

# Change and Composition of the Immigrant Population

Throughout its history, New York City's population has been shaped by the ebb and flow of immigrants. European immigration helped fuel dramatic population growth in the initial decades of the 1900s and, in the latter half of the century, the city's population was reshaped by the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (also known as the Hart-Celler Act). This pivotal legislation repealed immigration quotas that favored northern and western Europeans and established a fairer system for all countries, resulting in a large increase in immigrants from other parts of the world. These new sources of immigration helped change the racial and ethnic make-up of the city. This chapter first examines the overall growth of New York's population since the turn of the last century and shows how immigration has long fueled the city's population growth and, later in the century, stemmed its decline. It next examines the top immigrant groups in 2023 and goes on to analyze the changing composition of the city's immigrant population since 1970, the period that was directly affected by the 1965 law and subsequent amendments. Data throughout this chapter are from U.S. decennial censuses and the American Community Survey.

## 2.1 New York City's Population, 1900 to 2023

New York's population grew for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and for the first two decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Table 2.1 and Figure 2.1). Following the 1898 consolidation of the five boroughs, the city's

population stood at 3.4 million in 1900. Population growth, largely fueled by immigration, was highest in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the city's population increasing 38.7 percent, reaching 4.8 million in 1910. Continued immigration, domestic inflows, and natural increase (births minus deaths) resulted in further large increases, with the city reaching 6.9 million in 1930, doubling in size in just three decades.

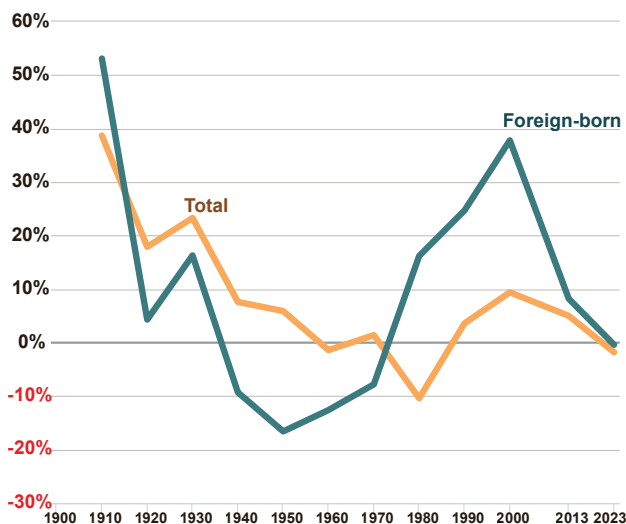
With the onset of the Great Depression and World War II, as well as restrictive national immigration policies in place at the time, immigration tapered off in the 1930s and 1940s, but the city continued to grow due to domestic flows from the South and from Puerto Rico. By 1950, the city's population had reached 7.9 million. High Baby Boom fertility and domestic inflows in the 1950s did not fully counter the large out-migration to the suburbs, and growth dipped during this period. With the enactment of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, immigration increased once again, and by 1970 the city's population rebounded to its 1950 high of 7.9 million.

The substantial increase in immigration in the 1970s was insufficient to offset the very large domestic outflow during the decade. As a result, the city's population declined by 10.4 percent, to 7.1 million in 1980. Lower domestic out-migration in the 1980s, a higher level of immigration, and greater natural increase all resulted in a return to growth, with the city's population enumerated at 7.3 million in 1990. With continued growth in the 1990s, the city's population surpassed 8 million for the first time in 2000.

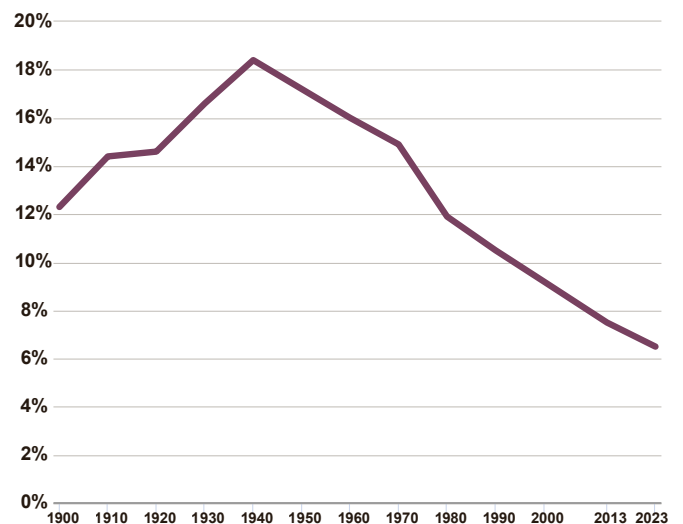
**Table 2.1**  
**Population by Nativity**  
**New York City and the United States, 1900 to 2023**

Year	New York City			United States		
	Total Population	Foreign-born Population	Percent Foreign-born	Total Population	Foreign-born Population	Percent Foreign-born
1900	3,437,202	1,270,080	37.0	75,994,575	10,341,276	13.6
1910	4,766,883	1,944,357	40.8	91,972,266	13,515,886	14.7
1920	5,620,048	2,028,160	36.1	105,710,620	13,920,692	13.2
1930	6,930,446	2,358,686	34.0	122,775,046	14,204,149	11.6
1940	7,454,995	2,138,657	28.7	131,669,275	11,594,896	8.8
1950	7,891,957	1,784,206	22.6	150,216,110	10,347,395	6.9
1960	7,783,314	1,558,690	20.0	179,325,671	9,738,091	5.4
1970	7,894,798	1,437,058	18.2	203,210,158	9,619,302	4.7
1980	7,071,639	1,670,199	23.6	226,545,805	14,079,906	6.2
1990	7,322,564	2,082,931	28.4	248,709,873	19,767,316	8.0
2000	8,008,278	2,871,032	35.9	281,421,906	31,107,889	11.1
2013	8,405,837	3,106,661	37.0	316,128,839	41,348,066	13.1
2020	8,804,190	-	-	331,449,281	-	-
2023	8,258,035	3,093,845	37.5	334,914,896	47,831,411	14.3

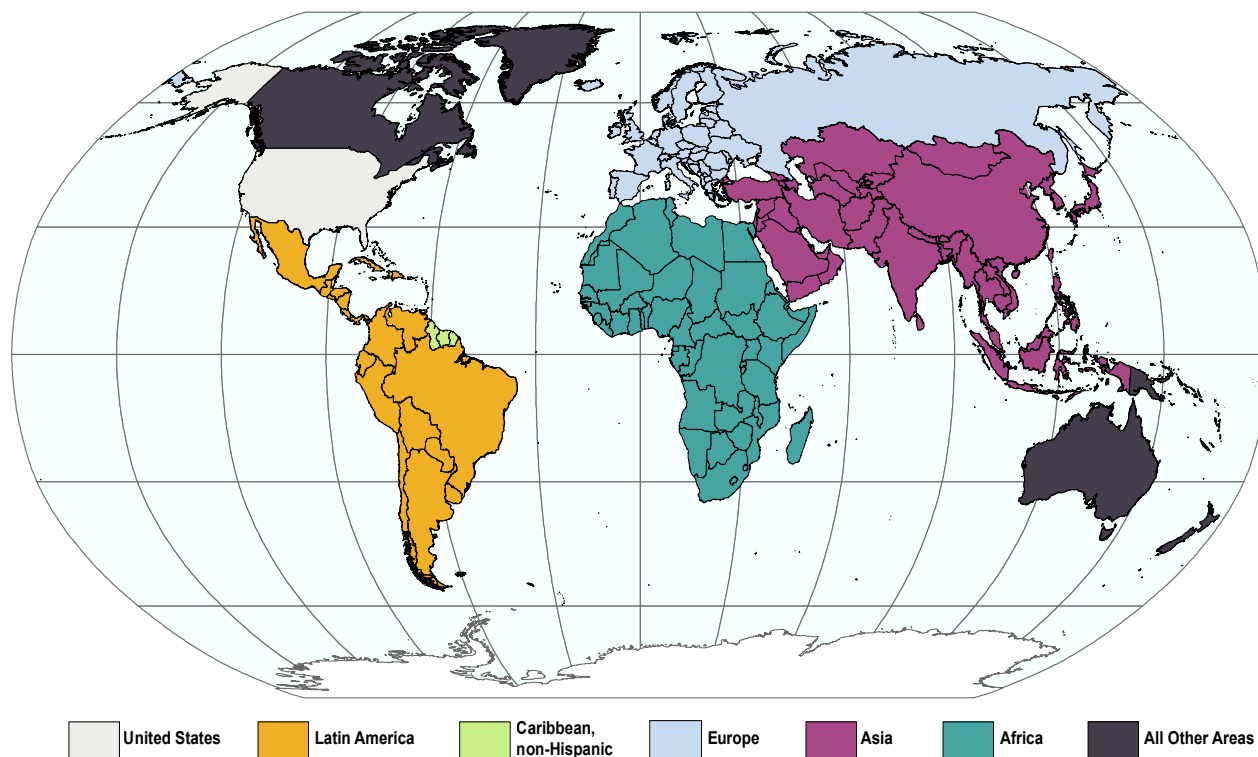
**Figure 2.1**  
**Percent Change in the Total and Foreign-born Populations, New York City, 1900 to 2023**



