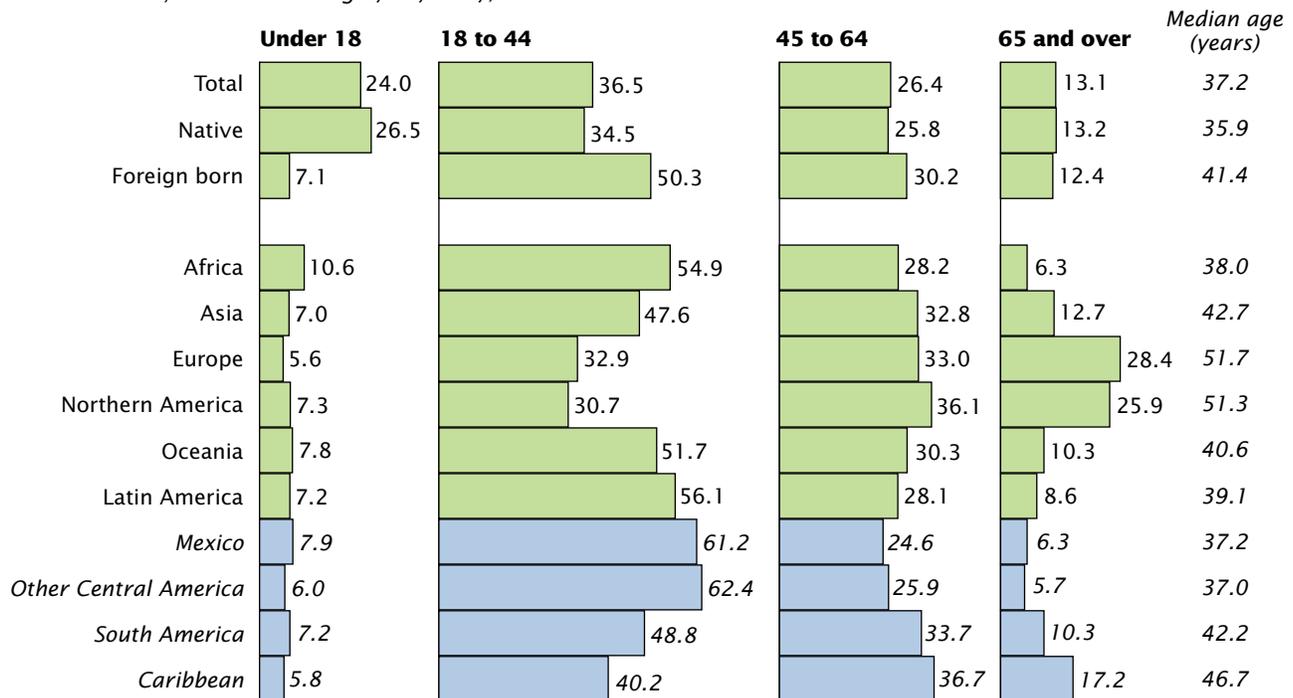
**Half of the foreign born were between the ages of 18 and 44, compared with about one-third of the native born.**

- Over 80 percent of the foreign-born population was between the ages of 18 to 64, including 50 percent between the ages of 18 to 44. Among the native born, 60 percent were between the ages of 18 to 64, including 35 percent between 18 and 44.
- The native population had a higher proportion under the age of 18 than the foreign-born population. About 27 percent of the native population was under age 18, compared with 7 percent of the foreign born. This difference reflects the fact that children of immigrants born in the United States are, by definition, native.
- Compared with the native born and foreign born from other regions, the proportion of people aged 65 and older was highest among those born in Europe. Over 28 percent of the population born in Europe was aged 65 and older.
- The foreign born had a median age of 41.4 years, about 5 years older than the median age of the native population, 35.9 years. The higher median age of the foreign-born population reflects the higher proportion of children in the native population than in the foreign-born population.
- Among the world regions of birth, the foreign-born population from Europe (51.7) and Northern America (51.3) had the highest median age, while those born in Africa (38.0) had the lowest median age.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> The estimates for Europe and Northern America are not statistically different.

Figure 3.  
**Selected Age Groups and Median Age: 2010**

(Percent distribution. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



Note: Some percentages do not sum to 100.0 due to rounding.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

**The percent male for the native population was comparable to that of the foreign born, but there was some variation in sex composition by age and region-of-birth groups.**

- About 49 percent of both the native and foreign-born populations were male. However, for those aged 18 to 44, the foreign born had a slightly higher proportion of males (51 percent) than the native born (50 percent).
- Among the regions of birth, the foreign born from Africa had the highest proportion of males (53 percent), while the foreign born from Europe and Northern America had the lowest (each 45 percent).<sup>11</sup> Among areas within Latin America,

<sup>11</sup> The estimates for Europe and Northern America are not statistically different.

Mexico had the highest proportion of males (54 percent), while the Caribbean and South America had the lowest (each 46 percent).<sup>12</sup>

- For the population aged 18 to 44, the foreign born from Latin America had the highest proportion of males (54 percent), while the foreign born from Europe and Asia (each 47 percent) were among the lowest.<sup>13</sup> Among the areas within Latin America, Other Central America

<sup>12</sup> The estimates for the Caribbean and South America are not statistically different.

<sup>13</sup> The estimates for Europe and Asia are not statistically different from Northern America.

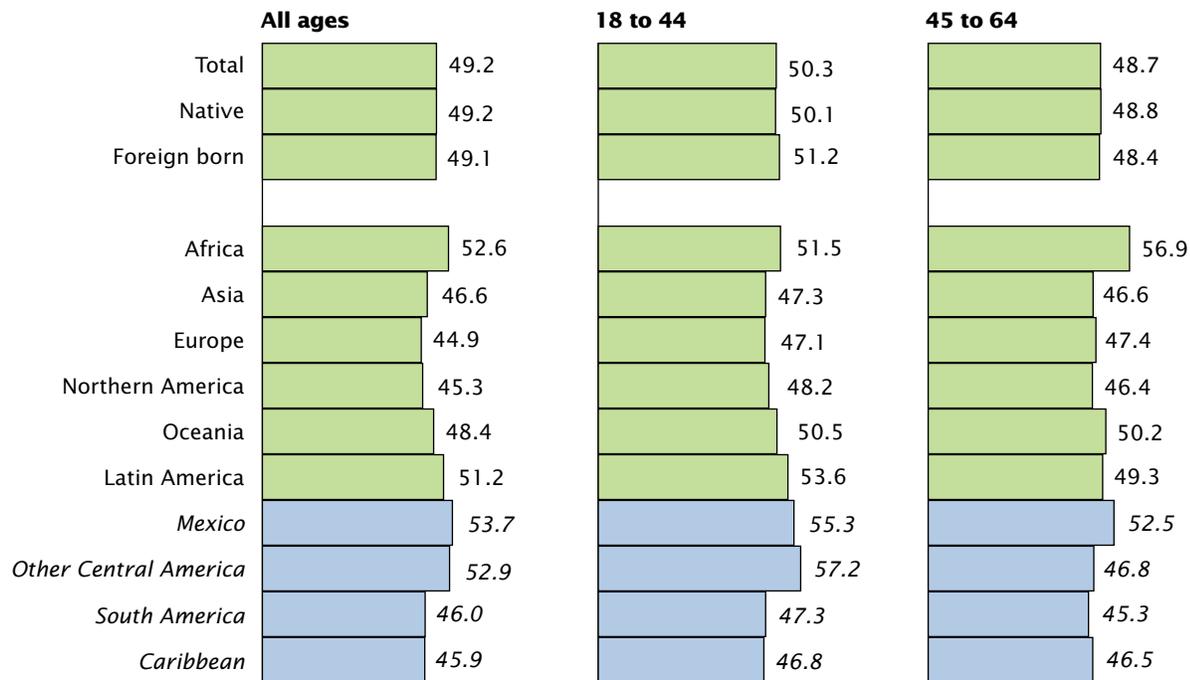
had the highest proportion of males (57 percent), while South America and the Caribbean (each 47 percent) had the lowest.<sup>14</sup>

- For the population aged 45 to 64, the foreign born from Africa had the highest proportion of males (57 percent). Among the areas within Latin America, Mexico had the highest proportion of males (53 percent) while South America (45 percent) had the lowest.

