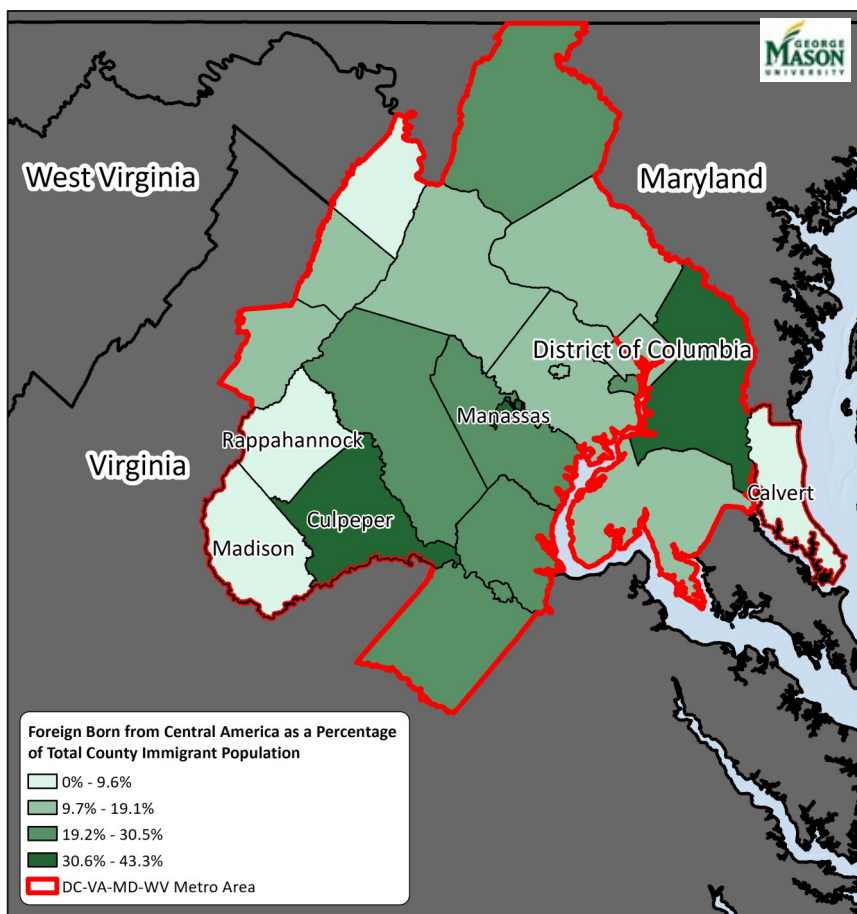


Central American Immigrants in the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, Metropolitan Area

Figure 1. Immigrants in the DC-VA-MD-WV Metro Area



Map Note: This data was prepared by the George Mason University Institute for Immigration Research (IIR). 2022. This data is displayed at the county level. Maps are based on IPUMS National Historical Geographic Information System: Version 16.0. ACS 2016-2020dataset. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota. 2022.

2020 NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

- **44,411,750:** Approximate number of immigrants living in the U.S. (14% of the population)
- **1,425,110:** Approximate number of immigrants in the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV metropolitan area (23% of the metropolitan area's total population)
- **308,300:** Approximate number of Central American immigrants in the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, **DC-VA-MD-WV** metropolitan area (22% of the DC-VA-MD-WV immigrant population and 5% of the DC-VA-MD-WV total population (i.e., native-and-foreign born))
- **164,430:** Approximate number of Central American immigrants in the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, **DC-VA** metropolitan area (12% of the DC-VA-MD-WV immigrant population and 3% of the DC-VA-MD-WV total population (i.e., native-and-foreign born))
- **4%:** Estimated increase in the number of Central American immigrants in the DC-VA-MD-WV metro area over the past decade (i.e., 2010-2020)
- **17th:** Rank of the DC-VA-MD-WV metropolitan area among the 260 identified metro areas in terms of immigrants as a percentage of the metro's population.

Distribution of Immigrants

Across the DC-VA-MD-WV metro area, three counties in Virginia have the highest share of Central American immigrants as a percentage of the county's foreign-born population, these are Culpeper County (36%), Manassas Park (38%), and Manassas City (43%). Over half (59%) of the DC-VA-MD-WV metropolitan area's Central American immigrants arrived to the United States from 2000 to 2018, 81% of whom were from El Salvador (61%) and Guatemala (20%). Nationally, immigrants from El Salvador were more easily able to come to the United States after 2001, once El Salvador was designated under the Temporary Protected Status (T.P.S.) Program, which granted temporary immigration status to immigrants from select countries in which there was ongoing armed conflict, environmental disaster, or other extraordinary conditions. While Guatemala was never designated under the T.P.S. program, the wake of an extended civil war and devastating natural disasters, such as Hurricane Mitch in 1998, were among key factors driving Guatemalan migration to the United States.