**Figure 2.2**  
**New York City's Share of the United States Foreign-born Population, 1900 to 2023**



**Figure 2.3**  
**How Areas of Origins are Defined in this Report**



Over a decade later, the city’s population had increased to 8.4 million in 2013 and reached an all-time high of 8.8 million in 2020. The outbreak of Covid-19 at the start of the third decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century produced steep declines, resulting in the city’s population dipping to 8.4 million by 2023.<sup>1</sup> It has since increased to 8.5 million in 2024 as domestic outflows moderated and international flows to the city increased.

## 2.2 New York City’s Foreign-born Population, 1900 to 2023

The foreign-born population totaled 1.3 million in 1900 and increased by 674,000 to reach 1.9 million by the end of the decade. Both the increase in the foreign-born (53.1 percent) and the foreign-born share of the 1910 population (40.8 percent) have been unmatched in subsequent decades. This large increase was due to a wave of immigration from

southern and eastern Europe, which continued into the early 1920s. Although restrictive immigration policies slowed inflows in the latter half of the 1920s, New York City’s foreign-born population still reached a new peak of 2.4 million by 1930. However, the sharp decline in immigration during the Great Depression and World War II led to a sustained reduction in the foreign-born population over the following four decades, reaching a low of 1.4 million by 1970. Changes in immigration law in 1965 resulted in a resurgence in immigration, and the foreign-born population rose in the following decades. The largest absolute increase in the foreign-born population occurred in the 1990s, with 788,000 foreign-born added to the population, which helped establish a new peak of 2.9 million foreign-born New Yorkers in 2000. Thus, the first and last decades of the century were bookends to the largest increases in the city’s foreign-born. Growth slowed substantially in the new century, with the foreign-born

## Box 2.1

### Defining an Immigrant in the American Community Survey

The U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) provides detailed information on the place of birth of city residents. Respondents who wrote-in a place of birth outside the United States and its territories, and whose parents were not American citizens, are included in the foreign-born population.<sup>2</sup> The overwhelming share of the foreign-born are lawful immigrants, i.e., persons who were at one time admitted to the United States for lawful permanent residence under the provisions of the Immigration and Nationality Act. The foreign-born population, however, also includes non-immigrants, such as students, business personnel, and diplomats, who have been admitted to the United States for a temporary duration. The foreign-born also includes unauthorized immigrants. In this study, we use the terms *foreign-born* and *immigrants* interchangeably.

The 2023 ACS, which is the primary source of data for this report, does not fully reflect the foreign-born population in New York City, in part due to an underestimate of migration at the national level. It also does not accurately reflect all migrants and asylum seekers who arrived in 2022 and 2023 who were living in temporary shelters. A methodological update was integrated into the 2024 estimates which improved estimates of international migration, and the Census Bureau also incorporated data provided by the city on the increase in migrants and asylum seekers in temporary shelters. The result of these improvements was an upward revision of 133,000 to the estimate of New York City's population as of July 2023, largely attributable to the influx of migrants. Updated figures for the total and foreign-born populations will be reflected in the 2024 ACS data.

population increasing to over 3.1 million in 2013, and remaining roughly the same in 2023. The foreign-born comprised 37.5 percent of the city's population in 2023, compared to their 14.3 percent share of the U.S. population.

At the turn of the last century, New York City was home to 12.3 percent (Figure 2.2) of the nation's foreign-born population of 10.3 million. With southern and eastern European immigrants settling disproportionately in New York, the city's share of the U.S. foreign-born population increased in the next four decades, reaching 18.4 percent in 1940. As immigration waned, and many longer-resident immigrants out-migrated from New York, the city's share of the nation's foreign-born population began to decline. By 1970, under 15 percent of the country's foreign-born made their home in New York City. While immigration to the city rebounded after the passage of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, flows to the United States as a whole increased even

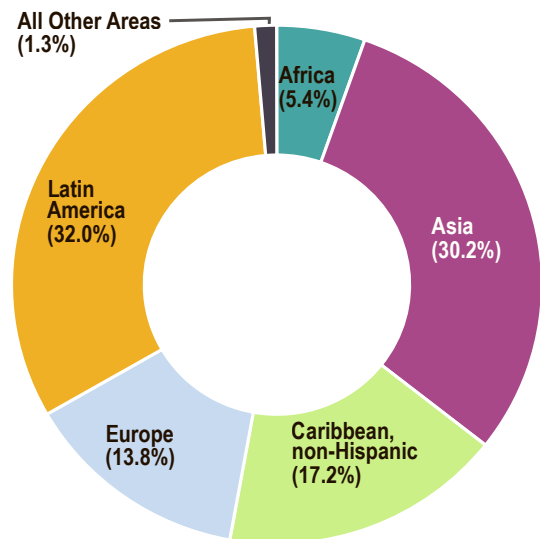
faster, as Mexicans and most Asian groups settled largely on the West Coast. By 2023, just 6.5 percent of the U.S. foreign-born lived in New York City. This still represented a disproportionate share of the nation's foreign-born, given that the city accounted for under 2.5 percent of the U.S. population in 2023.

## 2.3 Area of Origin and Country of Birth, 2023

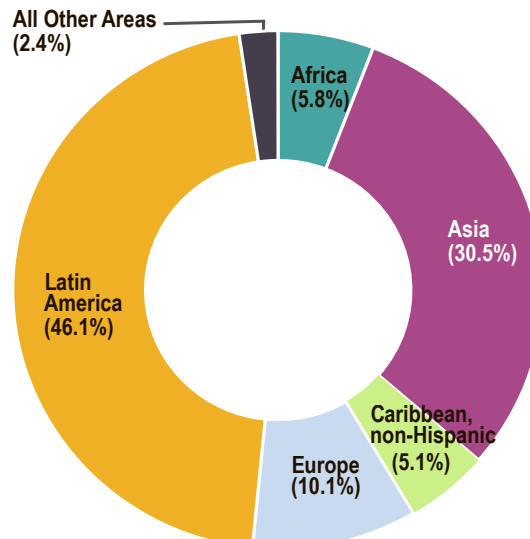
In order to get a broad picture of the foreign-born from around the globe, Figure 2.3 divides the world into six "areas of origin": Latin America, Asia, the non-Hispanic Caribbean,<sup>3</sup> Europe, Africa, and an "All Other Areas" category, while Figure 2.4 shows the areas of origin of the 2023 foreign-born population in New York City and the United States.

