

U.S. Naturalizations: 2013

JAMES LEE AND KATIE FOREMAN

The naturalization process confers U.S. citizenship upon foreign citizens or nationals who have fulfilled the requirements established by Congress in the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). After naturalization, foreign-born citizens enjoy nearly all of the same benefits, rights, and responsibilities that the Constitution gives to native-born U.S. citizens, including the right to vote. This Office of Immigration Statistics Annual Flow Report presents information on the number and characteristics of foreign nationals aged 18 years and over who naturalized during 2013.¹

In 2013, a total of 779,929 persons naturalized (see Table 1 and Figure 1). The leading countries of birth of new citizens were Mexico (99,385), India (49,897), the Philippines (43,489), the Dominican Republic (39,590), and the People's Republic of China (35,387). The largest number of persons naturalizing lived in California (164,792), New York (107,330), and Florida (101,773).

THE NATURALIZATION PROCESS

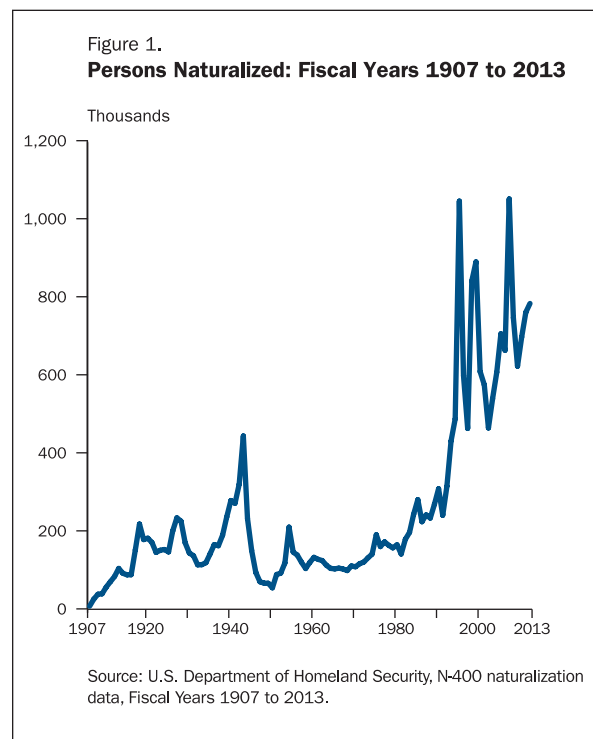
An applicant for naturalization must fulfill certain requirements set forth in the INA concerning age, lawful admission and residence in the United States. These general naturalization provisions specify that a foreign national must be at least 18 years of age; be a U.S. lawful permanent resident (LPR); and have resided in the country continuously for at least five years. Additional requirements include the ability to speak, read, and write the English language; knowledge of the U.S. government and history; and good moral character.

Special provisions of naturalization law exempt certain applicants from some of these general requirements. The primary types of applicants who may, under certain conditions, be eligible for specific exemptions include spouses and minor children of U.S. citizens and persons with qualifying military service in the Armed Forces of the United States.

Every applicant for naturalization who is 18 years of age or older must file an N-400 Application for Naturalization.

¹In this report, years refer to fiscal years (October 1 to September 30).

All applicants who meet the preliminary documentary requirements must be interviewed by officers from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to determine their eligibility to naturalize. Qualified applicants are then scheduled for an oath ceremony before a judge or before an officer with authority delegated by the Secretary of Homeland Security.



DATA

This report uses data from administrative records of USCIS of the Department of Homeland Security. These records consist of information taken from N-400 applications, such as date and country of birth; sex; marital status; and state of residence. The Computer Linked Application Information Management System (CLAIMS) of USCIS provided nearly all of the data; a small number of records came from the Central Index System of USCIS.

Caution should be exercised in drawing conclusions from these data about trends in the demand to naturalize. Year-to-year fluctuations in the number of naturalizations are not uncommon and reflect volatility in the volume of applications filed with USCIS and related impacts on application processing. Annual averages of persons naturalizing over a period of years provide a more accurate indication of long-term trends in the propensity to naturalize.

