

# Bureau of the Census

# Statistical Brief

## The Nation's Asian and Pacific Islander Population — 1994

### Rapid Growth

In March 1994, the Asian and Pacific Islander population in the United States was estimated at 8.8 million, up from 7.3 million in 1990.<sup>1</sup> In both 1994 and 1990, this population accounted for about 3 percent of America's total population.

Since 1990, the Asian and Pacific Islander population has grown at a rate of about 4.5 percent per year. Immigration to the United States accounted for much of the growth (about 86 percent). The rest was due to natural increase (i.e., births minus deaths). By the year 2000, this population

<sup>1</sup>The independent estimate of 8.8 million for the Asian and Pacific Islander population differs substantially from the March 1994 Current Population Survey (CPS) estimate of 7.4 million for this population. The CPS estimate, based on a sample, is subject to both sampling and nonsampling errors. It is not controlled to independent estimates for this population. Estimates may differ because of different data collection and estimation procedures and sampling error. However, distributions of characteristics for the Asian and Pacific Islander population in the March 1994 CPS appear reasonable when compared to the 1990 census distribution. When comparing data for the Asian and Pacific Islander population for previous years, caution should be used.



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is projected to reach 12.1 million and represent about 4 percent of the total.

Asians and Pacific Islanders are a heterogeneous group. They differ in language, culture, and recency of immigration. Several Asian groups, such as Chinese and Japanese, have been in this country for generations.

Relatively few Pacific Islanders are foreign born. Hawaiians, of course, are native to this land.

### Residence Mainly in Metro Areas

According to the March 1994 Current Population Survey, 6 of every 10 Asians and Pacific Islanders resided in the West (8 percent of the total population there).

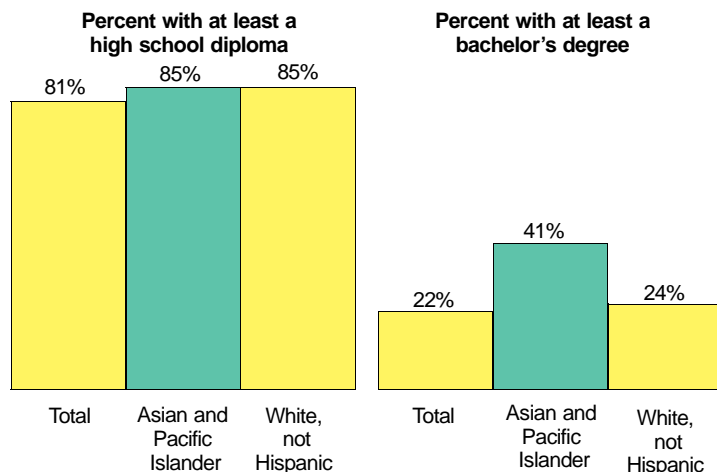
Asians and Pacific Islanders were more likely than non-Hispanic Whites to reside in metropolitan areas (95 percent compared to 75 percent). Similar proportions of both populations (about 52 percent) resided in the suburbs of metropolitan areas. The proportion of Asians and Pacific Islanders living in central cities was almost twice that of non-Hispanic Whites.

### Educational Attainment

In 1994, nearly 9 out of 10 Asian and Pacific Islander men 25 years old and over and 8 out of 10 women had at least a high school diploma. High school graduation rates vary widely among the groups.

### Educational Attainment

Percent of persons 25 years old and over who are high school graduates and college graduates: 1994



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## Occupation

Percent of workers in occupation, by sex

Occupation of longest job in 1993	Asian and Pacific Islander		White, not Hispanic	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Total <sup>1</sup>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Executive, administrative, and managerial workers	16.3	17.5	18.5	18.9
Professional specialty workers	21.5	20.3	15.6	18.4
Technical and related support workers	5.5	4.5	3.1	4.6
Sales workers	10.9	9.6	13.0	10.8
Administrative support workers, including clerical	8.5	22.5	5.5	28.0
Private household workers	—	1.0	—	0.3
Protective service workers	1.6	0.6	3.0	0.6
Service workers, except private household	10.1	11.0	3.4	8.7
Farming, fishing, and forestry workers	2.0	0.1	3.3	0.9
Precision production, craft, and repair workers	11.7	3.8	19.2	2.6
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	7.0	7.8	6.1	4.7
Transportation and material moving workers	3.5	0.2	6.4	0.6
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	1.4	1.1	3.1	0.9

— Under 0.1 percent.