Latin America was the top area of origin in New York City, accounting for nearly one-third of the city's immigrants. While this represented

**Figure 2.4**  
**Areas of Origin of the Foreign-born Population**  
**New York City and the United States, 2023**



**New York City**  
**Total = 3,093,845**



**United States**  
**Total = 47,831,411**

a substantial share locally, Latin Americans comprised an even larger portion of the nation’s foreign-born, at 46 percent. Asian immigrants comprised 30 percent of the city’s foreign-born—a proportion that closely mirrored their 31 percent share nationwide. In contrast with Latin Americans and Asians, immigrants from the non-Hispanic Caribbean disproportionately made their home in New York City where they accounted for 17 percent of the foreign-born population, but comprised just 5

percent of the nation’s immigrants. Europeans were also over-represented in New York, accounting for 14 percent of the city’s immigrants, exceeding their 10 percent share of the nation’s foreign-born. Africans comprised the smallest share of the city’s immigrants (just over 5 percent), similar to their nearly 6 percent share of the U.S. foreign-born.

**Box 2.2**  
**Note for Ranking Groups**

The American Community Survey is a sample survey, and estimates have associated margins of error. Consequently, seemingly different estimates of the immigrant population from two source countries, for example, may not statistically differ and would most accurately be represented as equivalent. This equivalence is reflected in rankings that are repeated.

During the decade 2013 to 2023, the overall foreign-born population in the city declined by 12,800 or 0.4 percent to approximately 3.1 million (Table 2.2), though this change is not significant. In contrast, the Chinese foreign-born (immigrants from the mainland, Hong Kong, and Taiwan) increased by over 5 percent to reach 397,200 and, for the first time, were ranked the largest foreign-born group by population, alongside Dominicans (389,800). (See Box 2.2 for details on how foreign-born groups are ranked in this analysis.) Since 1990 Dominicans were by far the city’s most populous foreign-born group, followed by the Chinese, but over the past decade,

**Table 2.2**  
**Foreign-born Population by Country of Birth**  
**New York City, 2013 and 2023**

	2013			2023			Change 2013 to 2023	
	Rank	Number	Percent	Rank	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>TOTAL, FOREIGN-BORN</b>	-	<b>3,106,661</b>	<b>100.0</b>	-	<b>3,093,845</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>-12,816</b>	<b>-0.4</b>
China, Total	2	377,768	12.2	1	397,249	12.8	19,481	5.2
Dominican Republic	1	415,902	13.4	1	389,779	12.6	-26,123	-6.3
Jamaica	3	172,476	5.6	3	162,490	5.3	-9,986	-5.8
Mexico	3	182,266	5.9	3	148,405	4.8	-33,861	-18.6
Ecuador	5	128,706	4.1	5	136,828	4.4	8,122	6.3
Guyana	5	136,604	4.4	5	129,004	4.2	-7,600	-5.6
Bangladesh	9	76,323	2.5	7	110,793	3.6	34,470	45.2
Colombia	12	64,591	2.1	8	86,318	2.8	21,727	33.6
Haiti	7	86,855	2.8	8	84,120	2.7	-2,735	-3.1
Trinidad and Tobago	7	80,316	2.6	10	69,332	2.2	-10,984	-13.7
Ukraine	12	60,663	2.0	10	68,093	2.2	7,430	12.2
India	9	70,737	2.3	10	64,154	2.1	-6,583	-9.3
Korea	12	64,965	2.1	13	54,889	1.8	-10,076	-15.5
Philippines	15	50,573	1.6	13	51,927	1.7	1,354	2.7
Russia	9	68,266	2.2	13	48,149	1.6	-20,117	-29.5
Italy	15	50,246	1.6	16	36,975	1.2	-13,271	-26.4
Ghana	19	26,622	0.9	16	36,295	1.2	9,673	36.3
Pakistan	15	42,109	1.4	16	34,212	1.1	-7,897	-18.8
El Salvador	19	32,449	1.0	16	33,817	1.1	1,368	4.2
United Kingdom	19	29,787	1.0	16	33,460	1.1	3,673	12.3

the Dominican immigrant population declined by 6 percent, enabling a burgeoning Chinese population to share the top spot by 2023. Jamaica (162,500) and Mexico (148,400) each remained the third largest, despite steep decreases of 6 percent and 19 percent, respectively.

New York's foreign-born are a diverse group. The city's top four sources of the foreign-born are emblematic of this diversity, with Asia, Latin America, and the non-Hispanic Caribbean each represented in this grouping.

Ecuador (136,800) and Guyana (129,000) were each the fifth largest group. The Ecuadorean

population increased by 6 percent since 2013, while the Guyanese population decreased 6 percent; despite different growth trajectories, their rankings were unchanged over the decade.

Ranked seventh was Bangladesh (110,800), up from ninth, due to a 45 percent increase. Bangladesh moved past India to emerge as the largest South Asian immigrant group. In the next decade, the Bangladeshi-born population is likely to further increase, as they now constitute the third largest group of *recent* arrivals and *newly* admitted lawful permanent residents (see Section 2.4 and Chapter 5 for details).

Colombians increased by one-third to 86,300, and moved from 12<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>, putting them back into the top 10 for the first time since 2000. In contrast, declines for both Haiti (84,100) and Trinidad and Tobago (69,300) resulted in a drop in their rankings to 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, respectively. Nevertheless, their continuing presence, along with that of Jamaica and Guyana, in the top 10 is indicative of the large footprint of non-Hispanic Caribbean immigrants in the city.

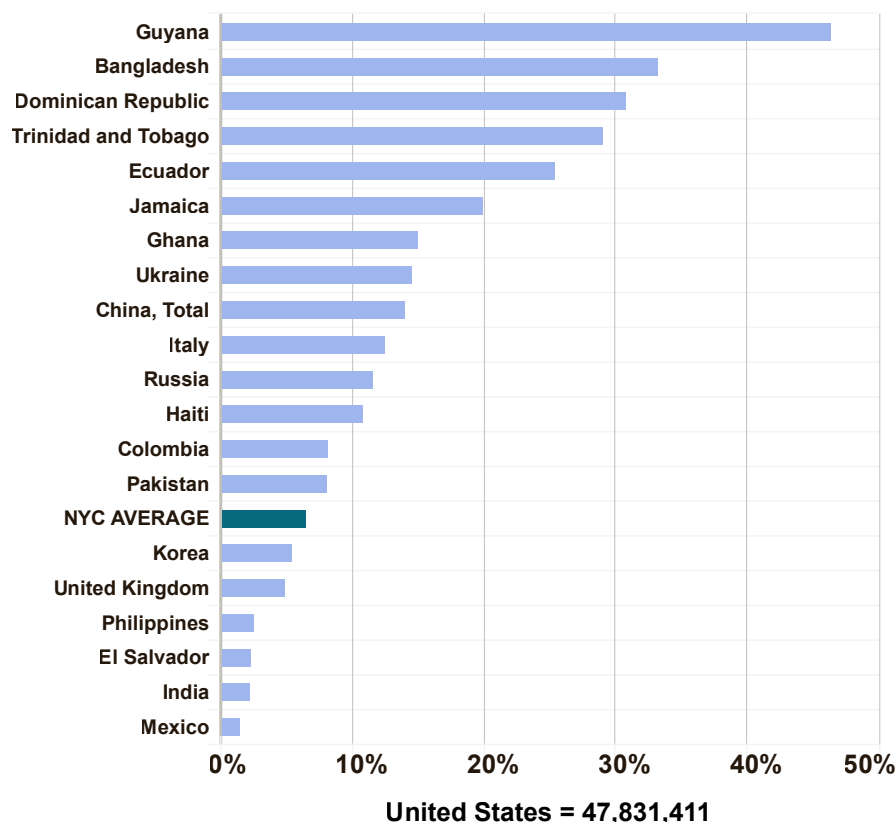
Two other groups ranked 10<sup>th</sup>: Ukraine and India. Ukraine, the only European country among the 10 largest, moved up from 12<sup>th</sup> due to a double-digit percent increase in population. The Indian population moved down in ranking from 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> after experiencing large decreases since 2013.

