A Portrait of Foreign-Born Teachers in the United States

13% of the U.S. population is foreign born, but only 11% of all teachers in the U.S. are foreign born. Immigrants are underrepresented in most teaching categories, but overrepresented in postsecondary positions.

56% of all foreign-born teachers are naturalized citizens. Foreign-born postsecondary teachers are less likely to be naturalized citizens compared to all other foreign-born teachers.

The top five countries of origin among immigrant postsecondary teachers are China, India, Korea, Canada, and Mexico. The top five countries of origin among all other immigrant teachers are Mexico, India, Philippines, Canada, and Cuba.
A Portrait of Foreign-Born Teachers in the United States

Educational Attainment of Foreign-Born Teachers

Overall, immigrant teachers are more likely than native-born teachers to have a Master’s, professional, or doctoral degree (57% versus 49%).

Foreign-born Teachers by U.S. Census Bureau Division

The Pacific division has the highest share of foreign-born teachers as a percentage of the division’s total teacher population (16%). The Middle Atlantic division ranks second (13%).

Years in United States Among Foreign-Born Teachers

44% of foreign-born teachers arrived in the United States more than 20 years ago, but post-secondary teachers tend to be more recent arrivals; 31% arrived in the last five years.