



Census Profile: New York City's Indian American Population

Asian American Federation of New York Census Information Center

Introduction

Using data from the 1990 and 2000 United States censuses, this profile outlines characteristics and trends among New York City's rapidly-growing Asian Indian population.¹ The U.S. Census Bureau defines as "Asian Indian" people who indicated their race as Asian Indian, Bengalese, Bharat, Dravidian, East Indian, or Goanese. This population group is also referred to and self-identified as "Indian American." That term and "Indian" also will be used in this profile.

Indian American Statistics at a Glance

Population	
2000 Alone or In-Combination Population in New York City	206,228
Queens (as a Percentage of NYC Population)	129,715 (63%)
Brooklyn	32,498 (16%)
The Bronx	19,305 (9%)
Manhattan	17,592 (9%)
Staten Island	7,118 (3%)
1990 Population	94,590
Population Growth from 1990 to 2000	118%
Immigration	
Foreign-Born Population	157,140
Foreign-Born Percentage of Total Population	77%
Educational Attainment (Adults 25 and Older)	
Number of Adults Without a High School Diploma	35,343
Percentage of Adults Without a High School Diploma	27%
Limited English Proficiency (Speaks English "Well," "Not Well," or "Not at All")	
Total Number	50,310
Percentage of Total Population	27%
Income	
Median Household Income	\$45,155
Median Family Income	\$46,084
Per Capita Income	\$18,473
Number of Households Earning Less Than \$20,000	12,577
Percentage of Households Earning Less Than \$20,000	21%
Number of Households Earning More Than \$100,000	9,384
Percentage of Households Earning More Than \$100,000	16%
Poverty	
Number of Individuals Living in Poverty	35,666
Percentage of Total Population Living in Poverty	18%
Number of Children (Under 18) Living in Poverty	11,749
Percentage of Children Living in Poverty	23%
Number of Elderly (65 and Older) Living in Poverty	1,518
Percentage of Elderly Living in Poverty	20%



74th Street in Jackson Heights, Queens

This demographic portrait presents statistics on population size, growth, immigration, citizenship status, educational attainment, English ability, income, poverty, and housing. Comparisons with New York City's total population will be used to provide perspective.²

Among notable traits, census data show tremendous growth in New York City's Indian population as it more than doubled from 1990 to 2000. In addition, compared with New York City residents overall, in 2000, the Indian population had higher post-secondary education levels, better English skills, higher median household and family incomes, and a lower child-poverty rate. However, Indians also had lower per capita income and substantially larger households.

Population

From 1990 to 2000, the Indian population in New York City jumped by 118 percent, from 94,590 to 206,228, far exceeding the city's overall 9 percent increase and the 71 percent expansion of the city's total Asian population. In raw numbers, the addition of 111,638 Indian New Yorkers represented the second-largest amount of growth among Asian groups in the city in the last decade.^{3,4}

The second-largest Asian group in New York City in 2000, Indians comprised nearly one-fourth (23 percent) of the city's Asian population – up from 19 percent in 1990, when Indians held the same position among Asian groups.

About 70 percent of the Indian population in New York State lived in New York City as of the last census. Within New York City, in 2000, the majority (63 percent, or 129,715) of Indians lived in Queens, followed by Brooklyn (with 16 percent, or 32,498); the Bronx (9 percent, or 19,305); Manhattan (9 percent, or 17,592); and Staten Island (3 percent, or 7,118).

By age, 26 percent (51,950) of the city's Indian residents were children (under 17); 71 percent (143,909) were working-age adults (18 to 64); and 4 percent (7,787) were senior citizens (65 and older).

Immigration and Citizenship

More than three-quarters (77 percent, or 157,240) of New York City's Indian population in 2000 was foreign-born, compared with about one-third (36 percent) of all city residents.

51 percent of Indian Americans in New York City have a post-secondary education.

Most Indian immigrants in New York City came to the United States in the last 20 years, fueling recent population growth. Specifically, 52 percent (81,955) immigrated from 1990 to March 2000; 35 percent (54,576) came to this country from 1980 to 1989; and 13 percent (20,709) arrived before 1980.

Of the city's Indian immigrants counted in the 2000 census, 32 percent (65,898) were naturalized citizens, compared with 45 percent of all New York City immigrants – a difference reflecting the extent of recent Indian immigration. In fact, Indians in the city obtained citizenship faster than foreign-born New Yorkers as a whole. According to 2000 census data, 61 percent of foreign-born Indian New Yorkers became citizens within 20 years, surpassing 31 percent of foreign-born residents city-wide.