Some countries in the lower half of the top 20 list

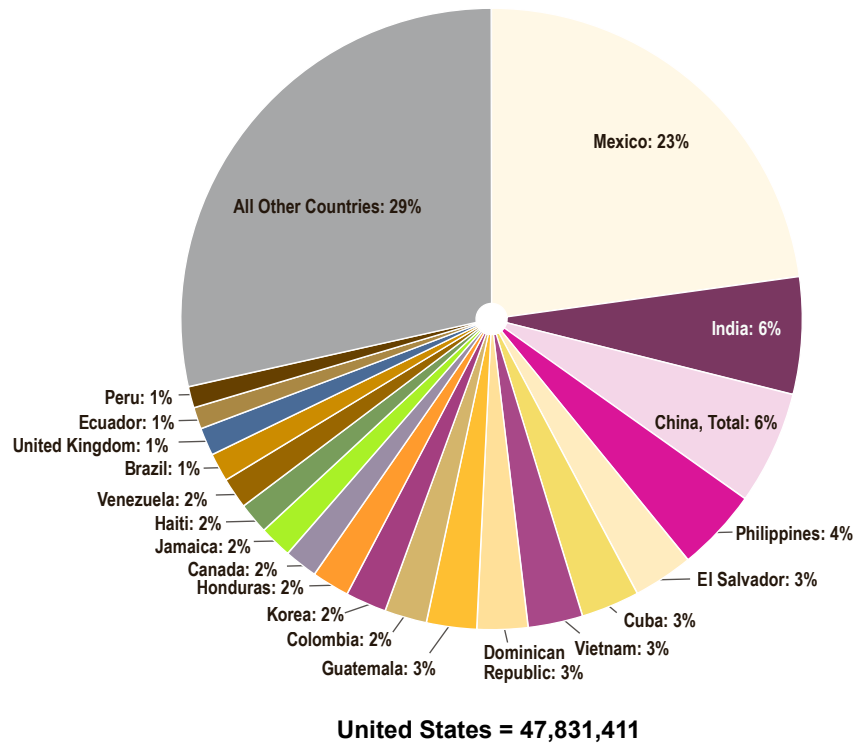
experienced large declines and a slip in their rankings. These included Russia (48,100), which exited the top 10 list, ranking 13<sup>th</sup> in 2023, Korea (also ranked 13<sup>th</sup>), as well as Italy and Pakistan (each ranked 16<sup>th</sup>). In contrast, the Philippines experienced above average growth and moved up to 13<sup>th</sup>. High growth of 36 percent allowed Ghana (36,300) to emerge as the 16<sup>th</sup> largest source country, the first African country on the city's top 20 list in the post-1965 period. Above average growth also allowed El Salvador and the United Kingdom to each move up three ranks to 16<sup>th</sup>.

The marginal post-2013 change in the city's foreign-born population was reflected among many in the top 20. Countries that were able to buck this trend were able to reach the number one position (China), move up the top 10 list (Bangladesh), enter the top 10 (Colombia and Ukraine), or maintain a

**Figure 2.5**  
**New York City's Share of the United States Foreign-born Population by Country of Birth, 2023**



**Figure 2.6**  
**Foreign-Born Population by Country of Birth**  
**United States, 2023**



consistent presence in the top 20 (Philippines, Ghana, El Salvador, and the United Kingdom).

In 2023, New York City was home to under 6.5 percent of the nation’s immigrants (Figure 2.5). But most of New York’s top 20 immigrant groups disproportionately settled in the city. In 2023, Guyanese immigrants had the greatest proclivity to settle in New York, with close to one-half of the Guyanese-born population in the United States making their home in the city. Other countries that were disproportionately represented in the city included Bangladesh, the Dominican Republic, and Trinidad and Tobago—roughly 3-in-10 immigrants in the United States from these sources settled in New York. Only 5 countries in the city’s top 20 list of the foreign-born had a below average propensity to settle in New York. These countries were Mexico (just over 1 percent of the nation’s Mexican-born population lived in the city); India, El Salvador, and the

Philippines (each at over 2 percent); and the United Kingdom and Korea (5 percent each).

The top sources of the foreign-born population for the United States differed markedly from those for New York City (Figure 2.6). Mexicans were the leading U.S. immigrant population, accounting for 23 percent of the nation’s 48 million foreign-born. In New York, China and the Dominican Republic were the largest sources of immigrants, but each had a much smaller national footprint, collectively accounting for 9 percent of the foreign-born. Indian and Chinese immigrants were the second and third most populous among the U.S. foreign-born, followed by immigrants from the Philippines, El Salvador, Cuba, Vietnam, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Colombia, and Korea. Thus, six countries on the nation’s top 10 list—the Philippines, El Salvador, Cuba, Vietnam, Guatemala, and Korea—were not among the city’s top 10 foreign-born groups,

with Cuba, Vietnam, and Guatemala not even among the city's top 20.

## 2.4 Change in the Composition of the Immigrant Population, 1970 to 2023

This section examines the changing composition of the foreign-born population since the passage of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act. For the years 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, 2013, and 2023, Tables 2.3 and 2.4 show the areas of origin and top source countries of the foreign-born populations of New York City and the United States, respectively, while Figure 2.7 shows the share of each area of origin during this period.

In 1970, of the 1.4 million immigrants living in the city, 64 percent (922,800) were from Europe, and the top 5 source countries were all European. Those born in Italy were the largest group (212,200), followed by immigrants from Poland (119,600), the U.S.S.R. (117,400), Germany (98,300), and Ireland (68,800). Other European sources in the city's top

20 list were the United Kingdom, Austria, Greece, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia; European countries accounted for 12 of the top 20 sources of the foreign-born. Latin America provided 15 percent of the city's foreign-born population, with Cuba (63,000) and the Dominican Republic (51,200) ranked sixth and seventh, respectively.

By 1980, the city's immigrant population had increased to 1.7 million, but the number of European-born declined to 667,200. Nevertheless, Europe remained the largest area of origin, comprising 40 percent of the foreign-born, and Europe accounted for 10 of the top 20 sources of the foreign-born in the city. Italy remained the largest source country, but the U.S.S.R., the next largest European source country in 1980, ranked fifth overall. The Dominican Republic, with 120,600 residents, was the second largest source country, followed by Jamaica (93,100) and China (85,100). Latin America was the birthplace of 21 percent of the foreign-born, the non-Hispanic Caribbean accounted for 17 percent, and Asia for 13 percent.

