



Profile of New York City’s Vietnamese 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 Vietnamese 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.

The Vietnamese were among the few Asian ethnic groups in New York City with population declines from 2010 to 2015. Relative to all residents, Vietnamese in New York City were more likely to be:

- working-age adults,
- less educated,
- limited English proficient,
- living in poverty if a senior, and
- renters and living in overcrowding housing.

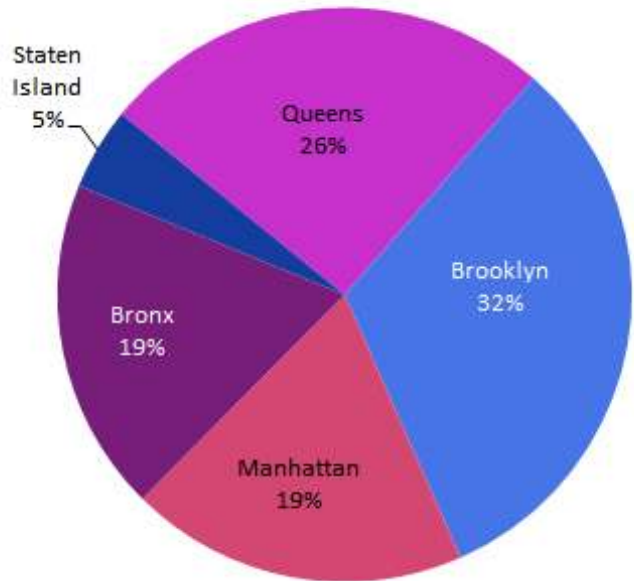


Figure 1: Vietnamese Population by Borough

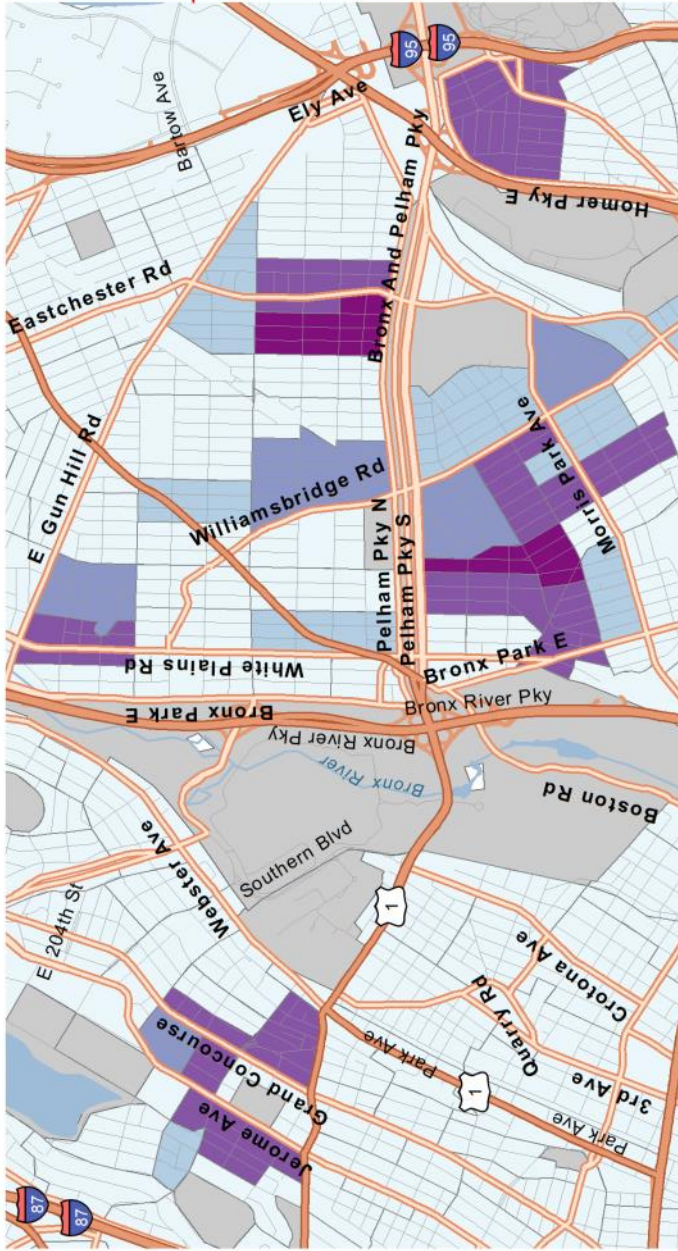
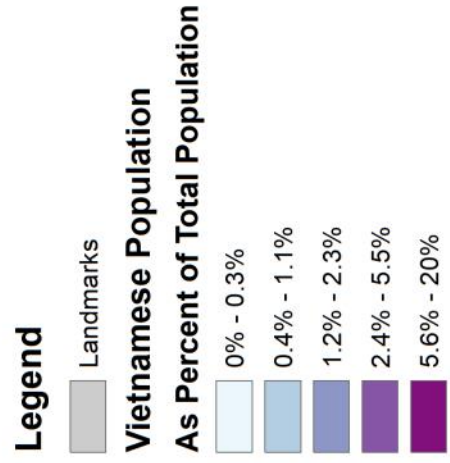
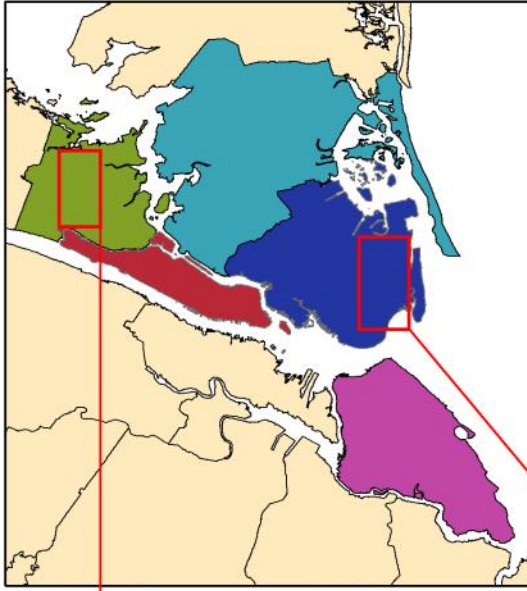
Population

