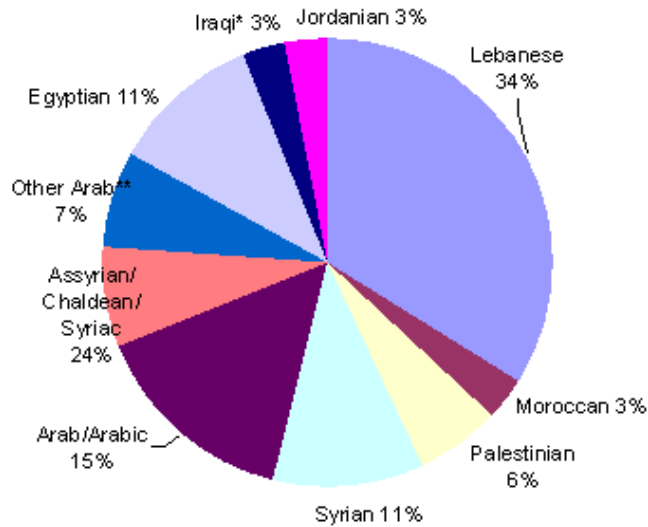


Arab American Demographics

The Arab American Institute reports that at least 3.5 million Americans are of Arab descent. Arab Americans live in all 50 states, but two thirds reside in just 10 states. One third of the total live in only three states: California, New York and Michigan. Most (94%) live in metropolitan areas, and the top five metro areas of Arab American concentration are Los Angeles, Detroit, New York/New Jersey, Chicago and Washington, D.C.



The chart to the left shows the ancestry breakdown of Arab Americans. Those considered Arab Americans are from 22 different Arab countries. The number from Iraq excludes those who identify themselves as Chaldeans, Assyrians, or another Christian minority in Iraq. The category “Other Arab” includes persons from Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros Islands, Djibouti, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, The United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. It does not include persons from Sudan, Somalia, or Mauritania.

Those of Lebanese descent constitute the greatest portion of Arab Americans in most states. New Jersey is an exception where Egyptians are the largest Arab group. The majority of Arab Americans in Rhode Island are of Syrian descent, and the largest Palestinian population is found in Illinois.

The growth rate for Arab Americans from 1990 to 2000 in the top eleven states is as follows:

Virginia	80%	California	34%
Michigan	65%	Ohio	30%
Florida	57%	New York	30%
New Jersey	50%	Pennsylvania	25%
Texas	45%	Massachusetts	20%
Illinois	40%		

According to the Arab American Institute most Arab Americans are Christians: 35% Catholic (Roman Catholic, Maronite, and Melkite), 20% Orthodox (Antiochian, Syrian, Greek and Coptic), and 11% Protestant. 13% have no religious affiliation. Only 24% are Muslim including Sunni, Shi’a and Druze.

The AAI has compiled this information from sources including a February 2000 Zogby International report, the U.S. Census 2000 Summary File 4, and the 2000 U.S. Census Supplementary Survey. The AAI has been designated as the Census Bureau’s only Census Information Center (CIC) dedicated to analyzing data on the Arab American community. The information in this report is from the Arab American Institute’s website.



1. California

California has the largest number of Arab Americans of any state. Zogby International estimates the Arab American population is approximately 715,000. The U.S. Census reports only 220,372. However, the Arab American Institute explains the reason for the undercount. It is estimated that the 2000 Census question on ancestry, which measures ethnicity beyond official race classifications, captured about one-third of the total population that traces its roots to the Arabic-speaking world. While the census figures account for about 1.25 million Americans of Arab descent, private research by the Arab American Institute and Zogby International indicates a population that exceeds 3 million. Reasons for the undercount include the effect of the sample methodology on small, unevenly distributed ethnic groups, high levels of intermarriage among the third and fourth generations, and distrust/misunderstanding of government surveys among more recent immigrants

More new immigrants from the Arab world select California as their destination than any other state. The population who identified an Arabic speaking ancestry in the U.S. Census grew by more than 34% between 1990 and 2000, and the population identifying itself as Arabic American has doubled since the 1980 census.