All analysis in this fact sheet is based on source data from the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2016-2020 distributed through IPUMS-USA, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org, unless otherwise noted. Central American is defined based on data from the American Community Survey (2016-2020) and includes people born in: Belize/British Honduras, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama. 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.

Central American Immigrants in the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, Metropolitan Area

Figure 2. Year of Immigration Among Immigrants

	Central American Immigrants in the DC-VA-MD-WV Metro Area	Central American Immigrants in the DC-VA Metro Area, excluding MD and WV
1930-1959	<.5%	<.5%
1960-1979	4%	4%
1980-1989	15%	15%
1990-1999	22%	23%
2000-2009	35%	35%
2010-2018	24%	23%
Estimated Immigrant Population	302,557	161,328
Median Year of Immigration	2001	2001

Figure 2 shows that Central American immigrants in the DC-VA-MD-WV and DC-VA metropolitan areas have very similar years of arrival to the United States. Both groups of Central American immigrants are more recent immigrants to the United States with more than half of them arriving in 2000 or later (59% and 58%, respectively). Nonetheless, it is important to note that a considerable share of Central American immigrants in DC-VA-MD-WV and DC-VA arrived from 1980 to 1999 (37% and 38% respectively). Similarly, nationally, 39% of Central American immigrants to the United States arrived during the same time period. Political and economic instability, including lengthy regional civil wars, largely account for reasons why Central Americans immigrated to the United States from 1980 to 1999.

Figure 3. Sex Among Immigrants

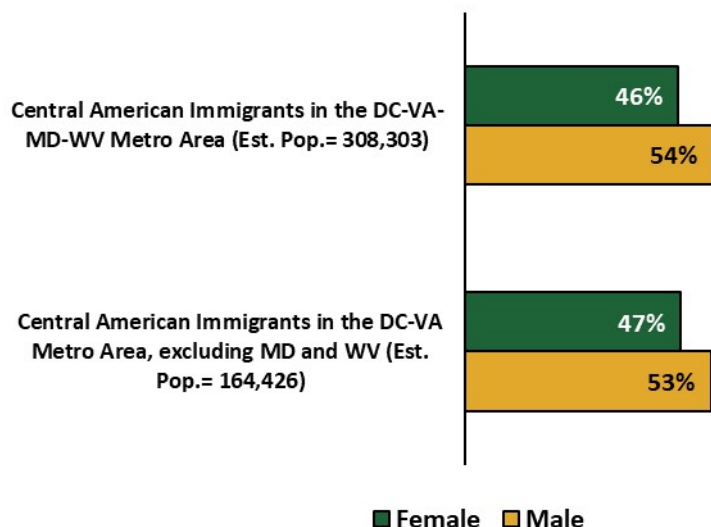
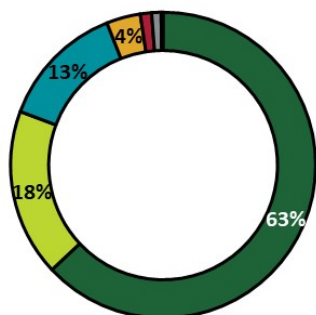


Figure 3 shows that the Central American foreign-born populations in the DC-VA-MD-WV and the DC-VA metro areas are similar in their share of females and males. In both places less than half of immigrants are females; 46% in the DC-VA-MD-WV metro area and 47% in the DC-VA metro area. Over half (54%) of Central American immigrants in the DC-VA-MD-WV metro area are male, similar to the DC-VA metro area where 53% are males.

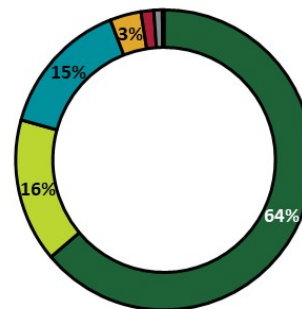
Central American Immigrants in the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, Metropolitan Area

Figure 4. Top 5 Countries of Birth Among Immigrants

Central American Immigrants in the DC-VA-MD-WV Metro Area (Est. Pop.= 308,303)



Central American Immigrants in the DC-VA Metro Area, excluding MD and WV (Est. Pop.= 164,426)