<sup>14</sup> The estimates for South America and the Caribbean are not statistically different.

**Figure 4.**  
**Percent Male: 2010**

(Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

**About three-fifths of the foreign born were married, compared with less than half of the native born.**

- In 2010, 58 percent of the foreign born aged 15 and older were married, while 26 percent were never married. By comparison, the native born aged 15 and older were less likely to be married (47 percent) and more likely to never have been married (33 percent). However, the native born were more likely to be separated or divorced (14 percent) than the foreign born (11 percent).
- Among the regions of birth, the foreign-born population from Asia had the highest proportion married (66 percent), while those born in Africa and Latin America (each 54 percent) had the lowest.
- Within Latin America, those born in Mexico were the most likely to be married (58 percent), while those born in the Caribbean were the most likely to be separated or divorced (18 percent). Among those born in Other Central America, about one-third (38 percent) were never married.

Figure 5.  
**Marital Status: 2010**

(Percent distribution of population 15 and older. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



Note: Some percentages do not sum to 100.0 due to rounding.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

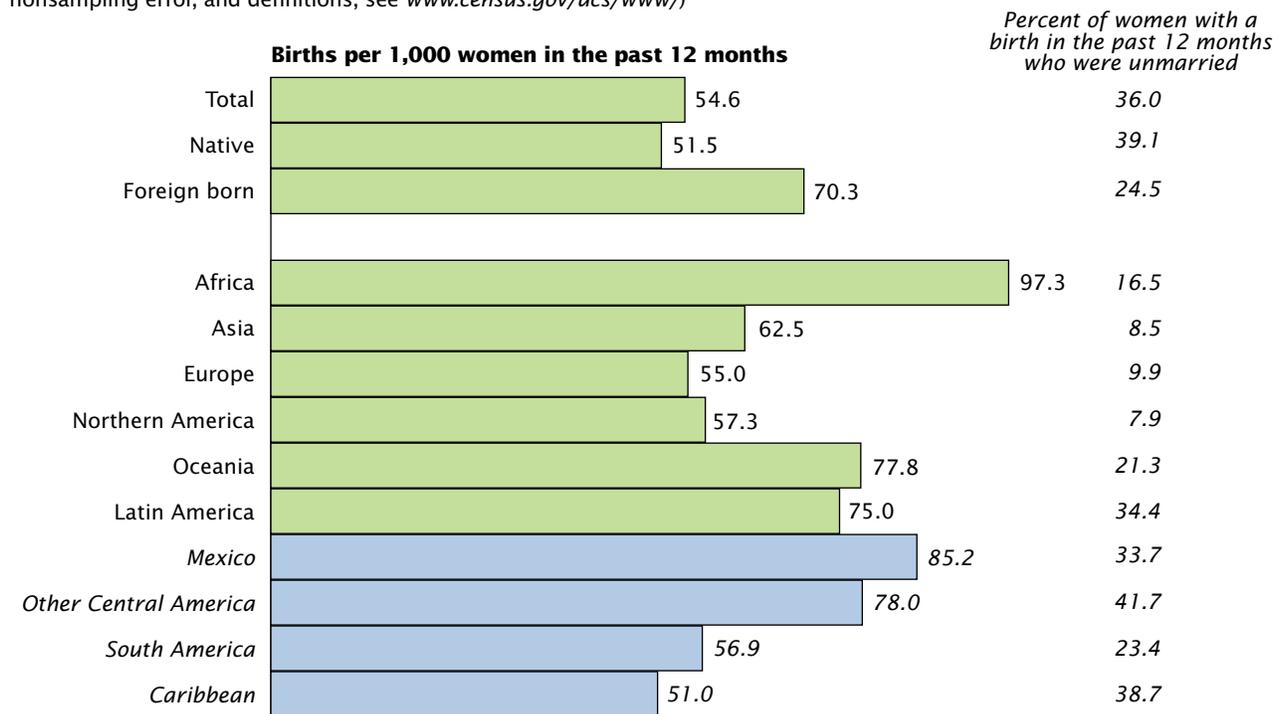
**Foreign-born women were more likely to have given birth in the past 12 months than native women.**

- Foreign-born women had a higher fertility rate than native women.<sup>15</sup> About 70 of every 1,000 foreign-born women aged 15 to 50 had given birth in the 12 months prior to being surveyed, compared with about 52 of every 1,000 native women aged 15 to 50.
- Among the regions of birth, foreign-born women aged 15 to 50 from Africa had the highest fertility rate, with 97 of every 1,000 women having given birth in the 12 months prior to being surveyed.
- About 85 of every 1,000 foreign-born women aged 15 to 50 from Mexico had given birth during the 12 months prior to being surveyed.
- About 39 percent of native women who had given birth in the past 12 months were unmarried, compared with 25 percent of foreign-born women.

<sup>15</sup> Of every 1,000 women aged 15 to 50, the number who had given birth in the 12 months preceding the date of the survey, whether in 2009 or 2010.

Figure 6.  
**Fertility: 2009–2010**

(Based on women aged 15 to 50 years. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



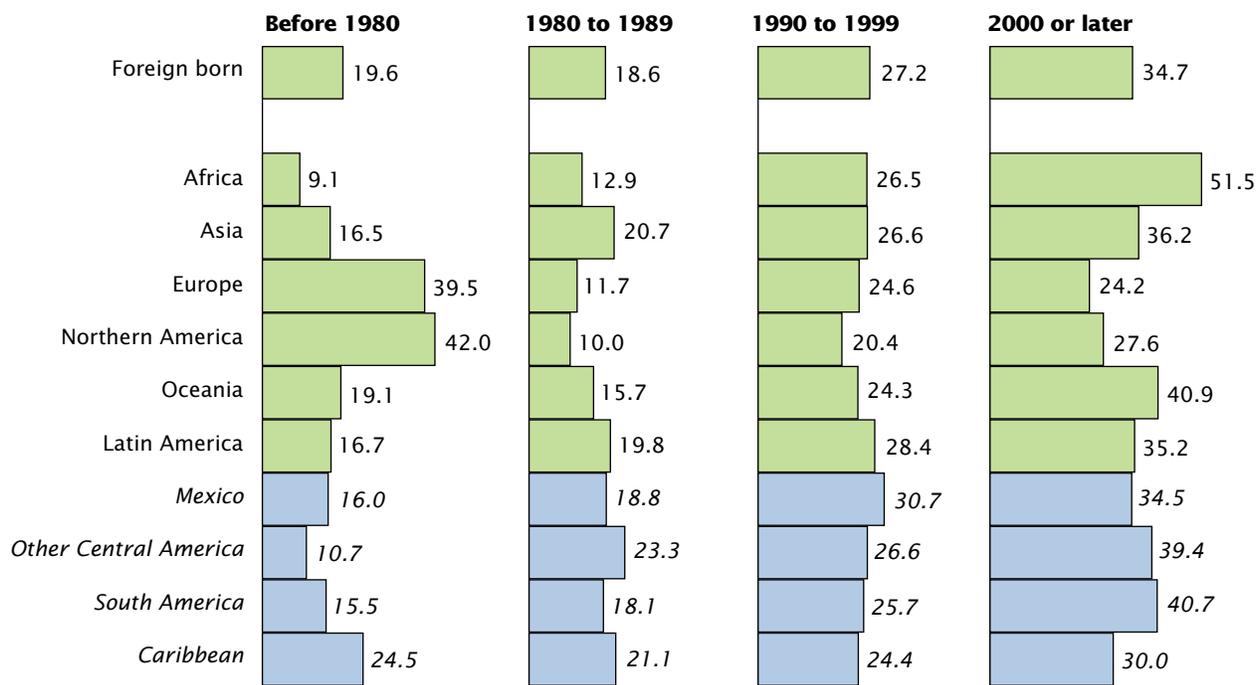
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

**Over one-third of the foreign-born population came to live in the United States in 2000 or later.**

- About two-thirds (62 percent) of the foreign born came to live in the United States in 1990 or later, including over one-third (35 percent) who entered in 2000 or later.
- The majority (78 percent) of the foreign-born population from Africa entered in 1990 or later, including 52 percent who entered in 2000 or later. By comparison, over half of the foreign born from Northern America and Europe entered before 1990.
- About 2 of every 5 foreign born from South America (41 percent) and Other Central America (39 percent) entered the United States in 2000 or later.