Educational Attainment

Education levels for Indians in 2000 were similar to or, particularly at the upper end of the academic ladder, higher than those for the general New York City population.

Out of the city's total Indian adult population

(128,995), 27 percent (35,343) had not graduated from high school, compared with 28 percent of adults city-wide.⁵ Also, 13 percent (16,688) of all adult Indian New Yorkers had less than a ninth-grade education, compared with 15 percent of all city adults.

At the high end of the educational spectrum, 51 percent (66,255) of Indian adults in New York City had some form of post-secondary education, compared with 48 percent of all city adults. The vast majority of Indian children in the city (86 percent, or 35,688) were enrolled in the New York City public school system, exceeding 79 percent of all New York City children.

English Proficiency

New York City's Indian residents spoke English with slightly higher rates of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) compared with residents city-wide in 2000 – both overall and by age group.⁶

Twenty-seven percent (50,310) of the total Indian population spoke English “well,” “not well,” or “not at all,” compared with 24 percent of all city residents. In terms of age, the LEP classification applied to 28 percent (40,822) of Indian working-age adults (age 18 to 64) and 39 percent (3,004) of Indian senior citizens (65 and older), compared with 25 percent of working-age adults and 27 percent of senior citizens throughout the city.

Income

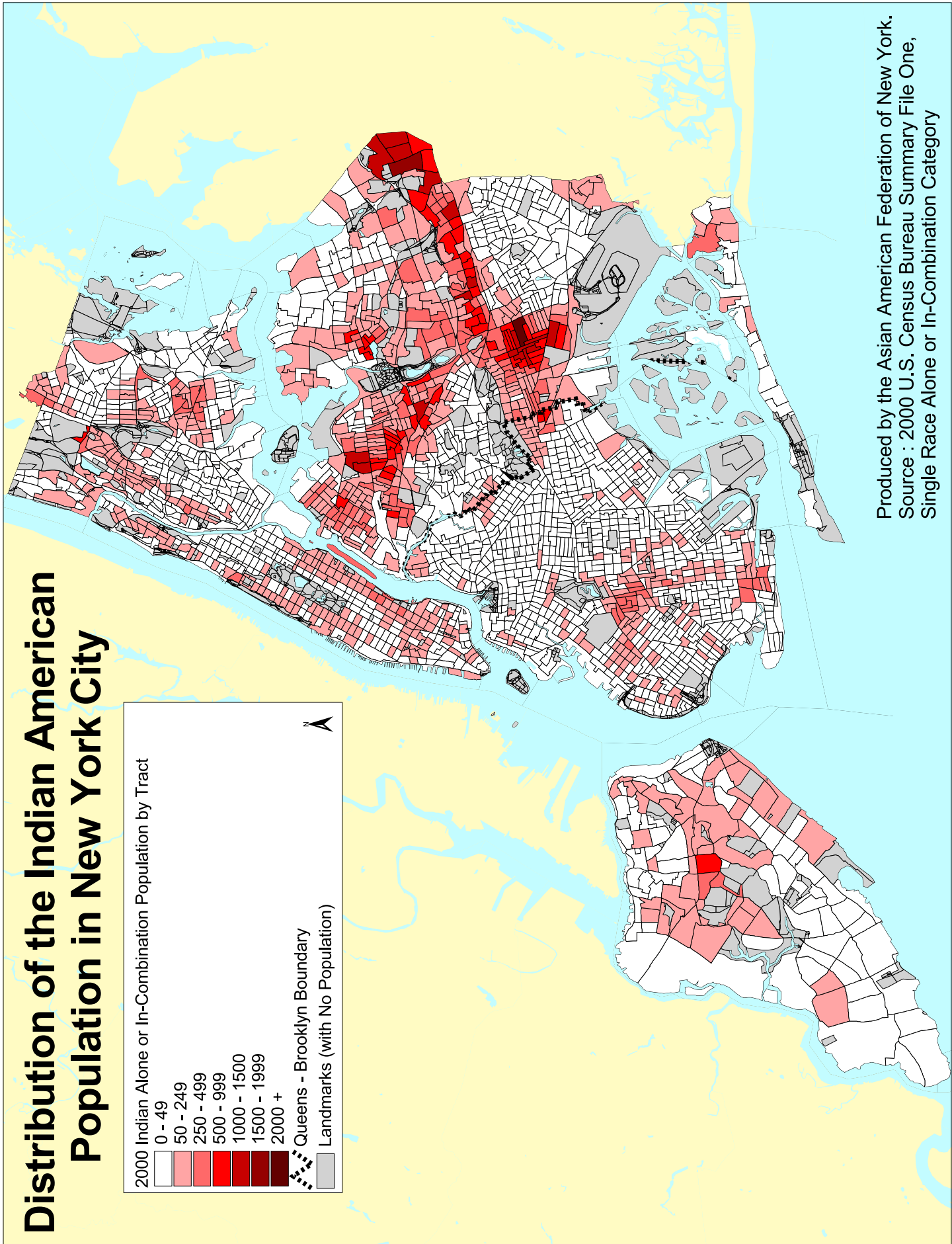
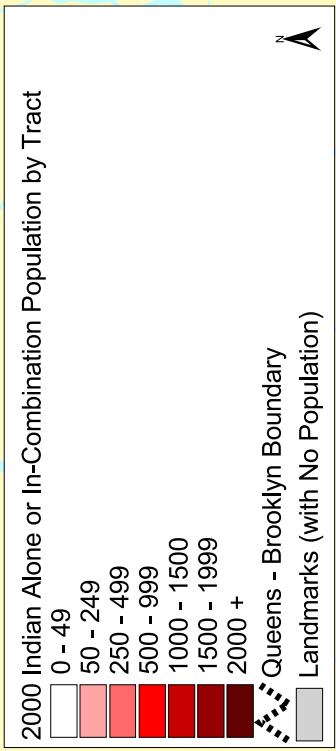
2000 census information illustrates two facets of income conditions for Indian New Yorkers. Indian median household income of \$45,155 and median family income of \$46,084 exceeded corresponding overall city figures of \$38,293 and \$41,887, respectively.⁷ However, Indian per capita income was \$18,473, less than \$22,402 city-wide. The disparity between Indian median household and family income on the one hand and Indian per capita income on the other hand partly reflects a larger average household size for Indians than for New Yorkers as a whole.