The ethnic identification is derived from responses to the ancestry question on the long form of the 2000 U.S. Census. The breakdown is as follows:

- Lebanese 24%
- Arab/Arabic 17%
- Egyptian 14%
- Assyrian/Chaldean/Syriac 10%
- Syrian 9%
- *Other 7%
- Palestinian 7%
- Iraqi 4%
- Jordanian 4%
- Moroccan 2%

*Other includes the countries of Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

A significant increase since 1990 was seen among the Assyrian/Chaldean population, predominately in the San Diego area. Palestinians are among the largest subgroups in the San Francisco Bay area. The southern California Arab community in Los Angeles and Orange Counties constitute the largest cluster in the state although the Arab American community is represented in 56 out of all 58 counties in California. The top five counties in California with Arab Americans are:

- Los Angeles County 32%
- San Diego County 12%
- Orange County 12%
- Santa Clara County 6%
- San Bernardino County 4%

2. Michigan

Michigan is home to the highest concentration of Arab Americans in any U.S. state. This particular group constitutes the most visible, organized and politically influential constituency of Arab Americans in the country. The estimated Arab American population is 490,000.

The population who identified an Arabic speaking ancestry in Michigan grew more than 65% between 1990 and 2000. Since 1980 the Arabic population has more than doubled from 69,610 to 151,493. The population total of 151,493 is from U.S. Census data. The estimated population total by Zogby International is 490,000. The Arab American Institute explains the reason for the undercount. It is estimated that the 2000 Census question on ancestry, which measures ethnicity beyond official race classifications, captured about one-third of the total population that traces its roots to the Arabic-speaking world. While the census figures account for about 1.25 million Americans of Arab descent, private research by the Arab American Institute and Zogby International indicates a population that exceeds 3 million. Reasons for the undercount include the effect of the sample methodology on small, unevenly distributed ethnic groups, high levels of intermarriage among the third and fourth generations, and distrust/misunderstanding of government surveys among more recent immigrants.

The ethnic breakdown of Arab Americans in Michigan is as follows:

- Lebanese 36%
- Assyrian/Chaldean/Syriac 23%
- Arab/Arabic 16%
- Iraqi 7%
- Syrian 6%
- Other 6%
- Palestinian 3%
- Egyptian 2%
- Jordanian 2%

*Other includes the countries of Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

Based on a sample year of 1997, the largest number of new Arab immigrants to Michigan came from Iraq (principally after the 1991 Gulf War) and from Lebanon and Jordan. Immigrants by country in 1997 are:

- Iraq 1006
- Lebanon 832
- Jordan 264
- Syria 173
- Egypt 137

The Arab American community is represented in 82 out of 83 counties in Michigan. 80% of the state's Arabic population resides in three Detroit metro counties (Wayne 39%; Oakland 26% and Macomb 17%). Also roughly one third of the city of Dearborn claims some Arab heritage.

3. New York

New York is ranked third in the nation with an Arab American population of 405,000. It is a major gateway destination for new immigrants.

According to the U.S. Census the population who identified themselves as having an Arabic-speaking ancestry in New York grew by about 30% between 1990 and 2000. This growth trend is the same rate of growth as experienced in New York between 1980 and 1990.

The population total of 125,442 is from U.S. Census data. The estimated population total by Zogby International is 405,000. The Arab American Institute explains the reason for the undercount. It is estimated that the 2000 Census question on ancestry, which measures ethnicity beyond official race classifications, captured about one-third of the total population that traces its roots to the Arabic-speaking world. While the census figures account for about 1.25 million Americans of Arab descent, private research by the Arab American Institute and Zogby International indicates a population that exceeds 3 million. Reasons for the undercount include the effect of the sample methodology on small, unevenly distributed ethnic groups, high levels of intermarriage among the third and fourth generations, and distrust/misunderstanding of government surveys among more recent immigrants.

The ethnic breakdown of Arab Americans in New York is as follows:

- Lebanese 25%
- Egyptian 19%
- Arab/Arabic 18%
- Syrian 14%
- *Other 9%
- Moroccan 5%
- Palestinian 4%
- Jordanian 3%
- Iraqi 2%
- Sudanese & Somalian 2%

*Other includes the countries of Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

Based on a sample year of 1997, the largest number of new Arab immigrants to New York came from Egypt (1128), Jordan (410), Lebanon (290), Syria (263) and Iraq (62).

Arab Americans reside in 59 of 62 counties in New York. Close to one half the population are located in the New York City metropolitan area, with other significant clusters in Syracuse and Buffalo.

The top five counties are:

- Kings County 29%
- Queens County 13%
- New York County 9%
- Erie County 5%
- Westchester County 5%

4. Florida

Florida ranks fourth among states by Arab American population. The population is estimated to be 255,000. According to the U.S. Census the population who identified an Arabic-speaking ancestry grew by more than 57% between 1990 and 2000. That is an increase of over 25,000.