■ El Salvador ■ Guatemala ■ Honduras
 ■ Nicaragua ■ Panama ■ Costa Rica
 ■ Belize/British Honduras

The most noticeable difference in Central American immigrants' countries of origin in the DC-VA-MD-WV and DC-VA metropolitan areas is that the latter has a slightly higher share of Guatemalan (18% compared to 16%) immigrants, while DC-VA has a slightly higher share of immigrants from Honduras (15% compared to 13%). These trends make sense since Maryland, which is excluded from the DC-VA metro area, has a somewhat higher share of Guatemalan immigrants (4.2%) than the District of Columbia (3.1%) or Virginia (3%). Likewise, Virginia has a slightly higher share of immigrants from Honduras (3%) than Maryland (2.5%) or West Virginia (1.3%), thereby accounting for the slightly larger share of Honduran immigrants in the DC-VA metro area.

Figure 5. Race and Hispanic Origin Among Immigrants

	Central American Immigrants in the DC-VA-MD-WV Metro Area	Central American Immigrants in the DC-VA Metro Area, excluding MD and WV
White	38%	47%
Asian	0%	0%
Black	1%	1%
Native American or Alaskan Native	1%	1%
Other Race	53%	43%
Two or More Races	7%	8%
Not Hispanic	1%	1%
Hispanic	99%	99%
Estimated Immigrant Population	308,303	164,426

Figure 5 shows that a smaller share of Central American immigrants in the DC-VA-MD-WV metro area identify as white than their counterparts in the DC-VA metro area (38% to 47%).

Central American Immigrants in the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, Metropolitan Area

Figure 6. Number of Children in Immigrant Headed Households

Household Head, Age 16+

Figure 6 shows that Central American immigrant headed households in the DC-VA-MD-WV metro area are slightly more likely to have one or more children (73%) than their counterparts in the DC-VA area (71%).

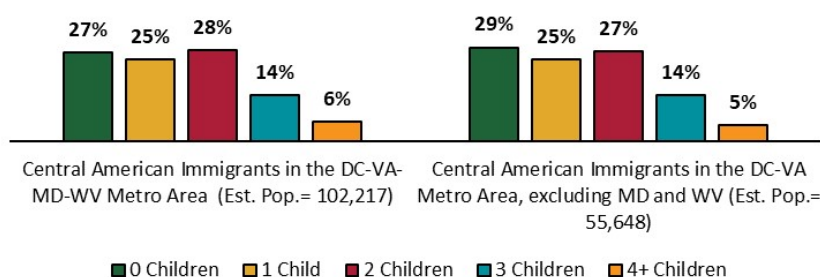


Figure 7. Age Among Immigrants

	Central American Immigrants in the DC-VA-MD-WV Metro Area	Central American Immigrants in the DC-VA Metro Area, excluding MD and WV
0 thru 4 years old	2%	1%
5 to 15 years old	5%	5%
16 to 24 years old	11%	12%
25 to 34 years old	20%	19%
35 to 44 years old	28%	28%
45 to 54 years old	18%	18%
55 to 64 years old	10%	11%
65 years and older	6%	6%
Estimated Immigrant Population	308,303	164,426
Median Age	39 years old	39 years old

Figure 7 shows that Central American immigrants in both the DC-VA-MD-WV and DC-VA metro areas have very similar age distributions. Close to half of each group is 25 to 44 years old (48% and 47%, respectively). Overall, both groups primarily have working age (i.e., 16 to 64 years old) immigrants (87% and 88%, respectively).

For factsheets that examine populations at the household level, please note that a household includes all the people who occupy a housing unit. A native-born U.S. citizen household is defined as a household which is headed by a native-born U.S. citizen, regardless of the immigration status of the spouse. Conversely, an immigrant-headed household is defined as a household which is headed by a foreign-born individual, regardless of the immigration status of the spouse. For fact sheets that examine total household income, please note that the total annual income of all members in the household is included in the analysis. For fact sheets that examine personal income, personal income refers to total personal income earned on an annual basis.

For fact sheets that examine poverty status, please note that it excludes individuals who live in group quarters and those who are under the age of 18 with no family.

IIR fact sheets are created following standard definitions established by the U.S. Census Bureau. Please consult <https://www.census.gov/topics/> for clarification as to important distinctions such as those between industry and occupation.

Central American Immigrants in the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, Metropolitan Area



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The IIR's mission is to produce valid, reliable, and objective multidisciplinary research on immigrants and immigration to the United States and to disseminate this information through peer-reviewed academic journals, as well as in print and digital formats that make this research easily accessible to policy-makers, the media, the business community, and the general public. 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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