Figure 7.  
**Period of Entry: 2010**

(Percent distribution. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



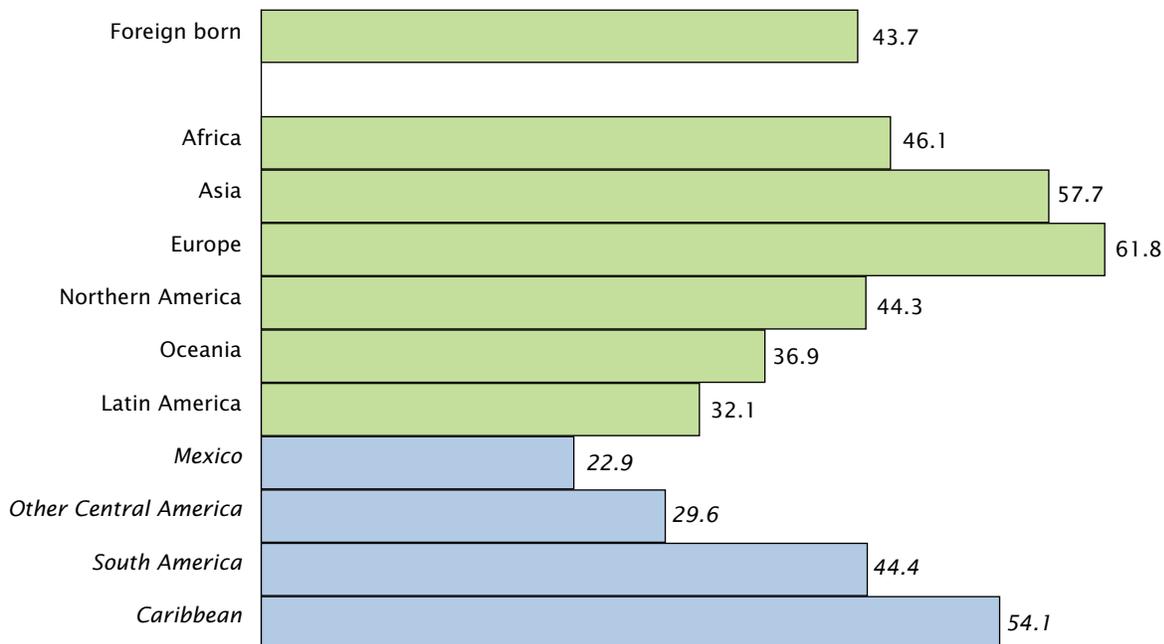
Note: Some percentages do not sum to 100.0 due to rounding.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

**Over 2 of every 5 foreign born were naturalized citizens.**

- As of 2010, 44 percent of all foreign born were naturalized citizens.
- The foreign born from Europe (62 percent) and Asia (58 percent) had the highest percent naturalized of all region-of-birth groups.
- The foreign born from Latin America had the lowest percent naturalized (32 percent) of all regions of birth.
- Of those born in the Caribbean, over half (54 percent) were naturalized citizens. By comparison, 44 percent of the foreign born from South America were naturalized citizens.
- About one-fourth of the foreign born from Mexico were naturalized citizens.

Figure 8.  
**Percent Naturalized: 2010**

(Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



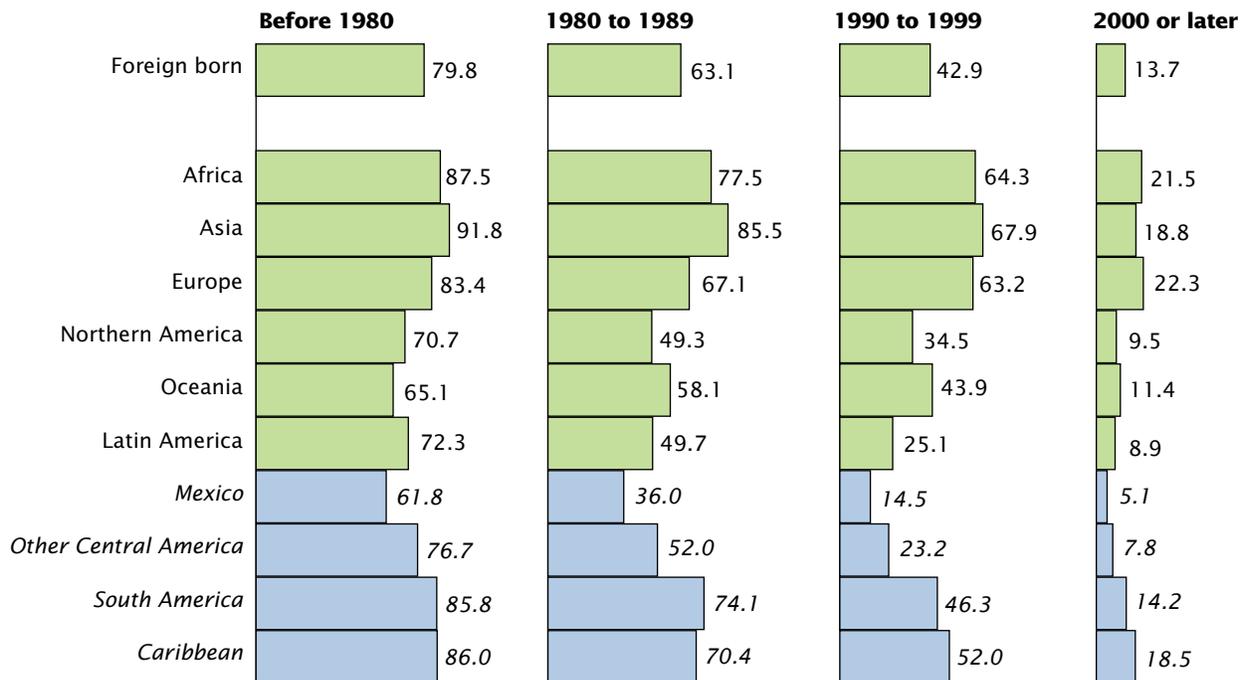
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

**Most foreign born who entered the United States before 1990 have obtained citizenship.**

- Of all foreign born who arrived before 1980, 80 percent were U.S. citizens in 2010. Sixty-three percent of the foreign born who arrived between 1980 and 1989 were naturalized citizens.
- Among the foreign-born population who were born in Asia and arrived before 1980, more than 90 percent were naturalized citizens. The foreign born from Asia also had the highest percent naturalized for those who arrived in the 1980-to-1989 and 1990-to-1999 periods.
- Among the foreign born from Latin America, the foreign born from the Caribbean and South America had the highest percent naturalized of those who arrived before 1980 (each about 86 percent), as well as between 1980 and 1989 (70 percent and 74 percent, respectively).
- The foreign born from Mexico had the lowest percent naturalized for all period-of-entry groups.