The population total of 79,212 is from U.S. Census data. The estimated population total by Zogby International is 255,000. The Arab American Institute explains the reason for the undercount. It is estimated that the 2000 Census question on ancestry, which measures ethnicity beyond official race classifications, captured about one-third of the total population that traces its roots to the Arabic-speaking world. While the census figures account for about 1.25 million Americans of Arab descent, private research by the Arab American Institute and Zogby International indicates a population that exceeds 3 million. Reasons for the undercount include the effect of the sample methodology on small, unevenly distributed ethnic groups, high levels of intermarriage among the third and fourth generations, and distrust/misunderstanding of government surveys among more recent immigrants.

The ethnic breakdown of Arab Americans in Florida is as follows:

- Lebanese 38%
- Arab/Arabic 17%
- Syrian 13%
- Egyptian 9%
- Palestinian 8%
- Other 7%
- Moroccan 5%
- Jordanian 2%
- Iraqi 1%

*Other includes the countries of Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

Since 1990 both the Egyptian and Palestinian subgroups have experienced the most growth in Florida. Based on a sample year of 1997, the largest number of new Arab immigrants to Florida came from Lebanon (214), Egypt (210), and Jordan (173), mostly West Bank Palestinians who held Jordanian passports.

Arab Americans reside in 59 out of Florida's 67 counties. Significant numbers are located in Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach. Other concentrations are in Jacksonville, Orlando and Tampa.

The top five counties are:

- Miami-Dade 19%
- Broward 14%
- Palm Beach 8%
- Orange 8%
- Duval 8%

5. New Jersey

New Jersey ranks fifth in the U.S. among Arab American population centers. Like New York it is a favored destination for immigrants. New Jersey is the only state where the Egyptian population is the dominant subgroup.

The population who identified an Arabic-speaking ancestry grew by more than 50% between 1990 and 2000. New Jersey has one of the fastest growing Arab populations in the country. The estimated population of Arab Americans in New Jersey is 240,000.

The U.S. Census reports a population total of 73,985. The Arab American Institute explains the reason for the undercount. It is estimated that the 2000 Census question on ancestry, which measures ethnicity beyond official race classifications, captured about one-third of the total population that traces its roots to the Arabic-speaking world. While the census figures account for about 1.25 million Americans of Arab descent, private research by the Arab American Institute and Zogby International indicates a population that exceeds 3 million. Reasons for the undercount include the effect of the sample methodology on small, unevenly distributed ethnic groups, high levels of intermarriage among the third and fourth generations, and distrust/misunderstanding of government surveys among more recent immigrants.

The ethnic breakdown of Arab Americans in New Jersey is as follows:

Egyptian 34%

Lebanese 18%

Syrian 17%

Arab/Arabic 13%

Palestinian 6%

Other 6%

Jordanian 3%

Moroccan 3%

Assyrian/Chaldean/Syriac 1%

*Other includes the countries of Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

Based on a sample year of 1997, the largest number of new Arab immigrants to New Jersey came from Egypt (1083), Jordan (349), Syria (166), Lebanon (121) and Iraq (27). Although not in the top five for 1997, a growing number of Moroccan immigrants are settling in the state.

Arab Americans reside in all of New Jersey's 21 counties, but one half of the population is concentrated in Hudson (18%), Bergen (17%) and Passaic (15%) counties.

6. Illinois

Illinois is home to the sixth largest Arab American community in the U.S. It is one of the most diversified by ancestry groups. It also is one of the few states where persons of Iraq, Palestine and Jordan ancestries outnumber persons of Lebanese and Syrian descent. The population of Arab Americans grew by more than 40% between 1990 and 2000. The statewide population is approximately 220,000.

The U.S. Census reports a population total of 68,982. The Arab American Institute explains the reason for the undercount. It is estimated that the 2000 Census question on ancestry, which measures ethnicity beyond official race classifications, captured about one-third of the total population that traces its roots to the Arabic-speaking world. While the census figures account for about 1.25 million Americans of Arab descent, private research by the Arab American Institute and Zogby International indicates a population that exceeds 3 million. Reasons for the undercount include the effect of the sample methodology on small, unevenly distributed ethnic groups, high levels of intermarriage among the third and fourth generations, and distrust/misunderstanding of government surveys among more recent immigrants.

The ethnic breakdown of Arab Americans in Illinois is as follows:

Arab/Arabic 25%

Chaldean/Assyrian/Syriac 23%

Lebanese 15%

Palestinian 11%

Egyptian 6%

Jordanian 6%

Syrian 6%

Other 4%

Iraqi 3%

Moroccan 2%

*Other includes the countries of Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

Based on a sample year of 1997, the largest number of Arab immigrants to Illinois comes from Jordan (584). This includes Palestinians with Jordanian passports. Next are Iraq (320), Syria (183), Egypt (115) and Lebanon (83).