TRENDS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSONS NATURALIZING

The number of U.S. naturalizations increased to 779,929 in 2013 from 757,434 in 2012 and 694,193 in 2011. Although the number of applications for naturalization filed decreased from 2012 to 2013, the number of applications processed during this period increased.

Historical Trend

The average annual number of persons naturalizing increased from less than 120,000 during the 1950s and 1960s to 210,000 during the 1980s, 500,000 during the 1990s, and to 680,000 between 2000 and 2009. Since 2010, the average annual number of naturalizations has increased to 710,000 (see Figure 1). Until the 1970s, the majority of persons naturalizing were born in European countries. The regional origin of new citizens shifted from Europe to Asia due to increased legal immigration from Asian countries, the arrival of Indochinese refugees in the 1970s, and the historically higher naturalization rate of Asian immigrants. Consequently, Asia has been the leading region of origin of new citizens in most years since 1976.

Region and Leading Countries of Birth

Asia and North America were each the regions of origin of 35 percent of persons naturalizing in 2013 (see Table 1). Mexico was the leading country of birth of persons naturalizing in 2013 (13 percent), followed by India (6.4 percent), the Philippines (5.6 percent), the Dominican Republic (5.1 percent), and the People's Republic of China (4.5 percent). The 10 countries with the largest number of naturalizations accounted for almost 50 percent of all new citizens in 2013.

Table 1.

Persons Naturalized by Region and Country of Birth: Fiscal Years 2011 to 2013

(Countries ranked by 2013 persons naturalized)

Region and country of birth	2013		2012		2011	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
REGION						
Total	779,929	100.0	757,434	100.0	694,193	100.0
Africa	71,872	9.2	74,775	9.9	69,738	10.0
Asia	275,700	35.3	257,035	33.9	249,940	36.0
Europe	80,333	10.3	82,714	10.9	82,209	11.8
North America	271,807	34.9	261,673	34.5	217,750	31.4
Caribbean	120,995	15.5	109,762	14.5	79,820	11.5
Central America	42,682	5.5	40,592	5.4	33,784	4.9
Other North America	108,130	13.9	111,319	14.7	104,146	15.0
Oceania	3,849	0.5	3,886	0.5	3,734	0.5
South America	76,167	9.8	76,992	10.2	70,485	10.2
Unknown	201	—	359	—	337	—
COUNTRY						
Total	779,929	100.0	757,434	100.0	694,193	100.0
Mexico	99,385	12.7	102,181	13.5	94,783	13.7
India	49,897	6.4	42,928	5.7	45,985	6.6
Philippines	43,489	5.6	44,958	5.9	42,520	6.1
Dominican Republic	39,590	5.1	33,351	4.4	20,508	3.0
China, People's Republic	35,387	4.5	31,868	4.2	32,864	4.7
Cuba	30,482	3.9	31,244	4.1	21,071	3.0
Vietnam	24,277	3.1	23,490	3.1	20,922	3.0
Haiti	23,480	3.0	19,114	2.5	14,191	2.0
Colombia	22,196	2.8	23,972	3.2	22,693	3.3
El Salvador	18,401	2.4	16,685	2.2	13,834	2.0
Jamaica	16,442	2.1	15,531	2.1	14,591	2.1
Korea, South	15,786	2.0	13,790	1.8	12,664	1.8
Pakistan	12,948	1.7	11,150	1.5	10,655	1.5
Peru	11,782	1.5	11,814	1.6	10,266	1.5
Iran	11,623	1.5	9,627	1.3	9,286	1.3
Bangladesh	9,571	1.2	8,417	1.1	7,325	1.1
Brazil	9,565	1.2	9,884	1.3	10,251	1.5
Nigeria	9,545	1.2	9,322	1.2	9,344	1.3
Guatemala	9,530	1.2	8,797	1.2	7,285	1.0
Ecuador	9,470	1.2	8,783	1.2	6,929	1.0
All other countries	277,083	35.5	280,528	37.0	266,226	38.4

— Figure rounds to 0.0.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, N-400 naturalization data for persons aged 18 and over, Fiscal Years 2011 to 2013.

