

Immigrants / Foreign-Born Population

Overview

Immigration to the U.S. has been at historic levels for the past 30 years in what has been called the Second Great Migration Wave. In contrast to the vast immigration from 1880 through 1920, the majority of these recent migrants have come from Latin America and Asia rather than Europe. This immigration has significantly impacted Utah, as its foreign-born population¹ increased from 58,600 in 1990 to 158,664 in 2000, accounting for at least 20% of the population growth of the state in the 1990s. About three-quarters (74,058) of this increase originated in Latin America. Because of the magnitude and regional sources of these flows, this most recent wave of immigration has dramatically increased the racial and ethnic diversity of the nation and Utah.

Immigration to the U.S.

Immigration has exerted an enormous influence on the development of the United States. From the colonial period to about 1880, immigrants came primarily from Northern and Western Europe, especially England, France, Germany, Scotland, Ireland, and Africa. The wave of migration that extended from 1880 to 1920 was much larger in scope and originated largely in Eastern and Southern Europe. By 1910, the foreign-born population of 13.5 million was 14.7% of the U.S. population.

Immigration to the U.S. was virtually unregulated until the passage of quotas in 1921. The effect of these restrictions was a reduction in the number of immigrants to the U.S. The quota system was abolished in 1965 and replaced by a system based on family reunification, skills, and refugee status—immigration is still, however, limited in total number. Further changes in U.S. immigration policy, including a blanket amnesty of 3 million undocumented persons in 1986, combined with international political and economic instability, military actions, free trade policies, and a relatively strong U.S. economy have led to the substantial increases in immigration (both legal and illegal) to the U.S.² The cumulative effect of these forces has been an expansion of the foreign-born population to an historic level of 31.1 million in 2000. This is a more than doubling of the 14.1 million foreign-born in the U.S. in 1980. The foreign-born population is now 11.0% of the total population, still well below the 14.7% share in 1910. Over half (51.7%) of this population is from Latin America, while about a fourth (26.4%) is from Asia, and 15.8% is from Europe.

Immigration to Utah

While immigration to Utah has certainly been affected by national trends, internal migration patterns (within the U.S.) and factors unique to the state have also had major influences. As is true for the nation, the Utah foreign-born population has increased significantly (both absolutely and relatively), particularly since 1990. The European share of the Utah foreign-born has diminished; the Asian and Latin American shares have exploded; and the Eastern European foreign-born share has risen somewhat. While these developments are similar to those at the national scale, Utah has differences in both the relative size and composition of its foreign-born population that derive from its historical experience.

The first large settlement to Utah by Europeans was by members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS Church) beginning in 1847. Virtually all of the Utah foreign-born population in 1880 was Northern and Western European and associated with the LDS Church. The completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 and the subsequent development of the mining industry facilitated the migration of many persons of other faiths, cultures, and regions to Utah. These included the Chinese, Southern and Eastern Europeans, and Mexicans. Even with these substantial migrations from other regions, Northern and Western Europeans continued to be the majority of Utah's foreign-born population. While they were 54% of the nation's foreign-born population in 1910, they were 80% of that of Utah.

Among the Asian born population, Japanese began arriving in Utah in small numbers early in the 20th Century, mostly associated with railroads, coal mines, agriculture, and a variety of commercial and other occupations of the growing urban area. In the 1920s and 1930s, some Filipino migrant laborers came to Utah, but it was not until the post-Korean War era that Filipinos and also Koreans arrived in Utah in larger numbers. Beginning in the 1960s, college and university students have come to Utah from the Philippines, Taiwan, Korea, Iran, and India, among others. Changes in immigration laws and the Vietnam War brought Southeast Asian immigrants, many with refugee status (particularly Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Laotian); this migration peaked in the 1980s. By 1990, Southeastern Asians became the numerically largest foreign-born Asians, overtaking the Eastern Asians.

The Pacific Islander population began arriving in small numbers in Utah around 1875, the result of LDS Church missionary efforts. The largest migration of Pacific Islanders has occurred since 1970. Tongans, Samoans, Hawaiians, Maoris, and Tahitians all established growing communities in Utah, as a result of continued LDS missionary efforts, family relations, and economic opportunity. There were 4,662 Utah residents born in Polynesia reported in the 2000 Census. This represents 2.9% of the state's foreign-born population, significantly larger than the 0.1% Polynesian share of the national population. Utah had 13.2% of the nation's foreign-born Polynesians in 2000.