Arab Americans can be found in 71 out of a total of 92 counties in Illinois, but 80% live in Cook (72%) or DuPage (8%) counties.

7. Texas

Texas has the seventh largest Arab American community in the nation with approximately 210,000. Roughly two in five Arab Americans in Texas have Lebanese or Syrian roots; however since 1990 significant increases appear in the number of Texans who are of Egyptian and Palestinian descent. One in five simply identify themselves as Arab/Arabic.

The U.S. Census reports a population total of 65,876. The Arab American Institute explains the reason for the undercount. It is estimated that the 2000 Census question on ancestry, which measures ethnicity beyond official race classifications, captured about one-third of the total population that traces its roots to the Arabic-speaking world. While the census figures account for about 1.25 million Americans of Arab descent, private research by the Arab American Institute and Zogby International indicates a population that exceeds 3 million. Reasons for the undercount include the effect of the sample methodology on small, unevenly distributed ethnic groups, high levels of intermarriage among the third and fourth generations, and distrust/misunderstanding of government surveys among more recent immigrants.

The Arabic speaking ancestry in Texas grew by more than 45% between 1990 and 2000, and has more than doubled since 1980. Texas' Arab American population is one of the fastest growing in the country.

The ethnic breakdown of Arab Americans in Texas is as follows:

Lebanese 36%

Arab/Arabic 19%

Syrian 9%

Egyptian 8%

Other 8%

Palestinian 8%

Jordanian 5%

Sudanese & Somalian 3%

Iraqi 2%

Moroccan 2%

Assyrian/Chaldean/Syriac 1%

*Other includes the countries of Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

Based on a sample year of 1997, the largest number of new Arab immigrants came to Texas from Jordan (312), Lebanon (217), Egypt (157), Iraq (140) and Syria (97).

Arab Americans in Texas live in 155 of the 248 counties in the state. Concentrations are found in metropolitan areas such as Houston, Dallas, San Antonio and El Paso. The top five counties are Harris (28%), Dallas (14%), Tarrant (10%), Bexar (7%), and Travis (6%).

8. Ohio

Ohio ranks eighth among the states with an Arab American population of 185,000. The Arab American population in Ohio has grown by 30% between 1990 and 2000, and by 40% since 1980.

The U.S. Census reports a population total of 58,261. The Arab American Institute explains the reason for the undercount. It is estimated that the 2000 Census question on ancestry, which measures ethnicity beyond official race classifications, captured about one-third of the total population that traces its roots to the Arabic-speaking world. While the census figures account for about 1.25 million Americans of Arab descent, private research by the Arab American Institute and Zogby International indicates a population that exceeds 3 million. Reasons for the undercount include the effect of the sample methodology on small, unevenly distributed ethnic groups, high levels of intermarriage among the third and fourth generations, and distrust/misunderstanding of government surveys among more recent immigrants.

The ethnic breakdown of Arab Americans in Ohio is as follows:

- Lebanese 47%
- Arab/Arabic 14%
- Syrian 11%
- Palestinian 6%
- Egyptian 6%
- Sudanese/Somalian 6%
- Other 5%
- Jordanian 3%
- Moroccan 2%

*Other includes the countries of Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

Based on a sample year of 1997, new Arab immigrants to Ohio came from Jordan (192) (predominantly Palestinians with Jordanian passports), Lebanon (120), Egypt (98), Iraq (74) and Syria (69).

Arab Americans in Ohio live in 86 of the 88 counties in the state. More than one third lives in metropolitan Cleveland, with clusters in Toledo, Columbus, and Akron. The top five counties for Arab American populations are Cuyahoga (26%), Franklin (16%), Lucas (9%), Summit (7%) and Hamilton (6%).

9. Massachusetts

Massachusetts is ranked ninth among states with significant Arab American populations. This state has a well-established, mostly U.S. born Arab American community with some pockets of foreign-born in the Boston area.

The estimated Arab American population is 175,000. The Arabic speaking ancestry has grown by 20% between 1990 and 2000, and overall the Arabic American community grew about 40% since 1980.

The U.S. Census reports a population total of 55,318. The Arab American Institute explains the reason for the undercount. It is estimated that the 2000 Census question on ancestry, which measures ethnicity beyond official race classifications, captured about one-third of the total population that traces its roots to the Arabic-speaking world. While the census figures account for about 1.25 million Americans of Arab descent, private research by the Arab American Institute and Zogby International indicates a population that exceeds 3 million. Reasons for the undercount include the effect of the sample methodology on small, unevenly distributed ethnic groups, high levels of intermarriage among the third and fourth generations, and distrust/misunderstanding of government surveys among more recent immigrants.

