



Profile of New York City’s Chinese Americans

Introduction

Using data from 2006-2010 and 2011-2015 American Community Survey (ACS) Selected Population Tables and the 2010 U.S. census, this profile outlines characteristics and trends among New York City’s Chinese American population.¹ It presents statistics on population size and changes, immigration, citizenship status, educational attainment, English ability, income, poverty, health insurance and housing. Comparisons with New York City’s general population are provided for context.

New York City’s Chinese population was the largest Asian ethnic group. Relative to all residents, Chinese in New York City were more likely to be:

- working-age adults and seniors,
- less educated,
- limited English proficient,
- lower income,
- living in poverty, if a senior, and
- living in overcrowded housing.

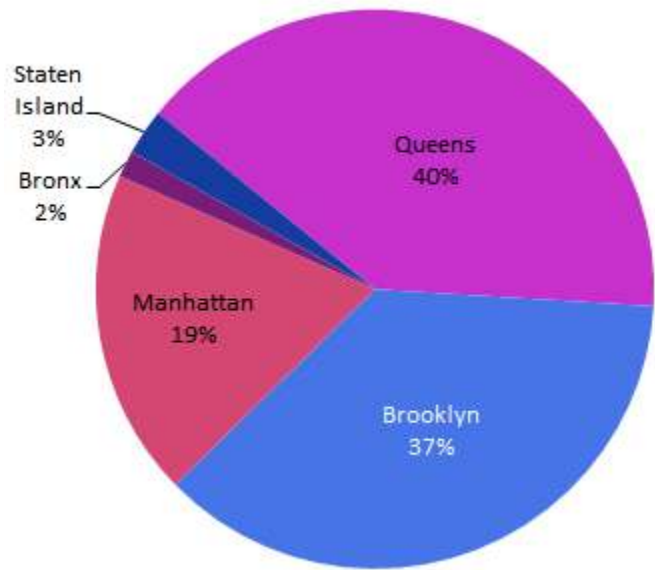


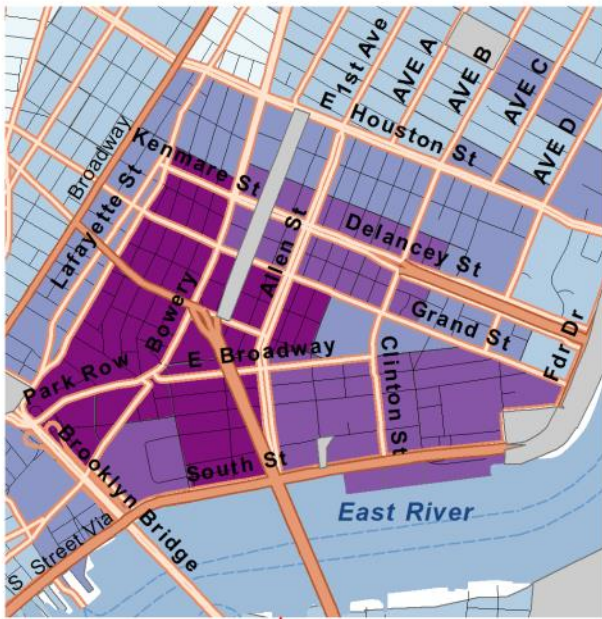
Figure 1: Chinese Population by Borough

Population

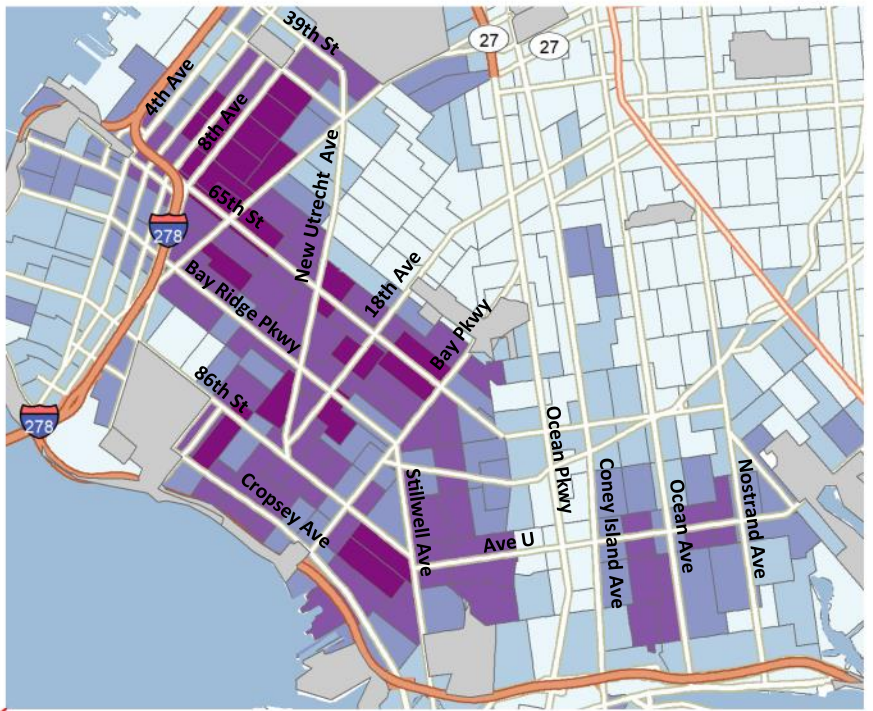
From 2010 to 2015, the Chinese alone or in combination population in New York City increased by 16 percent from 484,779 to 564,636 – faster than the city’s overall 4 percent increase and the 13 percent growth of the total Asian population. The Chinese alone population increased by 16 percent from 466,690 in 2010 to 539,381 in 2015.