From 2010 to 2015, the Vietnamese alone or in combination population in New York City decreased by 10 percent from 19,946 to 17,943 – compared with the city’s overall 4 percent increase and the 13 percent growth of the total Asian population. The Vietnamese alone population decreased by 18 percent from 17,352 in 2010 to 14,275 in 2015.

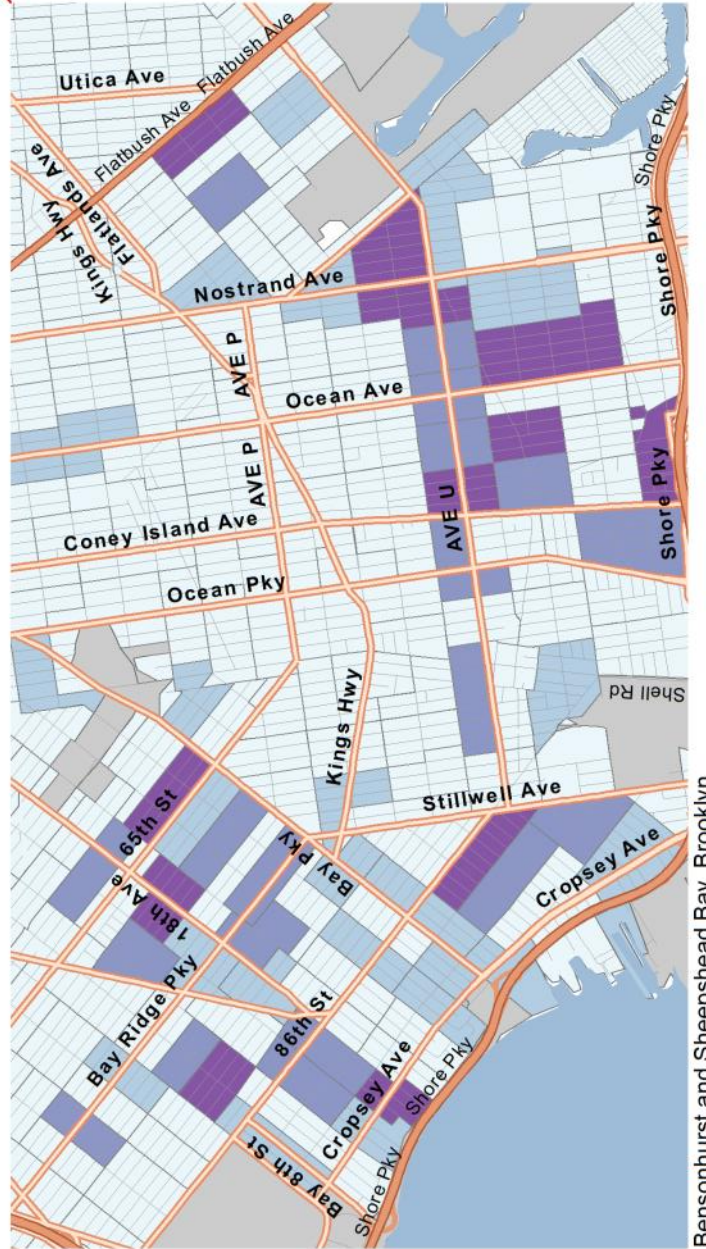
New York City was home to 50 percent of New York State’s Vietnamese residents. The majority of Vietnamese New Yorkers lived in Brooklyn (32 percent) and Queens (26 percent) (Figure 1). The remainder lived mostly in Manhattan and the Bronx. The neighborhoods with the largest Vietnamese populations were Bensonhurst and Sheepshead Bay in Brooklyn, and Kingsbridge Heights and Pelham Parkway in the Bronx.

In 2015, working-age adults (age 18 to 64) were a higher share of New York City’s Vietnamese population, comprising 71 percent of the group, compared with 66 percent for all city residents. Children (under 18 years of

Facts on Vietnamese Population in New York City	
Alone or in-Combination Population	17,943
Percent Change from 2010 to 2015	-10%
Immigration and Citizenship	
Percent of Population Foreign Born	59%
Percent of Foreign Born Who are Citizens	73%
Educational Attainment for Adults Age 25 or Older	
Percent of Adults without High School Diploma	31%
Percent of Adults with a Bachelor’s Degree	44%
Limited English Proficiency	
Percent of Population Age 5 or Older	43%
Income	
Median Household Income	\$72,147
Median Family Income	\$66,692
Per Capita Income	\$33,799
Poverty	
Percent of Total Population Living in Poverty	16.7%
Percent of Children Living in Poverty	17.1%
Percent of Seniors Living in Poverty	22.0%



Kingsbridge Heights and Pelham Parkway, Bronx Borough



Bensonhurst and Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn

age) and seniors (age 65 or older) each constituted 21 and 1 percent of the city’s Vietnamese population, compared with 21 percent and 8 percent, respectively, of the citywide population in those age groups.

Immigration and Citizenship

About 59 percent of New York City’s Vietnamese in 2015 were foreign-born, compared to 37 percent of all city residents. Vietnamese immigrants in New York City were less likely to be recent arrivals with only 7 percent arriving in 2010 or later, less than the 10 percent share of all immigrant New Yorkers. Of all the city’s foreign-born Vietnamese residents, 73 percent were naturalized citizens, greater than the 53 percent of all foreign-born New Yorkers.

Education

Vietnamese in 2015 had less schooling than the city’s general population. Of the city’s 12,461 Vietnamese adults, 31 percent had not graduated from high school, comparatively higher than 20 percent of adults citywide.² Also, 19 percent of Vietnamese adults in New York City had less than a ninth-grade education – almost double the 10 percent rate for all adult New Yorkers.

At the high end of the educational spectrum, slightly more than half (55 percent) of Vietnamese adults in New York City had some sort of post-secondary

education, almost identical to the 56 percent of all city adults. More than two-fifths (44 percent) of Vietnamese adults in New York City had a bachelor’s degree or higher, higher than one third (36 percent) of all city adults.