Figure 9.  
**Percent Naturalized by Period of Entry: 2010**

(Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

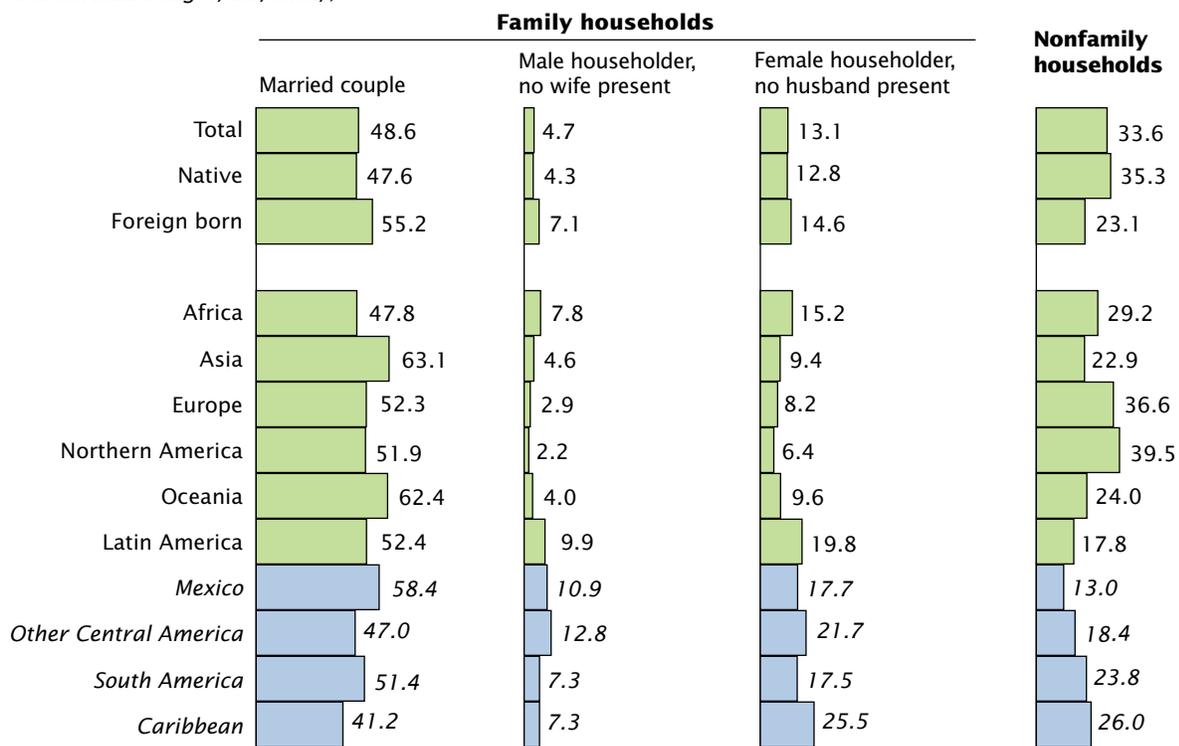
**Foreign-born households were more likely than native households to be family households.**

- More than three-fourths (77 percent) of foreign-born households and almost two-thirds (65 percent) of native households were family households.
- A higher proportion of foreign-born (55 percent) than native (48 percent) households were maintained by a married couple. Among the regions of birth, householders born in Asia (63 percent) and Oceania (62 percent) were the most likely to be in a married-couple household.<sup>16</sup> Within Latin America, households with a householder born in Mexico were the most likely to be maintained by a married couple (58 percent).
  - Compared with other regions, householders born in Latin America were more likely to be female with no husband present. This is especially true for Caribbean households, where 1 out of every 4 were families with a female householder with no husband present.
- Over one-third of households with a householder born in Northern America (40 percent) and Europe (37 percent) were nonfamily households, such as a person living alone or unrelated individuals living together.

<sup>16</sup> The estimates for Asia and Oceania are not statistically different.

Figure 10.  
**Household Type: 2010**

(Percent distribution. Households are classified by nativity and region of birth of the householder. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



Note: Some percentages do not sum to 100.0 due to rounding.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

**When compared with native households, foreign-born households were larger, included more children under 18 years old, and were more likely to be multigenerational.**

- The average size of foreign-born households (3.4 persons) was larger than that of native households (2.5 persons). One reason for this difference is that a higher proportion of foreign-born family households (62 percent) than native-born family households (47 percent) included children under the age of 18.
- Additionally, a higher proportion of foreign-born family households (10 percent) than native-born family households

(5 percent) were multigenerational households with three or more generations living together.<sup>17</sup>

- Households with a householder born in Northern America (38 percent) and Europe (39 percent) had the lowest proportion of family households with children under 18 years old.<sup>18</sup> Northern America was

<sup>17</sup> Multigenerational households are all family households, and contain three or more generations living together.

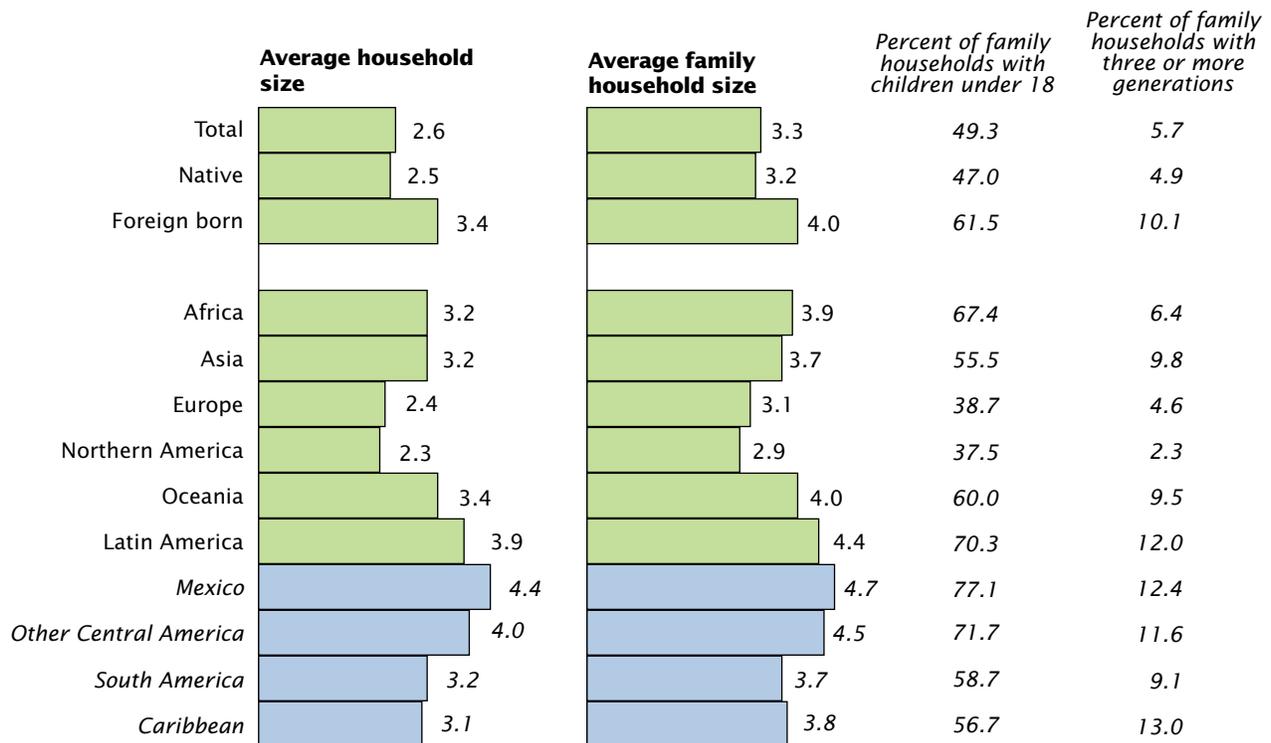
<sup>18</sup> The estimates for Northern America and Europe are not statistically different.

also the region of birth with the lowest proportion of multigenerational households (2 percent).

- Within Latin America, households with a householder born in Mexico had the largest average household size at 4.4 persons. About 77 percent of family households had at least one child less than 18 years of age, and over 12 percent of family households were multigenerational.