Poverty

Poverty rates for Indians in relation to the total New York City population were lower overall and for children but higher for the elderly as of the 2000 census.⁸

Among all Indians in the city, 18 percent (35,666)

Distribution of the Indian American Population in New York City



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

lived below the poverty line, compared with an overall New York City poverty rate of 21 percent. By age category, 23 percent (11,749) of the city's Indian children lived in poverty – fewer than in the city overall, which had a 30 percent child-poverty rate. Eighty-one percent (or 9,391) of the city's Indian children in poverty lived in two-parent families, compared with 34 percent of all city children in poverty. 20 percent (1,518) of Indian senior citizens lived in poverty, which is higher than the 18 percent poverty rate for senior citizens city-wide.

Housing

Indian New Yorkers in 2000 had an average household size of 3.41 people, much larger than that for the general New York City population (2.59). Higher occupancy of Indian homes also suggests the necessity-based existence of multiple rent-payers in a housing unit – a factor that could inflate household income artificially and signify overcrowding.

The majority of Indians in New York City lived in rented homes in 2000. According to the census, 65 percent of Indians in the city rented and 35 percent owned their homes, compared with 70 percent renters and 30 percent homeowners in the city overall.

Footnotes

¹ All numbers are from the Summary Files (SF) One, Two, Three and Four of the U.S. census. However, please note that SF One and SF Two refer to information collected from a 100 percent U.S. population survey whereas SF Three and Four data represent a sample survey.

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 When compared with the Asian Indian Alone category for the 1990 census, the population increased by 81 percent (76,309).

⁴ New York City's Chinese American population expanded by 141,413 from 1990 to 2000, constituting a 61 percent gain for this largest Asian group in the city, with 374,321 people in 2000.

⁵ For education tabulations, adults were defined as individuals age 25 and older.

⁶ "Limited English Proficiency," as used in the profile, refers to individuals who spoke English "well," "not well" or "not at all".

⁷ 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, as well as residing together.

⁸ Families and individuals are 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 under 18 present in 1999. For these thresholds, please see <http://www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/threshld/thresh99.html>.

Technical Notes

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 neighborhood, population and issue 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 collaboratively to meet the critical needs of Asian Americans in the New York metropolitan area, was selected by the U.S. Census Bureau to operate the only CIC in the New York area focused on serving the Asian American community. Established in 2000, the center provides census information, conducts data and policy analysis, and encourages census participation. For more information on the Federation, visit www.aafny.org.

Data citations from this profile should include the following acknowledgment: "Data derived from an analysis by the Asian American Federation Census Information Center."

For More Information

For more information regarding this profile, please contact the Asian American Federation of New York Census Information Center, at (212) 344-5878, x19 or cic@aafny.org, or visit www.aafny.org/cic/.

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