**Figure 2.7**  
Foreign-born Population by Area of Origin  
New York City and the United States, 1970 to 2023

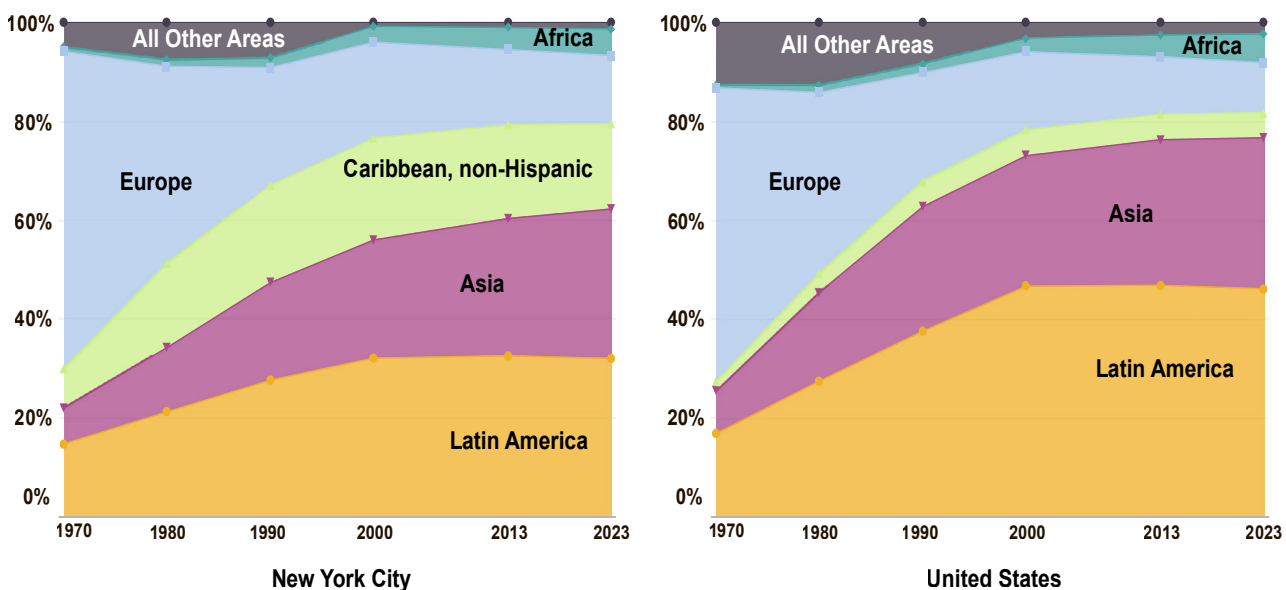


Table 2.3

### Foreign-born Population by Area of Origin and Selected Country of Birth New York City, 1970 to 2023

	NYC Foreign-born Population						Country Rank					
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2013	2023	1970	1980	1990	2000	2013	2023
<b>TOTAL, FOREIGN-BORN</b>	<b>1,437,058</b>	<b>1,670,199</b>	<b>2,082,931</b>	<b>2,871,032</b>	<b>3,106,661</b>	<b>3,093,845</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Africa</b>	<b>13,029</b>	<b>23,360</b>	<b>42,481</b>	<b>92,435</b>	<b>138,998</b>	<b>166,430</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ghana	-	2,620	5,634	14,915	26,622	36,295	-	61	51	37	19	16
Nigeria	-	2,460	5,676	15,689	19,583	23,836	-	63	50	35	29	28
<b>Asia</b>	<b>104,936</b>	<b>217,680</b>	<b>411,697</b>	<b>686,599</b>	<b>863,700</b>	<b>935,387</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
China, Total	37,348	85,100	160,399	261,551	377,768	397,249	11	4	2	2	2	1
Korea	2,665	20,380	56,949	70,990	64,965	54,889	47	23	11	12	12	13
India	5,032	21,500	40,419	68,263	70,737	64,154	34	20	14	14	9	10
Philippines	8,275	21,260	36,463	49,644	50,573	51,927	29	21	16	16	15	13
Bangladesh	-	1,280	8,695	42,865	76,323	110,793	-	77	42	17	9	7
Pakistan	932	4,440	14,911	39,165	42,109	34,212	61	46	29	18	15	16
Uzbekistan	-	-	-	12,685	22,579	32,914	-	-	-	40	24	16
<b>Europe</b>	<b>922,849</b>	<b>667,200</b>	<b>495,785</b>	<b>557,492</b>	<b>473,940</b>	<b>427,758</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
Austria	48,024	26,160	12,072	6,700	3,541	3,918	9	17	35	53	73	66
Czechoslovakia	21,523	16,320	11,825	8,628	4,201	4,160	15	26	36	46	57	66
Germany	98,336	60,760	38,259	27,708	17,999	14,886	4	7	15	22	29	34
Greece	35,000	41,760	31,894	29,805	23,491	20,139	12	11	18	20	24	28
Hungary	31,717	22,660	14,631	11,144	8,493	5,727	13	18	30	44	53	66
Ireland	68,778	42,360	31,252	22,604	14,819	11,535	5	10	19	28	39	42
Italy	212,160	156,280	98,868	72,481	50,246	36,975	1	1	4	11	15	16
Poland	119,604	77,160	61,265	65,999	50,241	32,743	2	6	9	15	15	16
Romania	21,165	17,560	17,585	19,280	13,817	8,115	16	25	28	32	39	55
Russia	-	-	-	81,408	68,266	48,149	-	-	-	10	9	13
U.S.S.R.	117,363	78,340	80,815	-	-	-	3	5	5	-	-	-
Ukraine	-	-	-	69,727	60,663	68,093	-	-	-	13	12	10
United Kingdom	48,798	34,520	28,740	28,996	29,787	33,460	8	15	20	21	19	16
Yugoslavia	16,491	22,300	21,926	19,535	-	-	19	19	23	30	-	-
<b>Latin America</b>	<b>211,048</b>	<b>353,500</b>	<b>574,151</b>	<b>919,759</b>	<b>1,009,040</b>	<b>989,151</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
Colombia	22,581	41,020	65,731	84,404	64,591	86,318	14	12	8	9	12	8
Cuba	63,043	49,720	41,039	26,030	15,305	9,832	6	9	13	26	39	42
Dominican Republic	51,231	120,600	225,017	369,186	415,902	389,779	7	2	1	1	1	1
Ecuador	16,075	39,000	60,451	114,944	128,706	136,828	20	14	10	6	5	5
Honduras	4,672	9,520	17,890	32,358	24,998	29,314	35	34	27	19	24	24
Mexico	3,541	7,380	32,689	122,550	182,266	148,405	42	36	17	5	3	3
Guatemala	1,494	5,860	12,888	17,936	26,852	31,063	54	39	32	33	19	16
<b>Caribbean, non-Hispanic</b>	<b>113,892</b>	<b>282,980</b>	<b>410,532</b>	<b>591,660</b>	<b>588,281</b>	<b>533,515</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
Guyana	-	31,960	76,150	130,647	136,604	129,004	-	16	6	4	5	5
Haiti	20,245	50,160	71,892	95,580	86,855	84,120	18	8	7	7	7	8
Jamaica	40,672	93,100	116,128	178,922	172,476	162,490	10	3	3	3	3	3
Trinidad and Tobago	13,773	39,160	56,478	88,794	80,316	69,332	22	13	12	8	7	10
<b>All Other Areas</b>	<b>71,304</b>	<b>125,479</b>	<b>148,285</b>	<b>23,087</b>	<b>32,702</b>	<b>41,604</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
Canada	20,545	15,320	13,818	17,318	22,962	28,900	17	28	31	34	24	24

In 1990, the foreign-born population surpassed the 2 million mark, and Latin America emerged as the largest area of origin of the city's immigrant population. The Dominican Republic was the leading source country; Colombia (8<sup>th</sup>) and Ecuador (10<sup>th</sup>) were the only other Latin American countries included in the top 10. Europe accounted for 24 percent of the foreign-born, with Italy and the U.S.S.R. still in the top five. Asia and the non-Hispanic Caribbean each accounted for one-fifth of the foreign-born population. China, ranked second, was the only Asian source in the top 10, but Korea, India, and the Philippines were among the top 20 source countries. Three non-Hispanic Caribbean countries were in the top 10: Jamaica (third), Guyana (sixth), and Haiti (seventh).

The year 2000 saw the city's foreign-born reach 2.9 million, with Latin America accounting for nearly one-third of the total. Four Latin American countries were on the city's top 10 list of sources of immigrants: the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Ecuador, and Colombia. With a 24 percent share, Asia surpassed the non-Hispanic Caribbean to comprise the second largest area of origin, though China was the only Asian country that figured in the top 10 foreign-born list. In contrast, though immigrants from the non-Hispanic Caribbean accounted for a smaller share (21 percent), they included four countries in the top 10: Jamaica, Guyana, Haiti, and Trinidad and Tobago. The European share of the foreign-born population continued to decrease, to 19 percent, while the African share grew to 3 percent.

By 2013, the city's foreign-born climbed to over 3.1 million. Latin Americans accounted for 33 percent of the foreign-born in 2013, similar to their share in 2000. Dominicans remained the largest foreign-born group, Mexicans became the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest, followed by Ecuadorians (ranked 5<sup>th</sup>), while Colombians (12<sup>th</sup>) exited the top 10. Asians accounted for 28 percent

of the foreign-born in 2013, up from 24 percent in 2000. For the first time three Asian countries were in the top 10: While China maintained its position as the second largest source country, Bangladesh and India (each ranked ninth) moved into the top 10. The non-Hispanic Caribbean population was essentially unchanged, and its share of the city's foreign-born population fell slightly to just under 1-in-5 in 2013, though Jamaica, Guyana, Haiti, and Trinidad and Tobago remained in the top 10. The European share of the foreign-born population dropped to 15 percent, with the European-born (473,900) at approximately one-half their 1970 total. The foreign-born from most European countries declined, with only Russia maintaining a presence in the top 10, while the African-born population increased their share of the foreign-born to 5 percent.