New York City was home to 82 percent of New York State’s Chinese residents. Chinese New Yorkers lived primarily in Queens (40 percent), Brooklyn (37 percent), and Manhattan (19 percent) (Figure 1). The share of Chinese in Manhattan dropped by two percentage points from 2010 to 2015, matched by a two percentage point increase in the share of Chinese in Brooklyn. Neighborhoods with large Chinese populations include Chinatown in Manhattan; Bayside, Elmhurst and Flushing in Queens; and Bensonhurst, Sheepshead Bay, and Sunset Park in Brooklyn.

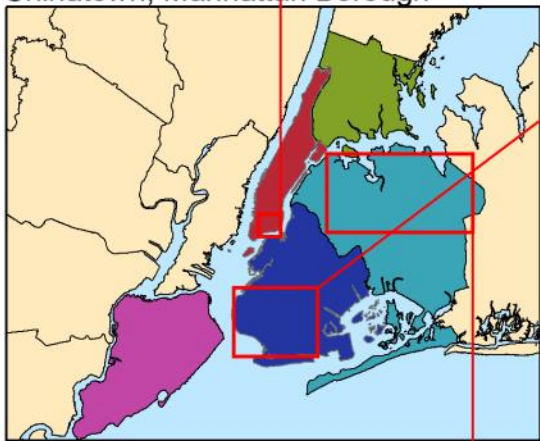
Facts on Chinese Population in New York City	
Alone or in-Combination Population	564,636
Percent Change from 2010 to 2015	16%
Immigration and Citizenship	
Percent of Population Foreign Born	70%
Percent of Foreign Born Who are Citizens	55%
Educational Attainment for Adults Age 25 or Older	
Percent of Adults without High School Diploma	35%
Percent of Adults with a Bachelor’s Degree	33%
Limited English Proficiency	
Percent of Population Age 5 or Older	60%
Income	
Median Household Income	\$50,577
Median Family Income	\$50,889
Per Capita Income	\$26,828
Poverty	
Percent of Total Population Living in Poverty	21.1%
Percent of Children Living in Poverty	23.3%
Percent of Seniors Living in Poverty	28.6%



