

APAs at a Glance

Asian Pacific American Demographic, Labor & Income Facts

Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics, Inc. (LEAP) • 327 East 2nd Street, Suite 226
Los Angeles, CA 90012 • (213) 485-1422 • <http://www.leap.org>

Asians are persons “having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent.”
(*Major groups in bold*)

Bangladeshi, Burmese, Bhutanese, Bornean, Cambodian, Celbesian, Cerem, Cernam, **Chinese, Filipino**, Hmong, **Indian**, Indochinese, Indonesian, Iwo-Jiman, **Japanese**, Javanese, **Korean**, Laotian, Malayan, Maldavian, Mongolian, Nepali, Okinawan, Pakistani, Sikkim, Singaporean, Sri Lankan, Taiwanese, Thai, Tibetan, and **Vietnamese**.

Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders are persons “having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.” (*Major groups in bold*)

Bikini Islander, Carolinian, Cook Islander, Eniwetok Islander, **Fijian, Guamanian or Chamorro, Hawaiian**, Kosraean, Kwajalein Islander, New Caledonian, Northern Mariana Islander, Niuean, Nauruan, Maori, Marshallese, Marshall Islander, Melanesian, Micronesian, ni-Vanuatu, Palauan, Papua New Guinean, Polynesian, Ponapean, Saipanese, **Samoa**n, Solomon Islander, Tahitian, I-Kiribati, Tinian Islander, Tokelauan, **Tongan**, Trukese, Tuvaluan, and Yapese.

Southeast Asian generally means Cambodian, Hmong, Laotian, and Vietnamese.

South Asian generally means Asian Indian, Bangladeshi, Bhutanese, Nepalese, Pakistani, and Sri Lankan.

Demographics

The term “Asian Pacific American” is an artificial category created by the U.S. Census. The “APA heritage” draws from over 60 different countries of origin spanning a geographic area from as far west as Pakistan and as far east as Tahiti. *Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

The Asian Pacific American (APA) population has doubled each decade from 1.5 million in 1970, reaching 11 million in 2000. APAs will reach 20 million by the year 2020. Since 1990, the APA population has grown 41% -- faster than any other racial or ethnic group. *Source: LEAP Asian Pacific American Public Policy Institute, U.S. Census Bureau*

In 1999, the majority of APAs lived in the West (53%). 20% of APA residents lived in the South, 18% in the Northeast, and 10% in the

Midwest. (U.S. Census, 1999). 95% resided in metro areas (49% in suburbs, 46% in central cities). *Source: U.S. Department of Labor*

Los Angeles County, CA, was the U.S. county with the highest number of Asians Pacific Americans (1.2 million). Honolulu County, HI, was second (566,000), followed by Orange County, CA. (361,000), Santa Clara County (San Jose), CA. (359,000); and Queens County, NY (332,000). *Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

The states with the fastest-growing Asian Pacific American populations were Nevada (a 106 percent increase), Georgia (95 percent) and North Carolina (87 percent). *Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

In 1997, 24%, or 6.1 million, of the nation’s foreign-born residents were APAs. Also, 6 in 10 APAs were foreign-born. *Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

Labor and Income Facts

Asian American men born in the United States are 7 percent to 11 percent less likely to hold managerial jobs than White men with the same educational and experience level. *Source: U.S. Commission on Civil Rights*

Median income for Asian Americans with four years of college education is \$34,470 a year, compared with \$36,130 for Whites with the same educational attainment, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. *Source: U.S. Commission on Civil Rights*

While one-third of APA families had incomes of \$75,000 or more, one-fifth have incomes of less than \$25,000 in 1999. *Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

APAs had the highest median household income among the nation’s race groups in 1997 with \$45,249. However, because APA households were, on average, larger than White households (3.17 people versus 2.58 people), their estimated income per household member was lower than that of White household members (\$18,569 versus \$20,093). *Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

Between 1987 and 1996, the number of Asian Pacific American adults (18 and over) below the poverty level increased by 61 percent. *Source: Department of Labor*

APAs are more likely to be poor than non-Hispanic Whites. In 1998, 13% of APAs, or 1.4 million, were below the poverty line, versus 8% of Whites, or 15.8 million. *Source: Department of Labor*



growing leaders

© Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics, Inc. All Rights Reserved. No part of this material may be reproduced, in any form or by any means, without prior written permission from LEAP.