Figure 11.  
**Total and Family Households: 2010**

(Households are classified by nativity and region of birth of the householder. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



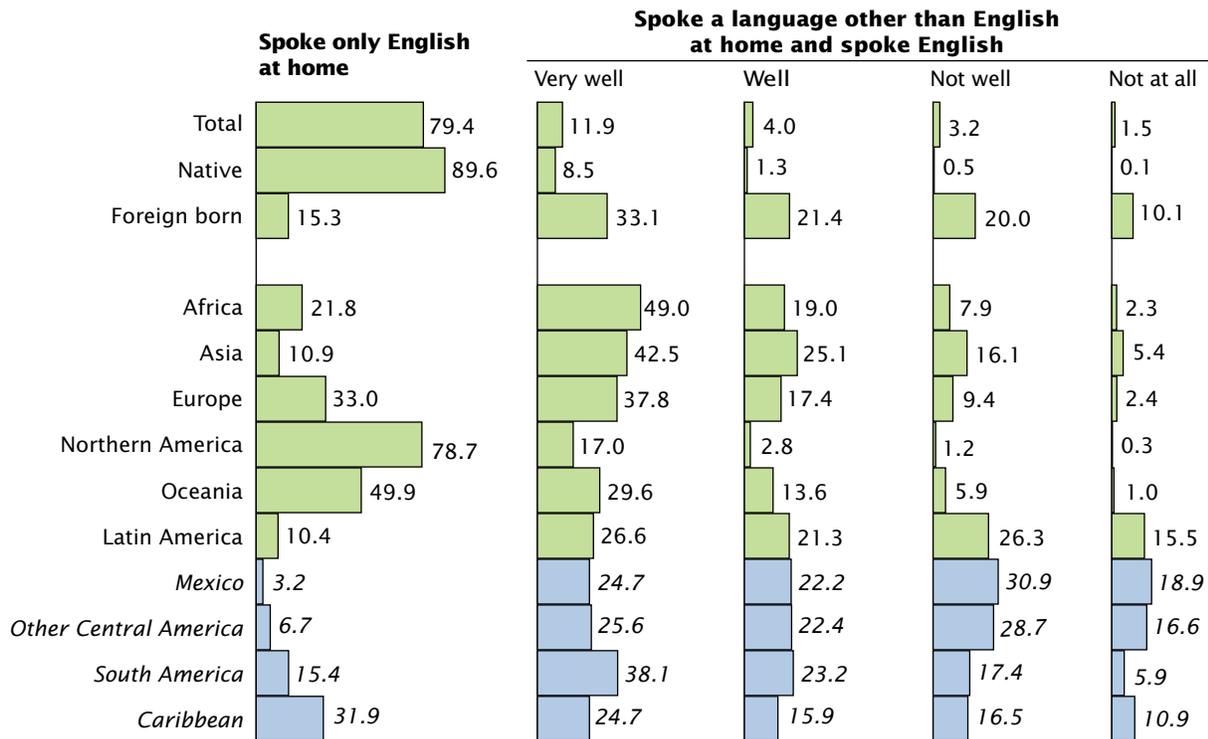
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

**Half of all foreign born either spoke only English at home or spoke a language other than English at home and spoke English “very well.”**

- About 85 percent of the foreign-born population spoke a language other than English at home, compared with about 10 percent of the native population.
- Fifteen percent of the foreign-born population spoke only English at home. An additional 33 percent spoke a language other than English at home and spoke English “very well.”
- One in ten foreign born did not speak English at all.
- At least 70 percent of the foreign-born population from Northern America, Oceania, Africa, and Europe spoke either only English at home or a language other than English at home and spoke English “very well,” compared with about 53 percent and 37 percent of the foreign-born population born in Asia and Latin America, respectively.
- Among the foreign-born population from Latin America, those born in the Caribbean were more likely to speak only English at home (32 percent) than the foreign born from South America (15 percent), Other Central America (7 percent), and Mexico (3 percent).
- Over half of the foreign born from the Caribbean and South America spoke either only English at home or a language other than English at home and spoke English “very well.”

Figure 12.  
**Language Spoken at Home and English-Speaking Ability: 2010**

(Percent distribution of population 5 and older. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



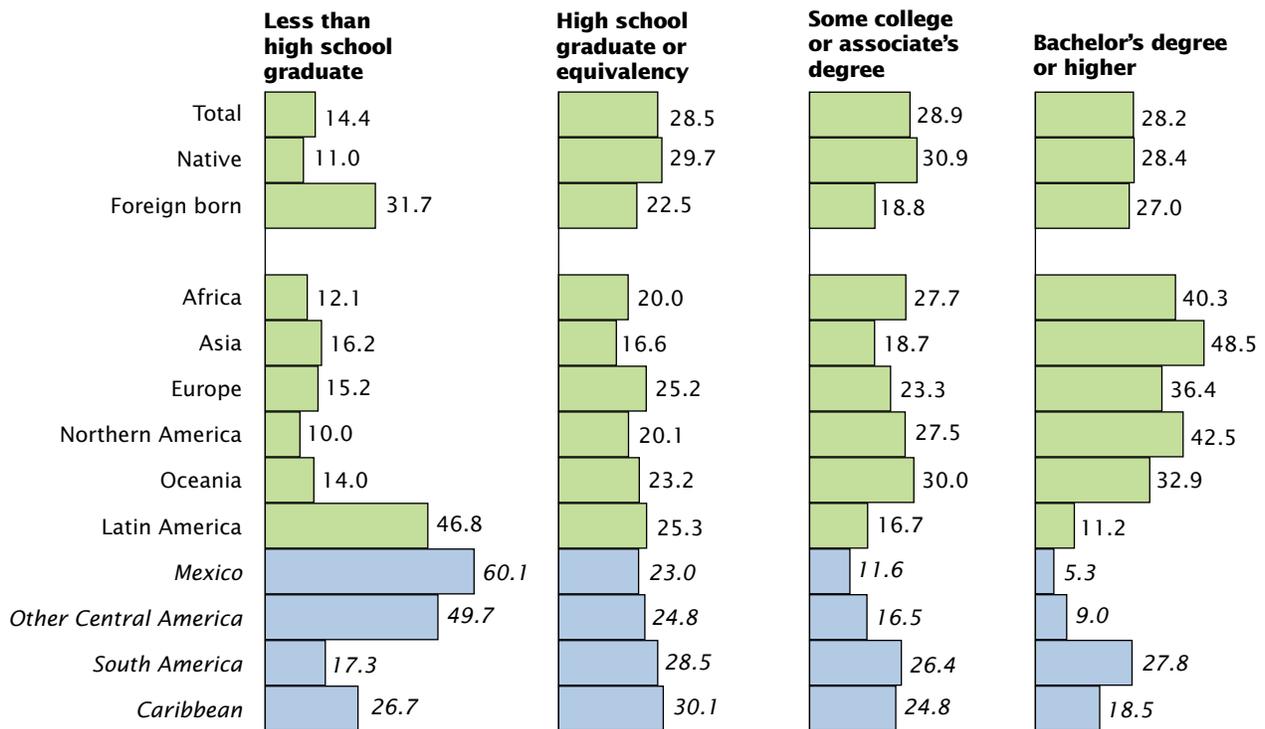
Note: Some percentages do not sum to 100.0 due to rounding.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

**About two-thirds of the foreign born were high school graduates or higher.**

- Among the foreign born aged 25 and older, 68 percent were high school graduates or higher, including 27 percent who had a bachelor's degree or higher. By comparison, 89 percent of the native born aged 25 and older were high school graduates, including 28 percent who had a bachelor's degree or higher.
- Over 80 percent of the foreign-born population born in Africa, Asia, Europe, Northern America, and Oceania were high school graduates or higher, compared with about 53 percent of those born in Latin America.
- Just under half (49 percent) of the foreign born from Asia completed a bachelor's degree or higher.
- About 40 percent of the foreign-born population born in Mexico and half (50 percent) born in Other Central America were high school graduates or higher, compared with 83 percent born in South America and 73 percent born in the Caribbean.