In the decade through 2023, while the U.S. immigrant population grew 16 percent, the city's foreign-born population remained roughly the same. Despite this, the composition of the city's foreign-born population has continued to change. The non-Hispanic Caribbean population in the city experienced a substantial decrease and accounted for just 17 percent of the foreign-born, down from 19 percent a decade earlier. The top 10 still included Jamaica, Guyana, Haiti, and Trinidad and Tobago, but each country's population in the city either decreased over the past decade or saw no substantial growth. These sources of immigration, however, have been growing nationally—it is just that over the past five decades, their share living in New York has consistently declined. This has been true for most groups over time: Their proclivity to live in the city initially increases, but then declines as they move to the suburbs and beyond. In 1970, 62 percent of the country's non-Hispanic Caribbean immigrants made their home in the city, but this had dropped to 37 percent in 2000, and to just 22 percent in 2023.

**Table 2.4**  
**Foreign-born Population by Area of Origin and Selected Country of Birth**  
**United States, 1970 to 2023**

	U.S. Foreign-born Population						Share Living in New York City					
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2013	2023	1970	1980	1990	2000	2013	2023
<b>TOTAL, FOREIGN-BORN</b>	<b>9,619,302</b>	<b>14,079,906</b>	<b>19,767,316</b>	<b>31,107,889</b>	<b>41,348,066</b>	<b>47,831,411</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>6.5</b>
<b>Africa</b>	<b>61,463</b>	<b>199,723</b>	<b>363,819</b>	<b>881,300</b>	<b>1,825,326</b>	<b>2,791,326</b>	<b>21.2</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>6.0</b>
Ghana	-	7,564	20,889	65,572	149,377	241,477	-	34.6	25.5	22.8	17.8	15.0
Nigeria	-	25,528	55,350	134,940	234,465	476,008	-	9.6	9.6	11.6	8.3	5.0
<b>Asia</b>	<b>824,887</b>	<b>2,539,777</b>	<b>4,979,037</b>	<b>8,226,254</b>	<b>12,176,983</b>	<b>14,607,826</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>6.4</b>
China, Total	172,132	366,500	921,070	1,518,652	2,383,831	2,827,634	21.7	23.2	17.4	17.2	15.8	14.1
Korea	38,711	289,885	568,397	864,125	1,070,335	1,017,250	6.9	7.0	10.0	8.2	6.1	5.4
India	51,000	206,087	450,406	1,022,552	2,034,677	2,910,042	9.9	10.4	9.0	6.7	3.5	2.2
Philippines	184,842	501,440	912,674	1,369,070	1,843,989	2,051,900	4.5	4.2	4.0	3.6	2.7	2.5
Bangladesh	-	4,989	21,414	95,294	203,179	333,026	-	25.7	40.6	45.0	37.6	33.3
Pakistan	6,182	30,774	91,889	223,477	342,603	428,795	15.1	14.4	16.2	17.5	12.3	8.0
Uzbekistan	-	-	-	23,029	48,197	74,967	-	-	-	55.1	46.9	43.9
<b>Europe</b>	<b>5,712,026</b>	<b>5,149,572</b>	<b>4,350,403</b>	<b>4,915,557</b>	<b>4,803,059</b>	<b>4,819,049</b>	<b>16.2</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>8.9</b>
Austria	214,014	145,607	87,673	63,648	44,688	37,929	22.4	18.0	13.8	10.5	7.9	10.3
Czechoslovakia	160,899	112,707	87,020	83,081	64,354	63,945	13.4	14.5	13.6	10.4	6.5	6.5
Germany	832,965	849,384	711,929	706,704	584,184	520,418	11.8	7.2	5.4	3.9	3.1	2.9
Greece	177,275	210,998	177,398	165,750	137,084	113,433	19.7	19.8	18.0	18.0	17.1	17.8
Hungary	183,236	144,368	110,337	92,017	74,213	62,703	17.3	15.7	13.3	12.1	11.4	9.1
Ireland	251,375	197,817	169,827	156,474	128,350	117,219	27.4	21.4	18.4	14.4	11.6	9.8
Italy	1,008,533	831,922	580,592	473,338	354,305	295,002	21.0	18.8	17.0	15.3	14.2	12.5
Poland	548,107	418,128	388,328	466,742	432,601	382,844	21.8	18.4	15.8	14.1	11.6	8.6
Romania	70,687	66,994	91,106	135,966	157,302	152,470	29.9	26.2	19.3	14.2	8.8	5.3
Russia	-	-	-	340,177	390,934	415,809	-	-	-	23.9	17.5	11.6
U.S.S.R.	463,462	406,022	333,725	-	-	-	25.3	19.3	24.2	-	-	-
Ukraine	-	-	-	275,153	345,187	468,780	-	-	-	25.3	17.6	14.5
United Kingdom	686,099	669,149	640,145	677,751	695,489	693,465	7.1	5.2	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.8
Yugoslavia	153,745	152,967	141,516	212,753	-	-	10.7	14.6	15.5	9.2	-	-
<b>Latin America</b>	<b>1,620,278</b>	<b>3,853,045</b>	<b>7,403,663</b>	<b>14,483,112</b>	<b>19,344,570</b>	<b>22,035,447</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>4.5</b>
Colombia	63,538	143,508	286,124	509,872	677,231	1,049,821	35.5	28.6	23.0	16.6	9.5	8.2
Cuba	439,048	607,814	736,971	872,716	1,144,024	1,450,808	14.4	8.2	5.6	3.0	1.3	0.7
Dominican Republic	61,228	169,147	347,858	687,677	991,046	1,265,231	83.7	71.3	64.7	53.7	42.0	30.8
Ecuador	36,663	86,128	143,314	298,626	427,906	539,546	43.9	45.3	42.2	38.5	30.1	25.4
Honduras	19,118	39,154	108,923	282,852	533,598	934,617	24.4	24.3	16.4	11.4	4.7	3.1
Mexico	759,711	2,199,221	4,298,014	9,177,487	11,584,977	10,918,205	0.5	0.3	0.8	1.3	1.6	1.4
Guatemala	17,356	63,073	225,739	480,665	902,293	1,250,053	8.6	9.3	5.7	3.7	3.0	2.5
<b>Caribbean, non-Hispanic</b>	<b>183,692</b>	<b>530,010</b>	<b>1,004,174</b>	<b>1,603,862</b>	<b>2,128,696</b>	<b>2,444,213</b>	<b>62.0</b>	<b>53.4</b>	<b>40.9</b>	<b>36.9</b>	<b>27.6</b>	<b>21.8</b>
Guyana	-	48,608	120,698	211,189	259,815	278,215	-	65.8	63.1	61.9	52.6	46.4
Haiti	28,026	92,395	225,393	419,317	593,980	777,845	72.2	54.3	31.9	22.8	14.6	10.8
Jamaica	68,576	196,811	334,140	553,827	714,743	817,294	59.3	47.3	34.8	32.3	24.1	19.9
Trinidad and Tobago	20,673	65,907	115,710	197,398	232,026	237,946	66.6	59.4	48.8	45.0	34.6	29.1
<b>All Other Areas</b>	<b>1,216,956</b>	<b>1,807,779</b>	<b>1,666,220</b>	<b>997,804</b>	<b>1,069,311</b>	<b>1,133,192</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>3.7</b>
Canada	812,421	842,859	744,830	820,771	840,192	828,396	2.5	1.8	1.9	2.1	2.7	3.5

Haitians experienced the steepest decline, with the share living in the city falling from 72 percent in 1970 to under 11 percent in 2023. Despite this dispersal across the country, non-Hispanic Caribbean immigrants, including Haitians, continued to have a large presence in New York, given that under 7 percent of the nation's immigrants made their home in the city.