From 2012 to 2013, the number of naturalizations increased among immigrants from Asia, the Caribbean, and Central America. Among leading countries of birth, the largest numeric increase in naturalizations occurred among immigrants born in India (6,969), the Dominican Republic (6,239), Haiti (4,366), and the People's Republic of China (3,519). In terms of percentage change, the leading countries of birth with the largest increase in naturalizations were Haiti (23 percent), Iran (21 percent), the Dominican Republic (19 percent), and India (16 percent).

Table 2.**Persons Naturalized by State of Residence: Fiscal Years 2011 to 2013**

(Ranked by 2013 persons naturalized)

State of residence	2013		2012		2011	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	779,929	100.0	757,434	100.0	694,193	100.0
California	164,792	21.1	158,850	21.0	151,183	21.8
New York	107,330	13.8	93,584	12.4	76,603	11.0
Florida	101,773	13.0	100,890	13.3	87,309	12.6
Texas	57,947	7.4	57,762	7.6	52,927	7.6
New Jersey	41,173	5.3	42,622	5.6	33,826	4.9
Illinois	27,706	3.6	28,376	3.7	29,133	4.2
Virginia	22,279	2.9	24,224	3.2	13,782	2.0
Massachusetts	21,404	2.7	22,753	3.0	22,812	3.3
Georgia	19,534	2.5	17,093	2.3	17,761	2.6
Pennsylvania	17,813	2.3	16,470	2.2	16,162	2.3
Other*	198,178	25.4	194,810	25.7	192,695	27.8

*Includes unknown, U.S. territories and armed forces posts.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, N-400 naturalization data for persons aged 18 and over, Fiscal Years 2011 to 2013.

Leading States and Metropolitan Areas of Residence

Seventy-five percent of all persons naturalizing in 2013 resided in 10 states (see Table 2). California was home to the largest percentage of persons naturalizing (21 percent), followed by New York (14 percent) and Florida (13 percent). Fifty-five percent of all new citizens in 2013 lived in 10 metropolitan areas (see Table 3).² The leading metropolitan areas of residence were New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, NY-NJ-PA (18 percent), Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, CA (9.0 percent), and Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach, FL (8.6 percent).

²The most current CBSA definitions are available from OMB at http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/fedreg_2010/06282010_metro_standards-Complete.pdf.**Table 3.****Persons Naturalized by Metropolitan Area of Residence: Fiscal Years 2011 to 2013**

(Ranked by 2013 persons naturalized)

Metropolitan area of residence	2013		2012		2011	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	779,929	100.0	757,434	100.0	694,193	100.0
New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, NY-NJ-PA	136,513	17.5	123,891	16.4	99,153	14.3
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, CA	70,189	9.0	65,679	8.7	62,373	9.0
Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach, FL	66,925	8.6	68,072	9.0	55,560	8.0
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	30,030	3.9	31,601	4.2	20,591	3.0
Chicago-Joliet-Naperville, IL-IN-WI	26,173	3.4	26,942	3.6	27,607	4.0
San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, CA	23,506	3.0	20,474	2.7	22,046	3.2
Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown, TX	22,581	2.9	22,056	2.9	18,467	2.7
Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA-NH	17,384	2.2	18,264	2.4	18,834	2.7
Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, GA	16,753	2.1	14,205	1.9	14,335	2.1
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX	16,267	2.1	16,892	2.2	16,048	2.3
Other, including unknown	353,608	45.3	349,358	46.1	339,179	48.9

Note: Metropolitan areas defined based on Core Based Statistical Areas (CBSAs).

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, N-400 naturalization data for persons aged 18 and over, Fiscal Years 2011 to 2013.

From 2012 to 2013, the largest percentage increases in the number of naturalizations among leading states of residence occurred in New York (15 percent) and Georgia (14 percent). Among leading metropolitan areas of residence, the largest percentage increase from 2012 to 2013 occurred in Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, GA (18 percent) and San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, CA (15 percent).