<sup>1</sup>Armed Forces not included.

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The 1990 census showed that among Asians the rates varied from 31 percent for Hmongs to 88 percent for Japanese. (Hmongs are among the most recent immigrant groups, while Japanese have been here for generations.) Among Pacific Islanders, the proportion with at least a high school diploma ranged from 64 percent for Tongans to 80 percent for Hawaiians.

In 1994, two-fifths of Asians and Pacific Islanders 25 years old and over held at least a bachelor's degree. Asian and Pacific Islander men (46 percent) and women (37 percent) were much more likely to have a bachelor's degree than comparable non-Hispanic White men (28 percent) and women (21 percent).

Among the specific groups, Asian Indians had the highest proportion earning at least a bachelor's degree (58 percent). Tongans, Cambodians,

Laotians, and Hmongs had the lowest proportion, 6 percent or less.

## Homeownership

About 52 percent of Asian and Pacific Islander householders owned their homes; a similar proportion (47 percent) were renters. In contrast, about 70 percent of non-Hispanic White householders were homeowners.

Asians and Pacific Islanders residing in central cities were less likely to be owners (41 percent) than renters (57 percent). In contrast, Asians and Pacific Islanders living outside central cities had a higher proportion of homeowners (61 percent) than renters (38 percent). Non-Hispanic White householders tend to have more owners than renters regardless of whether they lived inside or outside central cities.

## Occupations

In 1993, the highest proportions of Asian and Pacific Islander men 25 years old and over worked in executive and professional occupations (16 and 21 percent, respectively). Asian and Pacific Islander women worked predominantly in executive (18 percent), professional (20 percent), and administrative support (including clerical) jobs (23 percent).

Similar proportions of Asian and Pacific Islander and non-Hispanic White men were employed in executive, sales, and machine operator occupations.

The largest differences between the two groups occurred in service jobs, where the proportion of Asian and Pacific Islander men was three times that of non-Hispanic White men (10 and 3 percent, respectively), and in precision production, craft, and repair jobs, where the proportion of non-Hispanic White men employed was 1 times that of Asian and Pacific Islander men (19 and 12 percent, respectively).

The proportions of Asian and Pacific Islander men and women in most occupations were similar, except in administrative support, farming, precision production, and transportation (see table, left).

Among persons with at least a bachelor's degree, similar proportions of Asian and Pacific Islander and non-Hispanic White men were in professional and sales occupations (38 and 37 percent, and 12 and 15 percent, respectively). Only in the executive occupation was the percent of college-educated non-Hispanic White men greater (30 percent compared to 21 percent).

College-educated Asian and Pacific Islander men were twice as likely as comparable non-Hispanic White men to work in technical (7 and 3 percent, respectively) and administrative support occupations (10 and 4 percent, respectively).

Similar proportions of college-educated Asian and Pacific Islander and non-Hispanic White women 25 years old and over were employed in executive,

technical, and sales occupations. A higher percentage of college-educated non-Hispanic White women (49 percent) than of comparable Asian and Pacific Islander women (36 percent) worked in professional occupations.

The proportion of college-educated Asian and Pacific Islander women who worked in administrative jobs (20 percent) was about twice that of comparable non-Hispanic White women (11 percent), and the proportion who worked in service occupations was three times higher (6 and 2 percent, respectively).

### Earnings and Education

In 1993, college-educated Asian and Pacific Islander men 25 years old and over who worked year round, full time had median earnings (\$41,220) higher than comparable Asian and Pacific Islander women (\$31,780).

