Afghan Immigrants in the United States
Does Not Include 2020-2021 Arrivals

2019 NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

- **44,032,500**: Approximate number of immigrants living in the U.S. (14% of the population)
- **101,900**: Approximate number of Afghan immigrants living in the United States (less than 1% of the immigrant population)
- **122%**: Estimated change in the number of Afghan immigrants living in the United States over the past 10 years
- **Virginia, California, Washington, Nebraska and Maryland** are the top five states in terms of foreign-born Afghans as percentage of total state population
- **Sacramento-Roseville-Arden-Arcade, CA, Stockton-Lodi, CA, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward, CA, Modesto, CA** are the top five metro areas in terms foreign-born Afghans as percentage of total metro area’s population

Distribution of Afghan Immigrants in the United States

Figure 1 shows where Afghan immigrants live in the United States. Sacramento County, CA (9,736), Fairfax County, VA (6,863), and Alameda County, CA (6,366) reported the largest numbers of foreign-born Afghans.

Sex Distribution

Figure 2 shows that Afghan immigrants are slightly more likely to be males than females. In contrast, all other foreign born are slightly more likely to be females than males.

All analysis in this fact sheet is based on source data from the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2015-2019 distributed through IPUMS-USA, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org, unless otherwise noted.

1 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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Age Distribution

Figure 3 shows that Afghan immigrants are more likely to be 34 years old or younger, and all other foreign born are much more likely to be 35 or older. Fifty-one percent of Afghan immigrants in the United States are 34 years old or younger compared to 30 percent of all other foreign-born individuals. The median age of foreign-born Afghans is 34 years old which is ten years younger compared to the median age of all other immigrants in the United States (44 years old).

![Age Distribution Chart](chart.png)

Figure 4. Age Distribution Among Afghan Immigrants

Educational Attainment

Figure 4 shows that Afghan immigrants are more likely to have a high school diploma, some college or a Bachelor’s degree, but slightly less likely to have a Master’s, Professional or Doctoral degree compared to all other foreign born in the United States.

![Educational Attainment Chart](chart.png)

Figure 4. Educational Attainment Among Afghan Immigrants

Age 25+

Educational Attainment

- Master’s or Professional or Doctoral Degree
- Bachelor’s Degree
- Some College or Associate’s Degree
- High School Diploma
- No High School Diploma
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Employment Status

Figure 5 shows that Afghan immigrants reported slightly lower rates of employment compared to all other foreign born in the United States. Ninety-two percent of Afghan immigrants are employed compared to 95 percent of all other immigrants in the United States.

Figure 5. Employment Status Among Afghan Immigrants
In the Labor Force, Age 16-65

Employment Status

92% 8%
Foreign Born from Afghanistan
(Est.Pop.=48,183)

95% 5%
All Other Foreign Born
(Est.Pop.=26,826,074)

Employed Unemployed

Figure 6. Year of Immigration

Year of Immigration

Afghan immigrants are much more likely to report arriving in the U.S. after 2010 compared to all other foreign born, as shown in Figure 6. The median year of immigration to the U.S. for foreign-born Afghans is 2009, which is much later compared to all other immigrants in the United States (1998). This data does not include Afghans who arrived after 2017.
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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