Over the past decade, the Latin American foreign-born population in the city was essentially unchanged—large declines in the Mexican and Dominican populations offset growth in other groups. The Dominican Republic, which was by far the largest source of immigrants to New York for three decades, shared the top spot with China in 2023. Despite a decline in the Mexican population, it maintained its position as the third largest source country, while growth in the Ecuadorian population helped preserve their fifth place ranking. Increases in the Colombian population vaulted it back into the top 10, adding a fourth Latin American country to the top tier. The Colombian population in the United States is far larger than that of Ecuador, but just 8 percent of Colombians, compared to one-quarter of Ecuadorians, made their home in the city. Cubans continued to see their numbers decline: They were the 6<sup>th</sup> largest foreign-born group in 1970 and ranked 42<sup>nd</sup> in 2023 as Cuban flows bypassed the city for other parts of the New York region. As a result, the city was home to under 1 percent of the nation's Cuban-born population in 2023, compared to 14 percent in 1970. Despite their sizable presence in New York, Latin Americans were underrepresented among the city's foreign-born given their 46 percent share of the U.S. immigrant population.

The size of the European-born population continued to decrease, with only Ukraine among the top 10 (ranked 10<sup>th</sup>) and three other countries in the top 20: Russia (ranked 13<sup>th</sup>), as well as Italy and the United Kingdom (each ranked 16<sup>th</sup>). While the

heyday of European immigration to New York has long passed, immigration from Africa has continued to surge. The African population comprised between 5 and 6 percent of the foreign-born in both New York City and the United States; Ghana, the only African country in the top 20, rose from 19<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup>, following 36 percent growth, among the highest in the top 20.

The growing foreign-born Asian population comprised 30 percent of the city's immigrants, up 2 percentage points over the previous decade. China, which has been the second largest source country since 1990, grew 5 percent in the past decade to claim the top spot for the first time, alongside the Dominican Republic. The Bangladeshi foreign-born increased by 45 percent and continued to ascend in the rankings, to 7<sup>th</sup> in 2023, while India dropped to 10<sup>th</sup>. Nationwide, the Indian population is more than 11 times the size of the Bangladeshi population, but just over 2 percent of Indians in the United States made their home in the city, compared to 33 percent of Bangladeshis. In addition to China, Bangladesh, and India, the other Asian countries to figure in the top 20 were Korea and the Philippines (each ranked 13<sup>th</sup>) and Pakistan (16<sup>th</sup>).

The 1970 Census, when Europe accounted for nearly two-thirds of New York's foreign-born, marked the last time one area of origin accounted for a majority of immigrants in the city. By 2023, the European share had fallen to 14 percent, and diversity has become a hallmark of the city's foreign-born population, with the top area of origin (Latin America) accounting for less than one-third of the immigrant population. Patterns of increasing diversity in the foreign-born population at the national level reflect those long underway in New York City: In 1970, Europe was the leading area of origin nationally, accounting for 59 percent of the foreign-born. By 2023, Latin America had become the largest, with 46 percent. As in New York City, no single area of origin

constituted a majority of the foreign-born population in 2023. However, the ascendance of Latin America is a far cry from the overwhelming European presence of earlier decades.

## 2.5 Period of Entry of the Foreign-born by Area of Origin and Country of Birth

Nearly one-third of the city’s foreign-born were recent entrants, defined as those who arrived in the United States in 2010 or later,<sup>4</sup> while 21 percent entered the United States in the 2000s (Figure 2.8). Thus, just over one-half of New York’s foreign-born population in 2023 had arrived since 2000, often succeeding departing immigrants from earlier cohorts. For the United States overall, 56 percent of the foreign-born arrived in 2000 or later.

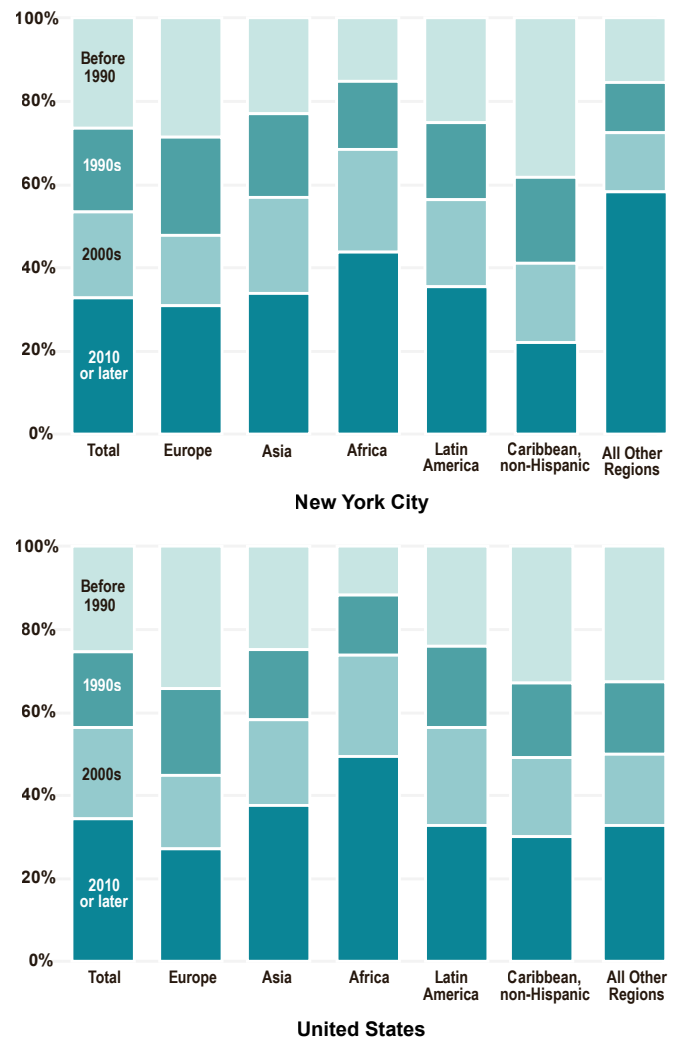
Groups with increasing flows are more likely to have larger proportions of recent entrants. Among the city’s foreign-born Africans, for example, 44 percent arrived in 2010 or later, as did one-third of Asian immigrants. In contrast, just over one-fifth of those born in the non-Hispanic Caribbean were recent entrants, the lowest share among any group, partly a reflection of their increased proclivity to bypass the city for the rest of the New York region. But the long history of flows from the non-Hispanic Caribbean is reflected in the large share (38 percent) who arrived prior to 1990, the highest of any group.

The ebb and flow of immigrants, as well as domestic migration patterns, can leave their mark on the distribution of a group’s year of entry, especially among longer-resident groups. This can be seen with the European foreign-born: Only 28 percent of European immigrants entered prior to 1990, partly a reflection of outflows among longer-resident Europeans, but 24 percent entered in the 1990s, the highest of any group, testament to the era of booming flows after the collapse of the

Soviet Union. Similarly, differences in those distributions between the United States and New York City can illuminate historical migration patterns: Just 21 percent of the European foreign-born population in the United States as a whole arrived in the 1990s, indicative of the disproportionate European flow to the city during this period.