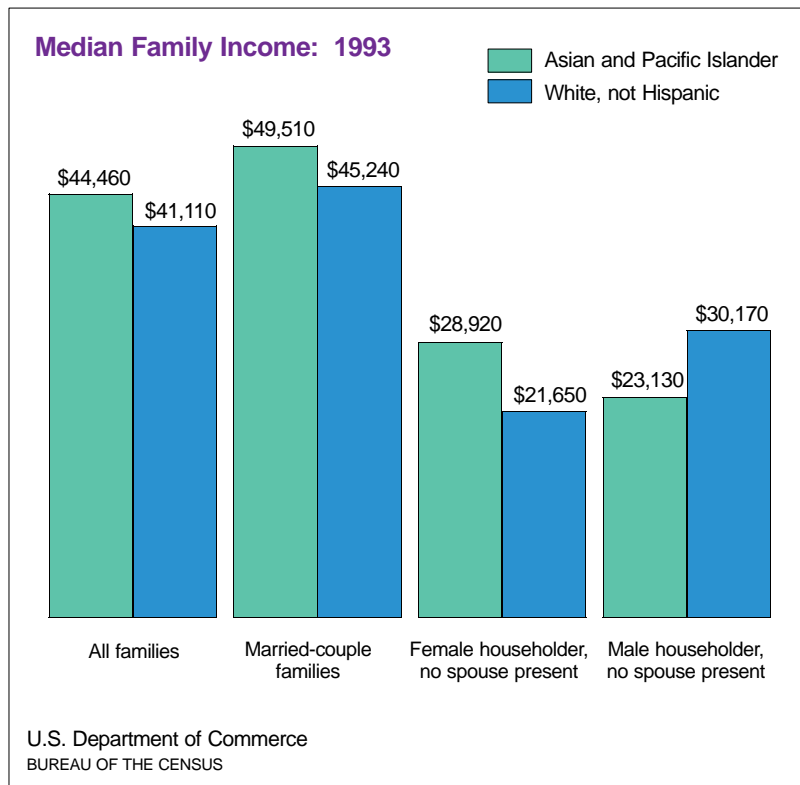
College-educated Asian and Pacific Islander and non-Hispanic White women had similar earnings (\$31,780 versus \$32,920) when they worked year round, full time. Comparable Asian and Pacific Islander men (\$41,220) earned about \$87 for every \$100 of non-Hispanic White men's earnings (\$47,180).

Among high school graduates, however, the median earnings of both Asian and Pacific Islander women (\$17,330) and men (\$23,490) were less than non-Hispanic White women (\$19,850) and men (\$28,370).

### Earnings Across Occupations

Across the major occupations in 1993, college-educated Asian and Pacific Islander men had higher median earnings than comparable non-Hispanic White men only in technical and related support occupations. Non-Hispanic White men had higher median earnings in executive, sales, and administrative support jobs.

The 1993 median earnings ratio of college-educated Asian and Pacific Islander men to comparable non-Hispanic White men in administrative support jobs



was 0.83 (although the proportion of Asian and Pacific Islander men in these jobs was twice that of non-Hispanic White men).

Asian and Pacific Islander and non-Hispanic White women 25 years old and over with at least a bachelor's degree had similar earnings in most occupations.

Two exceptions occurred: Asian and Pacific Islander women had higher median earnings than non-Hispanic White women in professional jobs (\$41,130 compared to \$34,440), but lower earnings in sales positions (\$24,680 compared to \$33,100).

### Median Family Income

Asian and Pacific Islander (\$44,460) and non-Hispanic White (\$41,110) families had incomes that were not statistically different in 1993.

The median income of Asian and Pacific Islander families maintained by women with no spouse present (\$28,920) was higher than that for comparable non-Hispanic White families (\$21,650). Male householder families with no

spouse present had median family incomes that were not statistically

different — \$23,130 for Asians and Pacific Islanders and \$30,170 for non-Hispanic Whites.

Asian and Pacific Islander married-couple families had a higher median income than comparable non-Hispanic White families (see graph, above).

### Income and Work Status

Both the husband and wife worked in about 60 percent of all Asian and Pacific Islander and non-Hispanic White married-couple families in 1993. However, the husband was the only earner in 18 percent of Asian and Pacific Islander and 15 percent of non-Hispanic White married-couple families.