The ethnic breakdown of Arab Americans in Massachusetts is as follows:

Lebanese 58%

Syrian 13%

Arab/Arabic 8%

Egyptian 6%

Other 6%

Moroccan 4%

Palestinian 2%

Sudanese & Somalian 2%

Jordanian 1%

Assyrian/Chaldean/Syriac 1%

*Other includes the countries of Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

Based on a sample year of 1997, the largest number of new Arab immigrants to Massachusetts came from Lebanon (205), Egypt (112), Syria (76), Jordan (51), and Iraq (32). Once a popular destination for immigrants, it now has one of the lower rates for new arrivals.

Arab Americans can be found in all 14 counties in Massachusetts. Although a slightly larger concentration can be found in Middlesex County, the Arab community is more evenly distributed around this state than in most other U.S. regions. The top five counties are Middlesex (21%), Norfolk (16%), Suffolk (14%), Essex (12%) and Bristol (8%).

10. Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania is ranked tenth in the nation with an Arab American population of 160,000. The population is well dispersed throughout the state. It is home to a predominantly U.S. born community well into its third generation. The population who identified an Arabic-speaking ancestry grew by 25% between 1990 and 2000.

The U.S. Census reports a population total of 50,260. The Arab American Institute explains the reason for the undercount. It is estimated that the 2000 Census question on ancestry, which measures ethnicity beyond official race classifications, captured about one-third of the total population that traces its roots to the Arabic-speaking world. While the census figures account for about 1.25 million Americans of Arab descent, private research by the Arab American Institute and Zogby International indicates a population that exceeds 3 million. Reasons for the undercount include the effect of the sample methodology on small, unevenly distributed ethnic groups, high levels of intermarriage among the third and fourth generations, and distrust/misunderstanding of government surveys among more recent immigrants.

The ethnic breakdown of Arab Americans in Pennsylvania is as follows:

- Lebanese 40%
- Syrian 27%
- Arab/Arabic 9%
- Egyptian 9%
- Other 4%
- Moroccan 3%
- Palestinian 3%
- Iraqi 2%
- Sudanese & Somalian 2%
- Assyrian/Chaldean/Syriac 1%
- Jordanian 1%

*Other includes the countries of Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

Based on a sample year of 1997, the largest number of new Arab immigrants to Pennsylvania came from Egypt (87), Lebanon (60), Jordan (59), Syria (51), and Iraq (40).

Arab Americans live in 60 of 66 counties in Pennsylvania. Concentrations are found in Allentown, Bethlehem, Wilkes-Barre, Scranton and Philadelphia. The top five counties are Allegheny (16%), Lehigh (10%), Luzerne (6%), Montgomery (5%) and Delaware (4.8%).

11. Virginia

Virginia is ranked eleventh in the U.S. with approximately 135,000 Arab Americans. It is home to a growing number of Arab Americans, with the vast majority residing in the northern suburbs.

The population who identified an Arabic-speaking ancestry grew more than 80% between 1990 and 2000. The number of Virginians who claim Arab ancestry has increased four fold since 1980.

The U.S. Census reports a population total of 46,151. The Arab American Institute explains the reason for the undercount. It is estimated that the 2000 Census question on ancestry, which measures ethnicity beyond official race classifications, captured about one-third of the total population that traces its roots to the Arabic-speaking world. While the census figures account for about 1.25 million Americans of Arab descent, private research by the Arab American Institute and Zogby International indicates a population that exceeds 3 million. Reasons for the undercount include the effect of the sample methodology on small, unevenly distributed ethnic groups, high levels of intermarriage among the third and fourth generations, and distrust/misunderstanding of government surveys among more recent immigrants.

The ethnic breakdown of Arab Americans in Virginia is as follows:

Lebanese 28%

Arab/Arabic 16%

Egyptian 12%

Other 10%

Sudanese & Somalian 9%

Palestinian 7%

Moroccan 6%

Syrian 6%

Jordanian 3%

Iraqi 2%

*Other includes the countries of Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

Based on a sample year of 1997, the largest number of new Arab immigrants to Virginia came from Egypt (234), Lebanon (140), Jordan (138), Iraq (74) and Syria (73).

Arab Americans in Virginia live in 114 out of 135 counties in Virginia. Approximately three out of four live in the northern suburbs near Washington, D.C. The top five counties are Fairfax (47%), Arlington (8%), Alexandria (6%), Henrico (4.4%) and Morris (4.1%).