Table 2.5 details the period of entry for each of the top 20 groups in the city. Many groups had

**Figure 2.8**  
Foreign-born Population by Area of Origin and Period of Entry  
New York City and the United States, 2023



**Table 2.5**  
**Period of Entry of the Foreign-born Population by Country of Birth**  
**New York City, 2023**

Top 20 Foreign-born Groups							Top 20 Recent Arrivals, 2010 or later		
	Rank	Number	Percent Arriving				Rank	Number	
			2010 or later	2000s	1990s	Before 1990			
<b>TOTAL, FOREIGN-BORN</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>3,093,845</b>	<b>32.8</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>19.9</b>	<b>26.4</b>	<b>TOTAL, FOREIGN-BORN</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>1,013,979</b>
China, Total	1	397,249	26.9	25.2	21.1	26.7	Dominican Republic	1	136,582
Dominican Republic	1	389,779	34.9	17.5	19.7	27.9	China, Total	2	107,589
Jamaica	3	162,490	24.7	17.4	21.4	36.5	Ecuador	3	51,255
Mexico	3	148,405	29.3	32.6	23.6	14.5	Bangladesh	3	50,768
Ecuador	5	136,828	37.9	23.0	18.1	20.9	Mexico	5	42,339
Guyana	5	129,004	26.0	21.6	21.0	31.4	Jamaica	5	40,619
Bangladesh	7	110,793	48.1	23.9	19.7	8.2	Guyana	7	33,375
Colombia	8	86,318	35.3	18.1	15.6	30.9	Colombia	7	30,421
Haiti	8	84,120	23.3	17.8	18.2	40.7	India	9	25,285
Trinidad and Tobago	10	69,332	14.0	20.8	25.2	40.1	Haiti	9	20,746
Ukraine	10	68,093	29.7	15.6	36.3	18.3	Ghana	9	20,437
India	10	64,154	40.3	22.3	17.2	20.2	Ukraine	9	19,898
Korea	13	54,889	20.3	20.9	19.4	39.4	Venezuela	13	19,007
Philippines	13	51,927	31.9	22.5	19.0	26.5	Uzbekistan	13	17,459
Russia	13	48,149	33.9	18.5	29.5	18.1	Guatemala	13	17,154
Italy	16	36,975	18.4	11.7	9.5	60.5	Philippines	16	16,643
Ghana	16	36,295	50.5	27.2	12.7	9.6	Russia	16	16,578
Pakistan	16	34,212	38.7	23.5	18.4	19.4	Canada	16	14,945
El Salvador	16	33,817	36.7	27.8	11.8	23.6	United Kingdom	16	13,606
United Kingdom	16	33,460	39.3	16.4	14.1	30.3	France	16	13,413

a high percentage of recent entrants. Among the foreign-born from Bangladesh, 48 percent arrived in 2010 or later, as did 51 percent of Ghanaians—countries with among the highest growth in the past decade. At the other end of the spectrum, just 18 percent of Italians were recent entrants—61 percent of Italians arrived prior to 1990 when the Italian-born population ranked among the city’s top 10. The share of Ukrainians arriving in the 1990s was 36 percent and it was 30 percent for Russians, a reflection of a spurt in flows from former Soviet republics.

The share of the foreign-born from the

non-Hispanic Caribbean who were recent entrants ranged from 14 percent for immigrants from Trinidad and Tobago to 26 percent for the Guyanese, well below the city average of 33 percent. This is related to an increasing share of newly arrived immigrants from this region who bypass the city and settle directly in counties adjacent to New York City (see Chapter 6 for additional information).

Table 2.5 also lists the 20 source countries with the largest number of recent entrants. Seventeen countries on the list of the 20 largest sources of the overall foreign-born population also made the

list of countries with the largest number of recent entrants, though they were often ranked differently on each list. Bangladesh, ranked seventh on the city's top 20 list, had the third largest number of recent entrants, testament to its growing role on the city's immigrant landscape. In contrast, Trinidad and Tobago, which ranked 10<sup>th</sup> in terms of its overall foreign-born population, did not make the top 20 list of recent entrants, which indicates that not enough Trinidadian immigrants are arriving to replenish this population. In contrast, the five countries that made the top 20 list of recent entrants, but were not among the top 20 sources of the foreign-born, were Venezuela, Uzbekistan, Guatemala, Canada, and France. In the coming years, Uzbekistan, in particular, is likely to have an increased presence in New York (see Chapter 5 for details).

## 2.6 Summary

Since the passage of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, New York's foreign-born population has more than doubled, to around 3.1 million in 2023. Given that the total population of the city has not increased substantially during this time, the foreign-born share of the overall population has also more than doubled, to 37.5 percent. The European share of the foreign-born population has declined from 64 percent in 1970 to 14 percent in 2023, accompanied by increases in shares from other areas of origin. Latin America was the largest area of origin in 2023, comprising 32 percent of the city's foreign-born, followed by Asia (30 percent), the non-Hispanic Caribbean (17 percent), and Africa (5 percent).

While immigration to New York City surged after the passage of the 1965 law, flows to the United States as a whole have increased even faster. As a result, New York City's foreign-born, who comprised under 15 percent of the nation's foreign-born in

1970, accounted for just 6.5 percent in 2023. The top origins of the nation's foreign-born were different from that of the city, with a greater representation of Latin Americans and Asians. Mexico was the nation's largest source country, followed by three Asian countries—India, China, and the Philippines. El Salvador, Cuba, Vietnam, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, and Colombia rounded out the top 10. Three of these countries—Cuba, Vietnam, and Guatemala—were not even among the city's top 20. While Latin Americans and Asians were underrepresented among New York's foreign-born, the non-Hispanic Caribbean made up a disproportionately large 17 percent, compared to just 5 percent for the United States. Indeed, Jamaica, Guyana, Haiti, and Trinidad and Tobago were among the top sources of immigrants to the city, but no country from the non-Hispanic Caribbean made the nation's top 10 list.

Nearly one-third of New York's foreign-born were recent entrants, arriving in 2010 or later, and over one-half arrived in 2000 or later. A reflection of their increased flows to the city, 44 percent of Africans were recent entrants, the largest proportion among areas of origin, followed by those born in Asia (34 percent). In contrast, 38 percent of immigrants from the non-Hispanic Caribbean arrived before 1990, indicative of the long history of flows from that area of origin, which are now in decline.

In the last decade, 2013 to 2023, the foreign-born population in the city held steady at approximately 3.1 million. China was ranked the number one source of immigrants alongside the Dominican Republic, followed by both Jamaica and Mexico (third). The city's top four sources of the foreign-born are emblematic of immigrant diversity, with Asia, Latin America, and the non-Hispanic Caribbean each represented. Ecuador, Guyana, Bangladesh, Colombia, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, and

India rounded out the top 10 spots (accounting for the tied rank for 10<sup>th</sup> largest). These diverse origins stand in contrast to the overwhelming European origin of the foreign-born in earlier decades. The marginal change in the city's foreign-born population post-2013 was reflected among many in the top 20. Countries that were able to buck this trend were able to become the largest immigrant source country (China), move up the top 10 list (Bangladesh), enter the top 10 (Colombia and Ukraine), or bolster their position in the top 20 (Philippines, Ghana, El Salvador, and the United Kingdom). The presence of Ghana on the city's top 20 list of immigrants is a first for an African country in the post-1965 period. In contrast to the overwhelming European origin of the foreign-born in earlier decades, a hallmark of immigrant New York over the past half-century has been the diversity of area of origin and country of birth.

## ENDNOTES

1. According to the U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates Program's Vintage 2024 estimates, New York City's total population was 8,390,888 as of July 2023 and 8,478,072 as of July 2024. Note that the population estimate for 2023 differs from that of the 2023 ACS. See Box 2.1 for additional details.
2. Children of U.S. citizens born abroad are U.S. citizens at birth and are excluded from the foreign-born population.
3. The non-Hispanic Caribbean primarily comprises countries in the Caribbean Basin that are *not* Spanish-speaking. It includes large source countries of the city's foreign-born, such as Jamaica, Guyana, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago, and Barbados. It also includes smaller source countries, such as Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, the Bahamas, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Dominica, French Guiana, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Turks and Caicos Islands, and Belize.
4. The year of entry does not refer to a person's arrival in New York City, but the year of initial entry anywhere in the United States. For example, a foreign-born person residing in New York City in 2023 may have had a year of entry listed as sometime in the 1990s but could have arrived in New York only in the 2000s. Similarly, there are people who arrived in New York in the 1990s, but who may have left the city, and are thus excluded from the city's foreign-born population in 2023.