A higher proportion of Asian and Pacific Islander family householders worked year round, full time (62 percent) than of comparable non-Hispanic White family householders (58 percent).

About 14 percent of both Asian and Pacific Islander and non-Hispanic White families had three or more earners.

### Poverty and Family Type

Despite higher educational attainment and a similar median family

income, the poverty rate for Asian and Pacific Islander families (14 percent) was higher than that for non-Hispanic White families (8 percent) in 1993. Only 16 percent of poor families in both groups had a householder who worked year round, full time.

Among families with high school educated householders, the poverty rate of Asian and Pacific Islander families (13 percent) was 1 times that of non-Hispanic White families (8 percent); among college-educated householders, the poverty rate of Asian and Pacific Islander families was 3 times that of non-Hispanic White families (7 percent versus 2 percent).

In 1993, 12 percent of Asian and Pacific Islander and 5 percent of non-Hispanic White married-couple families lived in poverty. There was no statistical difference in the poverty rates for Asian and Pacific Islander and non-Hispanic White female householder families

where no spouse was present (19 and 25 percent, respectively).

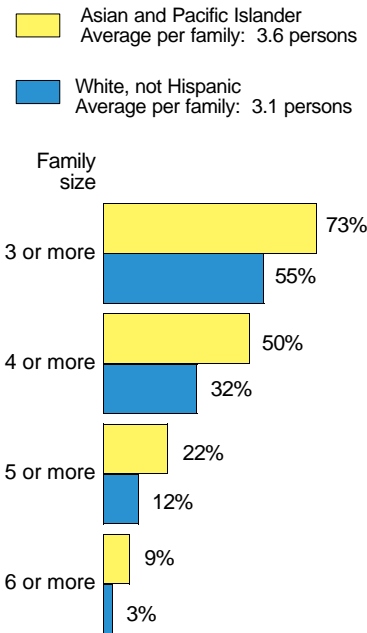
**Larger Families**

In 1994, the average number of persons per Asian and Pacific Islander family was 3.6; for non-Hispanic White families, the average was 3.1. Seventy-three percent of Asian and Pacific Islander families had three or more persons in 1994 compared with 55 percent of non-Hispanic White families. Twenty-two percent of all Asian and Pacific Islander families had five or more persons compared with 12 percent of non-Hispanic White families.

Sixty-one percent of Asian and Pacific Islander families had related children under 18 years old, compared with almost half (49 percent) of non-Hispanic White families. In each group, about 80 percent of related children under 18 years old lived with two parents.

**Larger Families**

Percent of families by family size: 1994



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**Our Growing Asian and Pacific Islander Population**

	1970	Population		Percent change	
		1980	1990	1970-80	1980-90
Total	1,356,638	3,726,440	7,273,662	174.7	95.2
Chinese	431,583	812,178	1,645,472	88.2	102.6
Filipino	336,731	781,894	1,406,770	132.2	79.9
Japanese	588,324	716,331	847,562	21.8	18.3
Asian Indian	(NA)	387,223	815,447	(NA)	110.6
Korean	69,510	357,393	798,849	414.2	123.5
Vietnamese	(NA)	245,025	614,547	(NA)	150.8
Hawaiian	(NA)	172,346	211,014	(NA)	22.4
Samoan	(NA)	39,520	62,964	(NA)	59.3
Guamanian	(NA)	30,695	49,345	(NA)	60.8
Other Asian and Pacific Islander	(NA)	183,835	821,692	(NA)	347.0

NA Not available from 1970 and 1980 tabulations.

Note: The 1970 total for the Asian and Pacific Islander population is not comparable with the 1980 and 1990 totals. The 1970 data reflect only those Asian and Pacific Islander groups shown separately in the race item. The 1980 sample count and the 1990 100-percent tabulation are comparable because they include a count for Asian and Pacific Islander groups not listed separately in the race item. The 1970 data on the Korean population excluded the State of Alaska.

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