Chinatown, Manhattan Borough



Sunset Park, Bensonhurst, and Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn Borough



Elmhurst and Flushing, Queens Borough

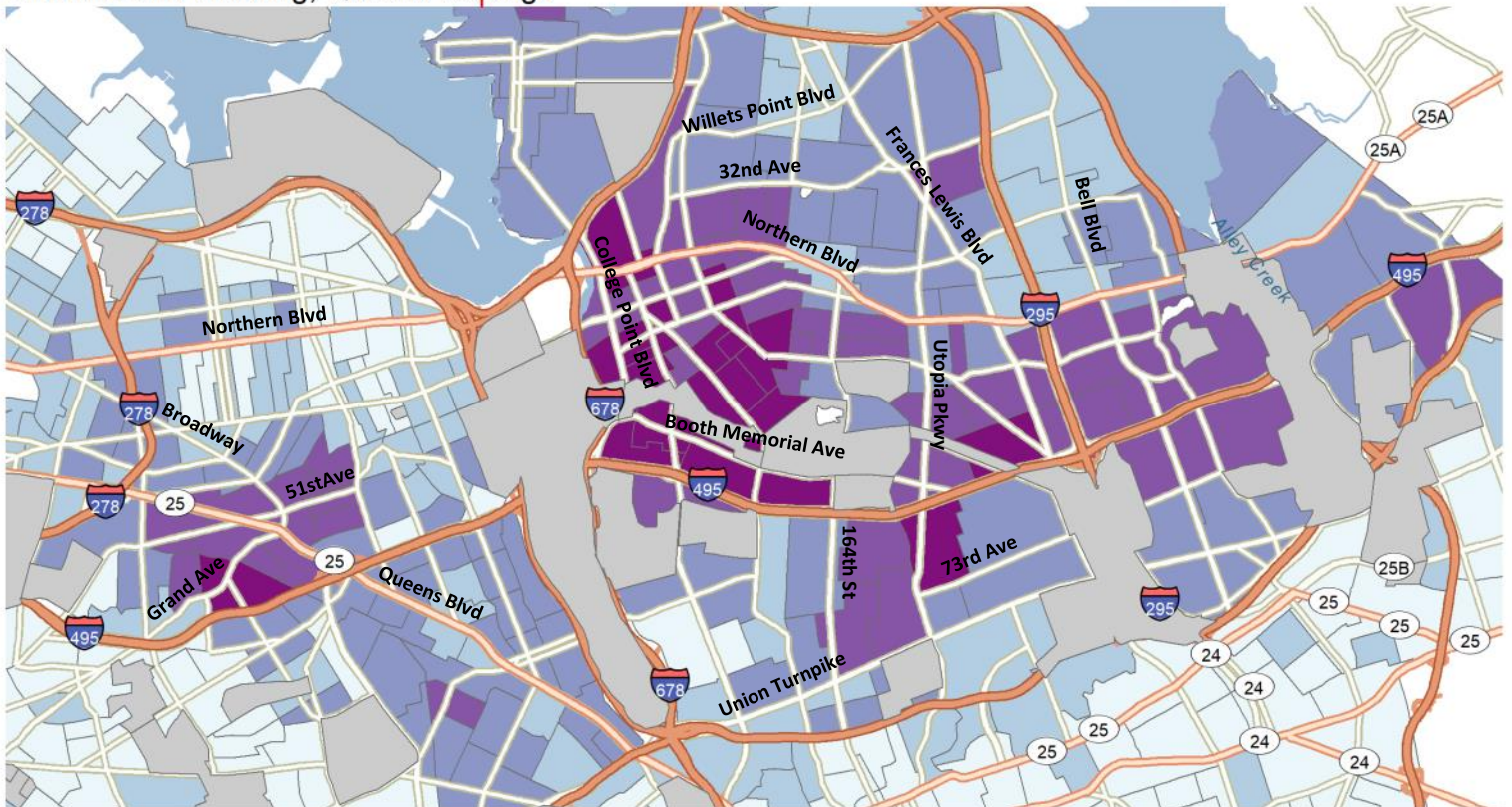
Legend

Landmarks

Chinese Population

As Percent of Total Population

- 0% - 3.6%
- 3.7% - 11.6%
- 11.7% - 25.5%
- 25.6% - 47.3%
- 47.4% - 82.1%



In 2015, working-age adults (age 18 to 64) were a larger share of New York City’s Chinese population, comprising 69 percent of the group, compared with 66 percent of all city residents. Children (under 18 years of age) and seniors (age 65 or older) each constituted 18 and 12 percent of the city’s Chinese population, compared with 21 percent and 8 percent, respectively, of the citywide population in those age groups.

Immigration and Citizenship

About 70 percent of New York City’s Chinese in 2015 were foreign-born, compared to 37 percent of all residents in the city. Chinese immigrants in New York City were just as likely to be recent arrivals as other immigrant New Yorkers, with only 10 percent arriving in 2010 or later, which was the same percentage for all immigrants. Of all the city’s foreign-born Chinese residents, 55 percent were naturalized citizens, slightly greater than the 53 percent of all foreign-born New Yorkers.

Education

Chinese in 2015 had less schooling than the city’s general population. Of the city’s 408,919 Chinese adults, 35 percent had not graduated from high school, comparatively higher than 20 percent of adults citywide.² Also, 22 percent of Chinese adults in New York City had less than a ninth-grade education – more

