



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on September 28, 2015

Pew Research: Asians Will Dominate Immigration by 2055

If current trends continue, by 2055 Asians will have surpassed Hispanics as the largest group of immigrants entering the United States, according to a new immigration study released on September 28 by the Pew Research Center.



Despite the large numbers of immigrants entering our country in recent years, the Pew report said that the percentage of foreign-born people living in our country today is actually less (14 percent) than it was in 1890 (15 percent). However, the report may not have taken one factor into consideration: In 1890, practically all immigrants came into the United States legally and were counted in the census. Since so many immigrants in our country today have come here illegally (an estimated 11 to 12 million of them), many of these may have avoided census takers out of fear of being deported, resulting in the immigrant population being undercounted.

Pew's report, "Modern Immigration Wave Brings 59 Million to U.S., Driving Population Growth and Change Through 2065," was issued 50 years after the passage of The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, which eliminated the National Origins Formula that had been in place since the Emergency Quota Act of 1921. That act (and the subsequent Immigration Act of 1924) gave larger immigration quotas to northern and western European nations than to southern and eastern European and non-European nations. Largely owing to the reduced quotas imposed by the immigration acts passed in the 1920s, the percentage of the population composed of immigrants steadily declined until it reached just 4.8 percent by 1965.

Pew reported that since the passage of the 1965 act, 51 percent of immigrants have come from Latin America and a quarter from Asia. During that time, the U.S. population has increased from 193 million to 324 million, with immigrants and their descendants accounting for 72 million, or 55 percent, of this growth.

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It also noted that new immigration since 1965 has altered the nation's racial and ethnic composition:

In 1965, 84 percent of Americans were non-Hispanic whites. By 2015, that share had declined to 62 percent. Meanwhile, the Hispanic share of the U.S. population rose from 4 percent in 1965 to 18 percent in 2015. Asians also saw their share rise, from less than 1 percent in 1965 to 6 percent in 2015.



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The report also noted that immigration figures will shift dramatically over the next 40-50 years:

In 2015, 47 percent of immigrants residing in the U.S. are Hispanic, but as immigration from Latin America, especially Mexico ... has slowed in recent years, the share of the foreign born who are Hispanic is expected to fall to 31 percent by 2065. Meanwhile, Asian immigrants are projected to make up a larger share of all immigrants, becoming the largest immigrant group by 2055 and making up 38 percent of the foreign-born population by 2065.

The Pew report also included the results of surveys measuring Americans' views on the impact of immigration. One survey found that 45 percent of Americans say immigrants in the U.S. are making American society better in the long run, as opposed to 37 percent who believe they are making it worse. However, the same survey found that nearly half of Americans (49 percent) want to see immigration to the United States reduced with 82 percent of those surveyed saying that the U.S. immigration system either needs major changes or it needs to be completely restructured.

However, Americans' views on whether immigration is having a positive or negative effect varies according to the area of our society being considered — with half of U.S. adults saying that immigrants are making things worse in certain areas. When asked about the effect of immigrants on the economy, half said they are making it worse, 28 percent said immigrants are making things better, while 20 percent say they are not having much of an effect. On crime, half said immigrants make things worse, just seven percent said immigrants are making things better, while 41 percent could see neither a positive nor negative impact.

When stating their views about whether the immigrants are having a positive or negative impact on American society, Americans also have varying views based on where immigrants come from. Pew found that 47 percent of U.S. adults said that immigrants from Asia have had a mostly positive impact on American society, and 44 percent said the same about immigrants from Europe. Half of those polled said the impact of immigrants from Africa has been neither positive nor negative.

However, Pew discovered that Americans are more likely to have negative views about the impact of immigrants from Latin America and the Middle East. When asked about Latin American immigrants, 37 percent said their impact on American society has been mostly negative, 35 percent said their impact is neither positive nor negative, and just 26 percent said their impact on American society has been positive. Concerning immigrants from the Middle East, 39 percent said the impact of these immigrants has been mostly negative, 39 percent say their impact has been neither positive nor negative, and just 20 percent say that Middle Eastern immigrants have a mostly positive impact on U.S. society.

Pew further reported that Asia is currently the largest source region among recently arrived immigrants, a position it has held since 2011. Prior to that, going back to 1990, the largest source region had been Central and South America. Going back to 1970, Europe was the largest region of origin among newly arrived immigrants.

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