Figure 13.  
**Educational Attainment: 2010**

(Percent distribution of population 25 and older. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



Note: Some percentages do not sum to 100.0 due to rounding.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

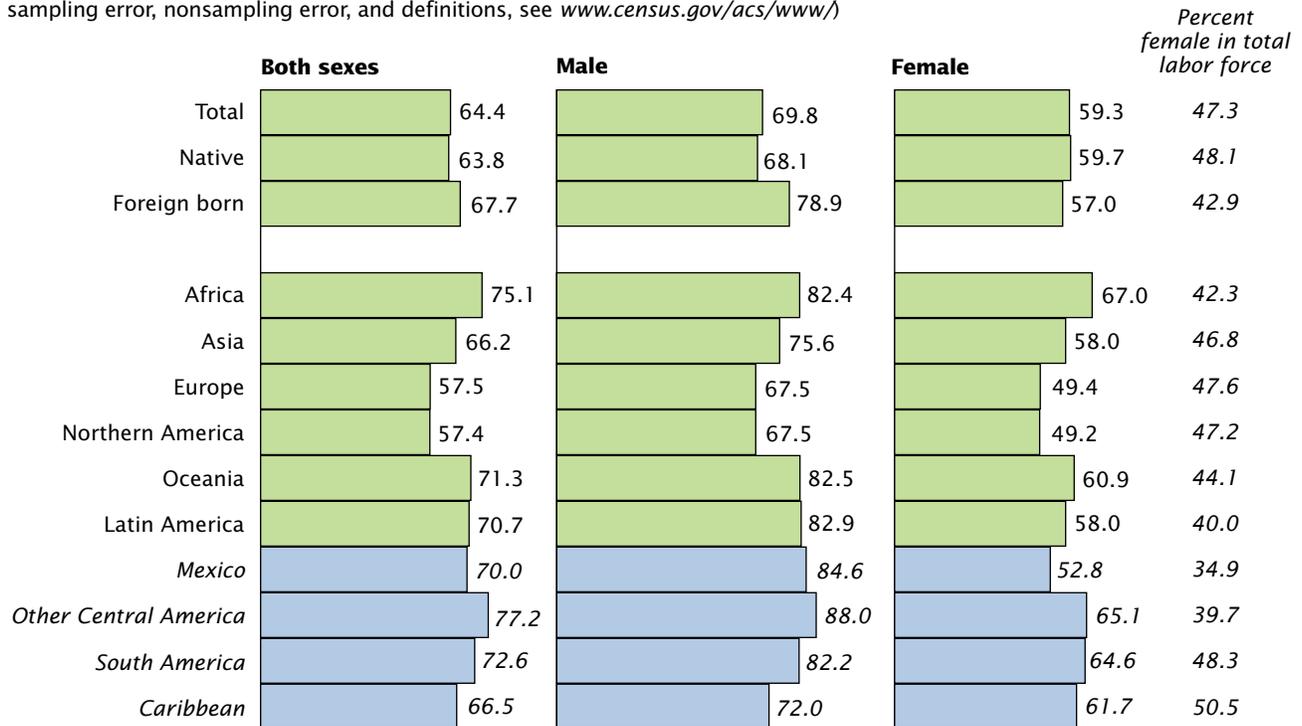
**The labor force participation rate of the foreign-born population was higher than that of the native born.**

- Of the foreign-born population aged 16 and older, 68 percent participated in the labor force. By comparison, 64 percent of the native population aged 16 and older participated in the labor force.
- Foreign-born males (79 percent) were more likely to be in the labor force than native males (68 percent). In contrast, native females (60 percent) were more likely to have participated in the labor force compared with foreign-born females (57 percent).
- About 70 percent or more of the foreign born from Africa, Latin America, and Oceania were in the labor force. Over 80 percent of foreign-born males from these three regions participated in the labor force.
- Among the foreign born from Latin America, those born in Other Central America had the highest total (77 percent), foreign-born males (88 percent), and female (65 percent) labor force participation rate.<sup>19</sup>
- Forty-eight percent of the native labor force was female, compared with 43 percent of the foreign-born labor force. About half of the foreign-born labor force from the Caribbean was female.

<sup>19</sup> The estimate for Other Central America females is not statistically different from the estimate for South America females.

Figure 14.  
**Labor Force Participation: 2010**

(Percent of population 16 and older. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



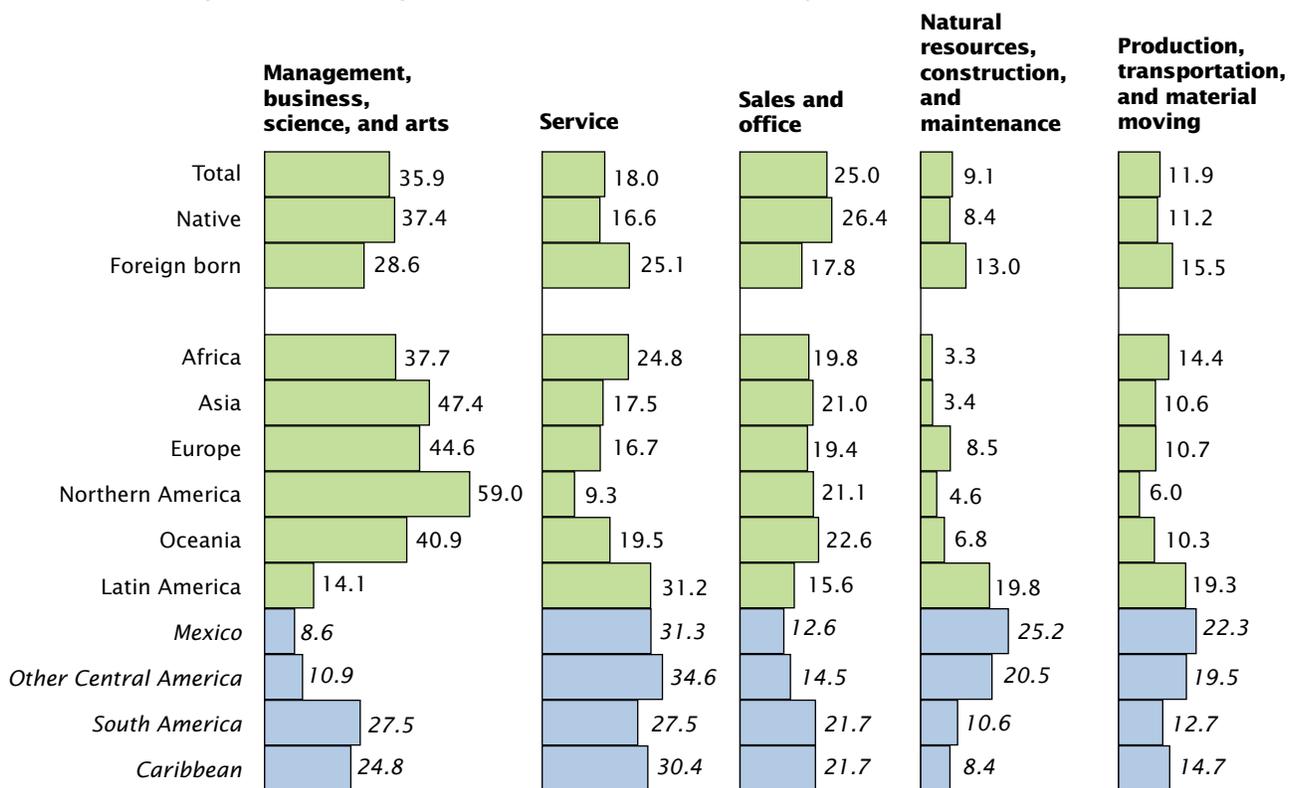
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

**The foreign born were more likely than the native born to work in service, construction, and production jobs.**

- Over half of the civilian employed foreign-born population aged 16 and older worked in either management, business, science, and arts occupations (29 percent) or service occupations (25 percent).
- Over one-third of the civilian employed native population aged 16 and older worked in management, business, science, and arts occupations (37 percent), with about one-fourth working in sales and office occupations (26 percent).
- Management, business, science, and arts occupations accounted for the largest share of the civilian employed foreign born aged 16 and older from Northern America (59 percent), Asia (47 percent), Europe (45 percent), Oceania (41 percent), and Africa (38 percent).
- The foreign born from Latin America were the least likely of all region-of-birth groups to work in management, business, science, and arts occupations (14 percent), but the most likely to work in service occupations (31 percent).
- Within Latin America, the foreign born from Mexico were the least likely to work in management, business, science, and arts occupations (9 percent).