than double the 10 percent rate for all adult New Yorkers.

At the high end of the educational spectrum, slightly less than half (46 percent) of Chinese adults in New York City had some sort of post-secondary education, compared with slightly over half (56 percent) of all city adults. One third (33 percent) of Chinese adults in New York City had a bachelor’s degree or higher, less than the 36 percent for all city adults.

English Proficiency

New York City’s Chinese residents had a higher incidence of limited English proficiency (LEP) than New Yorkers as a whole in 2015.³ Majority (60 percent) of the city’s Chinese population spoke English well, not well, or not at all – more than double the 23 percent rate for New Yorkers overall (Figure 2). Chinese children and seniors in particular had LEP rates which were almost three times higher than their age-group peers in the general population.

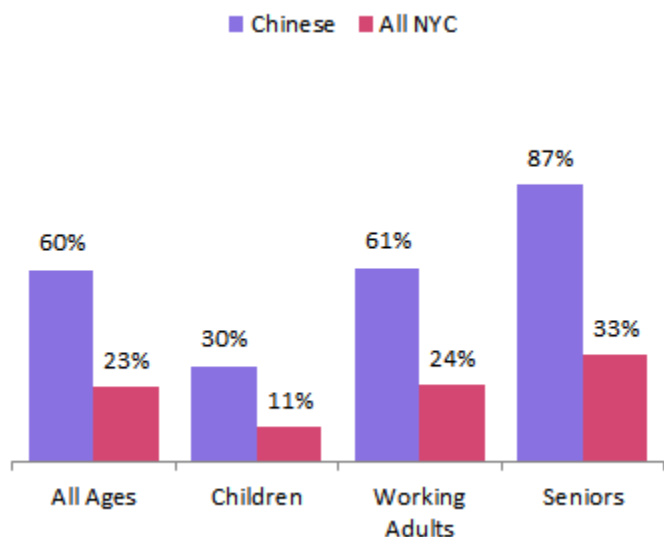
Income

Chinese New Yorkers had lower incomes to New York City residents overall for all income gauges.⁴ The Chinese median household income was \$50,577, less than the \$53,373 median for the entire city population. Median family income was \$50,889 for Chinese and \$59,285 for city residents as a whole. Additionally, Chinese per capita income was \$26,828 –significantly less than \$33,078 citywide.

