Ethiopian Immigrants in the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area

2017 NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

- **43,079,900**: Approximate number of immigrants living in the United States (13% of the population)
- **222,900**: Approximate number of Ethiopian immigrants living in the United States (less than 1% of the immigrant population)
- **1,378,400**: Approximate number of immigrants living in the Washington, DC metro area (23% of the metro area’s population)
- **49,600**: Approximate number of Ethiopian immigrants living in the Washington, DC metro area (4% of the metro area’s immigrant population)
- **1st**: Rank of the DC metropolitan area among the 260 metropolitan areas in terms of the largest share of immigrants from Ethiopia living in the United States (22% of the Ethiopian immigrant population in U.S.)

Distribution of Ethiopian Immigrants in the Washington, DC Metro area

Figure 1 shows where Ethiopian immigrants live in the Washington, DC metro area as a proportion of the total immigrant population. Alexandria City (18%), the District of Columbia (6%), and Arlington County (6%) reported the highest percentages of foreign-born Ethiopians.

Ethiopian immigrants make up the smallest shares of the immigrant population in Calvert and Loudoun Counties, and Manassas City.

Figure 2. Naturalization Rate Among Immigrants

Naturalization Rate

Figure 2 indicates that immigrants from Ethiopia in the DC metro area are more likely to be naturalized U.S. citizens compared to all other immigrants in DC metro area. An estimated 55 percent of foreign-born Ethiopians are U.S. citizens compared to 49 percent of all other foreign born in the DC metro area.

All analysis in this fact sheet is based on source data from the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2013-2017 distributed through IPUMS-USA, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org, unless otherwise noted.

*Please note that the terms “immigrant” and “foreign born” are used interchangeably throughout this fact sheet. Foreign born refers to individuals who are not a U.S. citizen at birth or who were born outside the U.S., Puerto Rico or other U.S. territories and whose parents are not U.S. citizens. The foreign born may include naturalized U.S. citizens, Legal Permanent Residents, temporary residents, refugees and asylees, and others. Additionally, native born includes those who are U.S. citizens at birth, those born in the United States, Puerto Rico, or other U.S. territories, and those born abroad to a parent who is a U.S. citizen.*
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**Figure 3. Educational Attainment Among Immigrants**

Age 25+

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree Level</th>
<th>Foreign Born from Ethiopia (Est.Pop.=41,878)</th>
<th>All Other Foreign Born in the DC metro area (Est.Pop.=1,148,644)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College or Associate’s Degree</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s or Professional Degree or Doctoral Degree</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No High School Diploma</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Educational Attainment**

Figure 3 shows that Ethiopian immigrants in the DC metro area are more likely to have a high school degree or higher but also less likely to have a Bachelor’s degree or higher. An estimated 57 percent of foreign-born Ethiopians have a high school degree or some college compared to 36 percent of all other foreign born in the DC metro area.

**Figure 4. Year of Immigration Among Immigrants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Range</th>
<th>Foreign Born from Ethiopia in the DC metro area (Est.Pop.=48,803)</th>
<th>All Other Foreign Born in the DC metro area (Est.Pop.=1,304,761)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1920-1959</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-1979</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-1989</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-1999</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2009</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2015</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Year of Immigration**

Ethiopian immigrants in the DC metro area are much more likely to report arriving in the U.S. between 2000 and 2015 compared to all other foreign born, as shown in Figure 4. The median year of immigrants to the U.S. for foreign-born Ethiopians living in the DC metro area is 2004, which is five years later compared to all other immigrants in DC metro area (1999).
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Employment Status

Figure 5 shows that Ethiopian immigrants living in the DC metro reported slightly lower rates of employment compared to all other foreign born. Ninety four percent of Ethiopian immigrants are employed compared to 95 percent of all other immigrants in the DC metro area.

Self-employment

Figure 6 indicates that Ethiopian immigrants are slightly more likely to be self employed overall compared to all other foreign born in DC metro area. Nine percent of foreign born from Ethiopia living in the DC metro area are self-employed but not incorporated, which may indicate that they are independent contractors. In contrast, 6 percent of all other immigrants in the DC metro area are self-employed but not incorporated.

IMMIGRATION DATA ON DEMAND (iDod)

The iDod service is offered free of charge to help individuals and institutions examine the immigrant populations of their particular geography. Recipients of this data will see how immigrants provide vital contributions to the economy and society of the U.S. Ultimately, the goal of the iDod project is to create collaborations and connect people with data of interest on immigrant populations from their particular geographic region or economic sector.
The Institute for Immigration Research (IIR) works to refocus the immigration conversation among academics, policy-makers and the public, including the business community and media, by producing and disseminating unbiased and objective, multidisciplinary academic research related to immigrants and immigration to the United States. The Institute for Immigration Research is a joint venture between George Mason University and the Immigrant Learning Center, Inc. (ILC) of Malden, MA.

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