Sex, Age, and Marital Status

In 2013, females accounted for 55 percent of all persons naturalizing (see Table 4). More than one-half (52 percent) of new citizens were ages 25 to 44 years. The median age of all persons naturalizing was 40 years. Persons 65 years and over accounted for nearly nine percent of naturalizations in 2013 (see Table 5). Nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of persons naturalizing in 2013 were married, and 22 percent were single (see Table 6).

Years in Immigrant Status

Persons naturalizing in 2013 spent a median of seven years in LPR status before becoming citizens (see Table 7). Immigrants born in Africa spent the least time in legal immigrant status (5 years), followed by immigrants from Asia and South America (6 years), Europe (7 years), Oceania (8 years), and North America (10 years). The median years spent in LPR status for all persons naturalizing remained unchanged from 2012 to 2013.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about immigration and immigration statistics, visit the Office of Immigration Statistics web page at <http://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics>.

Table 4.

Persons Naturalized by Sex: Fiscal Years 2011 to 2013

Sex	2013		2012		2011	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	779,929	100.0	757,434	100.0	694,193	100.0
Male	348,486	44.7	339,260	44.8	316,561	45.6
Female	431,427	55.3	418,125	55.2	377,581	54.4
Unknown	16	—	49	—	51	—

— Figure rounds to 0.0.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, N-400 naturalization data for persons aged 18 and over, Fiscal Years 2011 to 2013.

Table 5.

Persons Naturalized by Age: Fiscal Years 2011 to 2013

Age	2013		2012		2011	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	779,929	100.0	757,434	100.0	694,193	100.0
18 to 24 years	71,714	9.2	72,834	9.6	67,927	9.8
25 to 34 years	195,472	25.1	191,480	25.3	178,247	25.7
35 to 44 years	208,008	26.7	201,386	26.6	190,585	27.5
45 to 54 years	142,245	18.2	136,604	18.0	124,033	17.9
55 to 64 years	93,053	11.9	88,993	11.7	76,912	11.1
65 years and over	69,436	8.9	66,136	8.7	56,487	8.1
Unknown	1	—	1	—	2	—
Median age	40	X	40	X	39	X

X Not applicable.

— Figure rounds to 0.0.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, N-400 naturalization data for persons aged 18 and over, Fiscal Years 2011 to 2013.

Table 7.

Median Years in Lawful Permanent Resident Status for Persons Naturalized by Region of Birth and Year of Naturalization: Selected Fiscal Years 1965 to 2013

Region of birth	Year																
	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2000	1995	1990	1985	1980	1975	1970	1965
Total	7	7	6	6	7	9	8	7	8	9	9	8	8	8	7	8	7
Africa	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	6	7	7	7	6	6	6
Asia	6	6	6	5	6	7	6	6	7	8	7	7	7	7	6	6	6
Europe	7	7	6	6	7	7	6	6	6	7	9	10	9	10	8	9	7
North America	10	10	10	10	11	12	11	10	11	11	14	11	13	11	9	7	9
Oceania	8	8	7	7	8	9	9	8	9	11	11	10	8	8	7	9	8
South America	6	6	6	5	6	8	7	7	8	10	10	9	8	9	10	7	7

Note: Excludes persons who were not required to be lawful permanent residents prior to naturalization.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, N-400 naturalization data for persons aged 18 and over, Fiscal Years 1965 to 2013.

Table 6.

Persons Naturalized by Marital Status: Fiscal Years 2011 to 2013

Marital status	2013		2012		2011	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	779,929	100.0	757,434	100.0	694,193	100.0
Single	175,367	22.5	170,125	22.5	151,750	21.9
Married	496,262	63.6	480,863	63.5	446,686	64.3
Other*	108,300	13.9	106,446	14.1	95,757	13.8

*Includes persons who were divorced, separated, widowed, or of unknown marital status.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, N-400 naturalization data for persons aged 18 and over, Fiscal Years 2011 to 2013.