Figure 15.  
**Occupation: 2010**

(Percent distribution of civilian employed population 16 and older. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



Note: Some percentages do not sum to 100.0 due to rounding.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

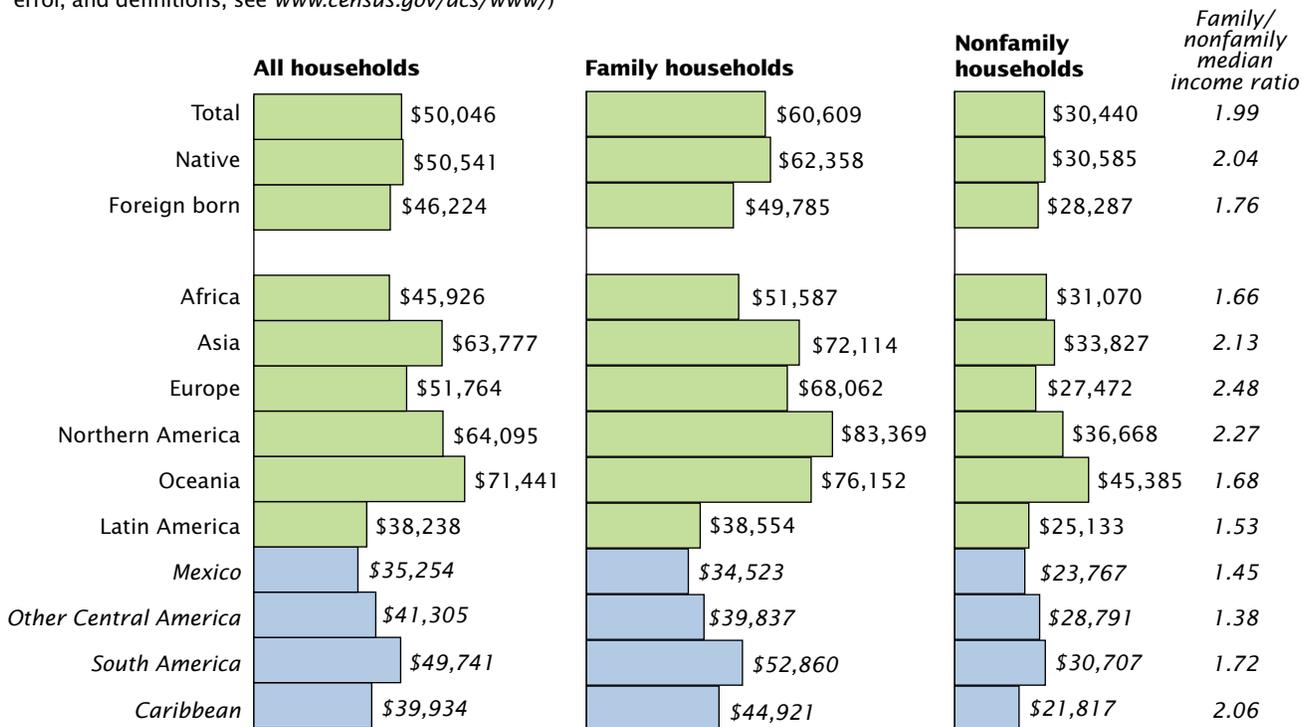
**The median income of foreign-born households was less than that of native households, regardless of household type.**

- The median household income of foreign-born households in the 12 months prior to being surveyed was \$46,224, compared with \$50,541 for native households. The difference in income was larger when focusing only on family households: the median income was \$62,358 for families with a native householder and \$49,785 for families with a foreign-born householder.
- The median income for households with a foreign-born householder born in Oceania was \$71,441, which exceeded the median income of the native household population and that of households with householders born in all other region-of-birth groups. However, among family households, the median income of families with a foreign-born householder from Northern America was the highest at \$83,369.
- The median income for households with a foreign-born householder born in Latin America was \$38,238. Considering the areas within Latin America, foreign-born households with a householder born in Mexico had the lowest median household income (\$35,254), while those with householders born in South America had the highest median household income (\$49,741).<sup>20</sup>
- Family households with a foreign-born householder from Europe had a median income (\$68,062) that was two-and-a-half times larger than corresponding nonfamily households (\$27,472), the highest such ratio among the region-of-birth groups.

<sup>20</sup> The estimates of median household income of all native households (\$50,541) and all households with a householder born in South America (\$49,741) are not statistically different.

Figure 16.  
**Median Household Income by Household Type: 2010**

(Household income in the past 12 months in 2010 inflation-adjusted dollars. Households are classified by nativity and region of birth of the householder. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

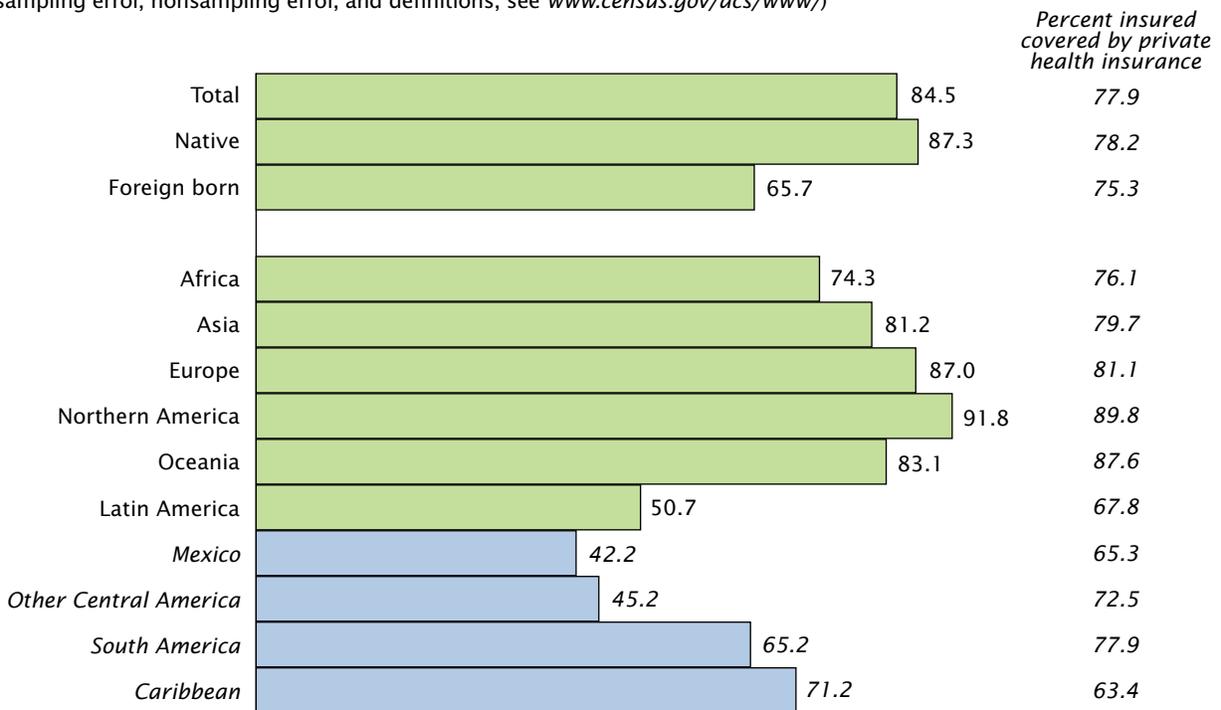
**The foreign born were less likely than the native born to have health insurance coverage and to be covered by a private insurer.**

- About 9 out of 10 native born (87 percent) had some form of health insurance coverage, compared with just under 2 out of 3 foreign born (66 percent). Among those who had health insurance, 78 percent of natives and 75 percent of the foreign born were covered by a private health insurance provider.
- Among the foreign born, those born in Latin America were least likely to be covered by some form of health insurance (51 percent). The foreign born from all other regions had health insurance coverage rates of about 74 percent or more. Those born in Latin America who did have health insurance also were least likely to be covered by a private insurer (68 percent).
- Among the foreign born from Latin America, those born in the Caribbean were most likely to have some form of health insurance coverage (71 percent). However, the foreign born from the Caribbean who did have health insurance were less likely to be covered by a private insurer (63 percent) than those born in any other area within Latin America.