Poverty

The poverty rates for Chinese residents in relation to the total New York City population were comparable overall, with the exception of seniors.⁵ Among all Chinese in the city, 21.1 percent lived below the poverty line, compared with the general New York City poverty rate of 20.6 percent. For children, 23.3 percent of Chinese experienced poverty, compared with 29.5 percent of all city children. Poverty rates for working-age adults were 20.6 percent for Chinese and 18.1 percent in general.

Figure 2: Limited English Proficiency Rates



Chinese seniors had exceptionally high poverty rates relative to their age peers, with 28.6 percent of elderly Chinese in the city lived in poverty, higher than the 18.8 percent for all seniors.

Health Insurance Coverage

Chinese residents in New York City were more likely to be without health insurance coverage, with 14.0 percent uninsured, compared with 12.4 percent for the general population. Among children, only 4.5 percent of Chinese were uninsured, compared to 3.6 percent of all children. Chinese were less likely to have private insurance than the general population, with 47.3 percent of Chinese having private insurance coverage compared to 55.0 percent of all New Yorkers.

Housing

Chinese New Yorkers in 2015 had a larger average household size than households in general (3.09 people versus 2.65 people). Chinese households were more likely to be overcrowded than households in general, with 13 percent of Chinese households and 9 percent of households in general having more than one occupant per room.

Chinese households more likely to own their homes compared to all households New York City. Less than half (46 percent) of Chinese households owned their homes, compared with about one-third (32 percent) of households in the city overall.

Endnotes

¹ Data sources used in this brief were 2011-2015 American Community Survey Selected Population Tables, and are for the Chinese Alone or in Any Combination, excluding Taiwanese, category, unless otherwise noted. Statistics from 2010 used 2006-2010 American Community Survey Selected Population Tables.

² For educational attainment, adults were defined as people age 25 or older.

³ "Limited English Proficiency" refers to individuals age 5 years and older who reported speaking English "well", "not well", or "not at all".

⁴ Household income refers to the income of all occupants of a housing unit. Family income referred to the earnings of a group of two or more people (one of whom is the householder) related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together.

⁵ Families and individuals were classified as below the poverty line if their total family income or unrelated individual income

over the last 12 months was less than the poverty threshold specified for the applicable family size, age of householder, and number of related children younger than 18 present for the year and month the data was collected. For these thresholds, please see <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-poverty-thresholds.html>.

Technical Notes

Race Categories

Beginning with the Census 2000, the Census Bureau collects data in which respondents were allowed to mark more than one race. For example, 2000 data include results for single-race as well as multiple-race responses. "Chinese Alone" corresponds to the respondents who reported only Asian Indian and no other race category. "Alone" should be considered the minimum population size in any analysis that uses Census Bureau data.

To be as inclusive as possible, this profile uses "Chinese Alone or in Any Combination" numbers where possible. "Alone or in Any Combination" corresponds to the responses (not respondents) that included Chinese, either alone or in any combination with other Asian groups or other race categories. If a respondent selected Chinese and another racial group (e.g., Chinese and black), that individual, while excluded from the "Chinese Alone" count, was tallied in the "Alone or in Any Combination" count for Asian Indian and the other racial group. Hence, some overlap in the "In Any Combination" numbers occurred. "Alone or in Any Combination" should be considered the maximum population size in any analysis that uses Census Bureau data.

About This Profile

This is one of a series of Asian American population profiles prepared by the Asian American Federation Census Information Center (CIC) to increase understanding of the rapidly-growing and diverse Asian American population in the New York metropolitan area.

Data citations from this profile should include the following acknowledgment: "Data derived from analysis by the Asian American Federation Census Information Center."

For more information regarding this profile, please contact the Asian American Federation Census Information Center at (212) 344-5878 x219 or howard.shih@aafederation.org, or visit www.aafny.org/cic/.

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120 Wall Street, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10005
Tel.: (212) 344-5878
E-mail: info@aafederation.org