English Proficiency

New York City’s Vietnamese residents had a higher incidence of limited English proficiency (LEP) than New Yorkers as a whole in 2015.³ More than two fifths (43 percent) of the city’s Vietnamese population spoke English well, not well or not at all – almost double the 23 percent rate for New Yorkers overall (Figure 2).

Vietnamese children and seniors in particular had LEP rates which were much higher than their age-group peers in the general population.

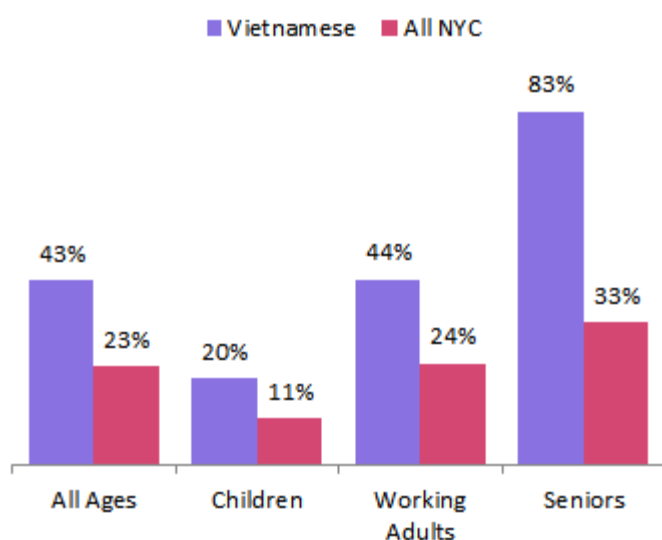
Income

Vietnamese New Yorkers had higher incomes compared to New York City residents overall for all income gauges.⁴ The Vietnamese median household income was \$72,147, more than the \$53,373 median for the entire city population. Median family income was \$66,692 for Vietnamese and \$59,285 for city residents as a whole. However, Vietnamese per capita income was only \$33,799 – not much higher than the \$33,078 per capita income citywide.

Poverty

The poverty rates for Vietnamese residents in relation to the total New York City population were lower overall.⁵ Among all Vietnamese in the city, 16.7 percent lived below the poverty line, compared with the general New York City poverty rate of 20.6 percent. For children, 17.1 percent of Vietnamese in New York City experienced poverty, compared with 29.5 percent of all city children. Among working-age adults, 16.0 percent of Vietnamese in the city lived in poverty, lower than 18.1 percent for all working age adults. For seniors, Vietnamese were much more likely to live in poverty with a 22.0 percent poverty rate compared to an 18.8 percent seniors citywide.

Figure 2: Limited English Proficiency Rates



Health Insurance Coverage

Vietnamese New Yorkers were less likely to be uninsured compared to the general population, with 10.3 percent of Vietnamese not covered by health insurance, compared with 12.4 percent of the general population. Among children, 6.6 percent of Vietnamese children were uninsured, compared to 3.6 percent of all children. Vietnamese were less likely to have public insurance with only 31.3 percent with public insurance coverage, compared to 40.3 percent of all New Yorkers.

Housing

Vietnamese New Yorkers in 2015 had a larger average household size than households in general (3.13 people versus 2.65 people). Vietnamese households were more likely to be overcrowded than households in general, with 12 percent of Vietnamese households and 9 percent of households in general having more than one occupant per room.

Vietnamese households had lower rates of owning homes compared to New York City households in general. Almost two fifths (39 percent) of Vietnamese households owned their homes, compared with 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 Vietnamese Alone or in Any Combination category, unless otherwise noted. Statistics from 2010 used 2006-2010 American Community Survey Selected Population Tables. The Alone or in Any Combination term includes anyone who identifies as an ethnicity in whole or in part and includes individuals who identify as multicultural. The term Alone includes individuals who identify with only one ethnicity.

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.htm>.

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. “Vietnamese 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 “Vietnamese Alone or in Any Combination” numbers where possible. “Alone or in Any Combination” corresponds to the responses (not respondents) that included Vietnamese, either alone or in any combination with other Asian groups or other race categories. If a respondent selected Vietnamese and another racial group (e.g., Vietnamese and black), that individual, while excluded from the “Vietnamese 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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