Figure 17.

**Percent of Population With Health Insurance Coverage: 2010**

(Based on the civilian noninstitutionalized population. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

**The poverty rate was higher for the foreign born than for the native born.**

- About 19 percent of the foreign born were living below the poverty level in the 12 months prior to being surveyed, compared with about 15 percent of the native born.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Following the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Statistical Policy Directive 14, poverty status is determined by comparing annual income to a set of dollar values called thresholds that vary by family size, number of children, and age of householder. If a family's before tax money income is less than the dollar value of its threshold, then that family and every individual in it are considered to be in poverty. For example, the poverty threshold for a family of three with one child under the age of 18 was \$17,268 in 2009. Because the ACS is a continuous survey and income is reported for the previous 12 months, the appropriate poverty threshold for each family is determined by multiplying the base-year threshold by the average of monthly CPI values for the 12 months preceding the survey month. Poverty status is determined for all people except institutionalized people, people in military group quarters, people in college dormitories, and unrelated individuals under 15 years old. For more information, see "How Poverty Is Calculated in the ACS" at [www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/methods/definitions.html](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/methods/definitions.html).

- Among the regions of birth, the poverty rate was highest for the foreign-born population from Latin America (24 percent) and Africa (21 percent). Within Latin America, the poverty rate was highest for the foreign-born population born in Mexico (28 percent).
- About 31 percent of foreign-born children (under the age of 18) were living below the poverty level, compared with about 21 percent of native born. About 39 percent of foreign-born children born in Latin America and 37 percent born in Africa were living in poverty.<sup>22</sup> Of foreign-born children born in Mexico, more than 2 in every 5 (46 percent) were living below the poverty

<sup>22</sup> The estimates for Latin America and Africa are not statistically different.

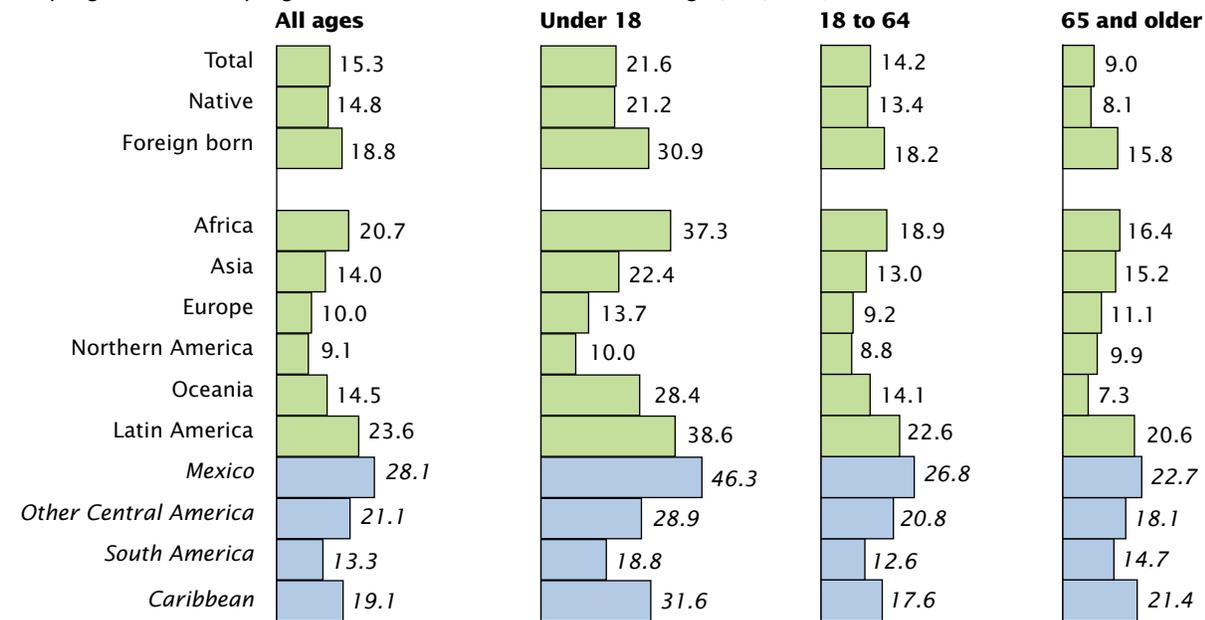
level. About 30 percent of foreign-born children from the Caribbean or Other Central America lived in poverty.<sup>23</sup>

- About 16 percent of foreign-born adults aged 65 and older were living below the poverty level, compared with about 8 percent of native born. Of foreign-born adults aged 65 and older born in Latin America, about 21 percent were living below the poverty level. More than 1 in 5 foreign-born adults aged 65 and older born in Mexico or the Caribbean lived in poverty.

<sup>23</sup> The estimate of the percent of foreign-born children from the Caribbean who lived in poverty (31.6 percent) is not statistically higher than the percent of foreign-born children from Other Central America who lived in poverty (28.9 percent).

**Figure 18.**  
**Poverty Rate: 2010**

(Percent of specific group in poverty in the past 12 months. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

---

## **SOURCE OF THE DATA AND ACCURACY OF THE ESTIMATES**

Data presented in this report are based on people and households that responded to the ACS in 2010. The resulting estimates are representative of the entire population. All comparisons presented in this report have taken sampling error into account and are significant at the 90 percent confidence level unless otherwise noted. Due to rounding, some details may not sum to totals. For information on sampling and estimation methods, confidentiality protection, and sampling and nonsampling errors, please see the “2010 ACS Accuracy of the Data” document located at [www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/data\\_documentation/Accuracy/2010ACS\\_Accuracy\\_of\\_Data.pdf](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/data_documentation/Accuracy/2010ACS_Accuracy_of_Data.pdf).

## **WHAT IS THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY?**

The American Community Survey (ACS) is a nationwide survey designed to provide communities with reliable and timely demographic, social, economic, and housing data for the nation, states, congressional districts, counties, places, and other localities every year. It has an annual sample size of about 3 million addresses across the United States and Puerto Rico and includes both housing units and group quarters (e.g., nursing facilities and prisons). The ACS is conducted in every county throughout the nation, and every municipio in Puerto Rico, where it is called the Puerto Rico Community Survey. Beginning in 2006, ACS data for 2005 were released for geographic areas with populations of 65,000 and greater. For information on the ACS sample design and other topics, visit [www.census.gov/acs/www](http://www.census.gov/acs/www).

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Additional information about the foreign-born population is available on the Census Bureau’s Web site at [www.census.gov/population/foreign/](http://www.census.gov/population/foreign/).

## **CONTACT**

For additional information on these topics, please call 1-866-758-1060 (toll free) or visit [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).

## **USER COMMENTS**

The Census Bureau welcomes the comments and advice of users of our data and reports. Please send comments and suggestions to:

Chief, Population Division  
U.S. Census Bureau  
Washington, DC 20233-8800