Mexicans populated the Southwest Region of the present day U.S., including Utah, from at least the early 1800s, contributing to the livestock, mining, and railroad industries. With the establishment of the defense sector in Utah during World War II, the demand for labor again brought Hispanics from New Mexico and Colorado. Mexican immigrants came to the U.S. in large numbers beginning in 1942 with the establishment of the Bracero Program, which facilitated the employment of temporary guest workers in the war effort. After the war, the program was extended to provide labor primarily to the agricultural sector. When the program was terminated in 1964, the era of illegal immigration to the U.S. began.

Because migration networks were well established, undocumented migrants continued to enter the U.S. from Mexico. The volume of this migration has been affected by relative labor market conditions, the cost of migration, and policy changes. The most significant of recent policies was the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 that increased border enforcement, increased penalties to employers of undocumented workers, established an agricultural guest worker program (H-2A), and offered amnesty to long-time undocumented

¹ A person is considered "foreign-born" if that person resides, but is not a U.S. citizen at birth. In contrast, a "native" is either born in the United States (or a U.S. Island Area) or is born outside the U.S. with at least one parent who is a citizen of the U.S.

² An undocumented (also called illegal or unauthorized) immigrant is a person who entered the U.S. without legal authorization to live or work in the U.S.

residents. The latter resulted in about three million persons acquiring amnesty, two-thirds of whom were from Mexico.

Mexico is currently the single largest source country of the foreign-born population of Utah, with 66,478 persons, up from 8,922 in 1990. In fact, the migration from Mexico accounts for nearly 57.5% of the increase in the Utah foreign-born population and 11.3% of the increase of the total population of the state from 1990 to 2000. Utah has a much larger share of Mexicans in the foreign-born population (41.9%) than does the nation (29.5%). Migration from South America has also increased substantially from 3,176 foreign-born in 1990 to 12,745 in 2000.

Eastern Europeans have come to Utah in small but increasing numbers, especially since 1990 from Bosnia and Herzegovina. At 4.6%, Northern Europeans are still a larger share of the Utah foreign-born population in 2000 as compared to 3.1% nationally.

Changing Racial and Ethnic Composition of the U.S.

The U.S. Census Bureau differentiates between place of birth, and race and ethnic origin. In fact, many immigrants have been counted in the "White" category. These include persons from Eastern and Southern Europe and the Middle East, among others. While the foreign born population is relatively large and growing, the majority of persons defined as "minority" are in fact born in the U.S. (to either immigrant or resident parents) and are by definition residents. The reason recent immigration has increased the ethnic and racial diversity of the nation is because the new source regions correspond to non-White race categories (especially Asian) and Hispanic (as opposed to non-Hispanic) ethnicity.

The minority population declined to its officially lowest share of 10.2% of the U.S. population in 1940, with the Black share of the population at 9.8%. The minority share increased slightly to 11.4% in 1960. Subsequently the proportion increased dramatically, especially from 1990 to 2000 when it reached 30.9%. The nation's new largest minority is the Hispanic population. Previously, African Americans had been the largest minority with an increasing share of the national population since 1940. Certainly, American Indians outnumbered Blacks in the early history of the country; however, they were not included in the early enumerations and there was not a serious effort to count them until at least 1920. With recent international migrations from Latin America and Asia, these populations have increased more rapidly than the white non-Hispanic population. These immigrants are young and, in the case of Hispanics, have relatively high fertility rates. These have combined to result in what is, and should continue to be, a very rapidly growing minority population.

Utah's Changing Racial and Ethnic Composition

In 2000, the foreign-born share of the Utah population (7.1%) was lower than that of the nation (11.1%). The majority of immigrants to the U.S. have traditionally settled in six major gateway states: California, Texas, Florida, New York, New Jersey, and Illinois. Over the past decade the majority of immigrants may have entered through these traditional gateways, but a new settlement pattern has emerged. Rather than staying in these historic receiving states, substantial numbers continued their migration to interior states beyond established migration patterns. As one of these nontraditional interior-receiving states, the diversity of Utah increased more rapidly than that of the nation as a whole in the 1990s as the foreign-born share of the population more than doubled.

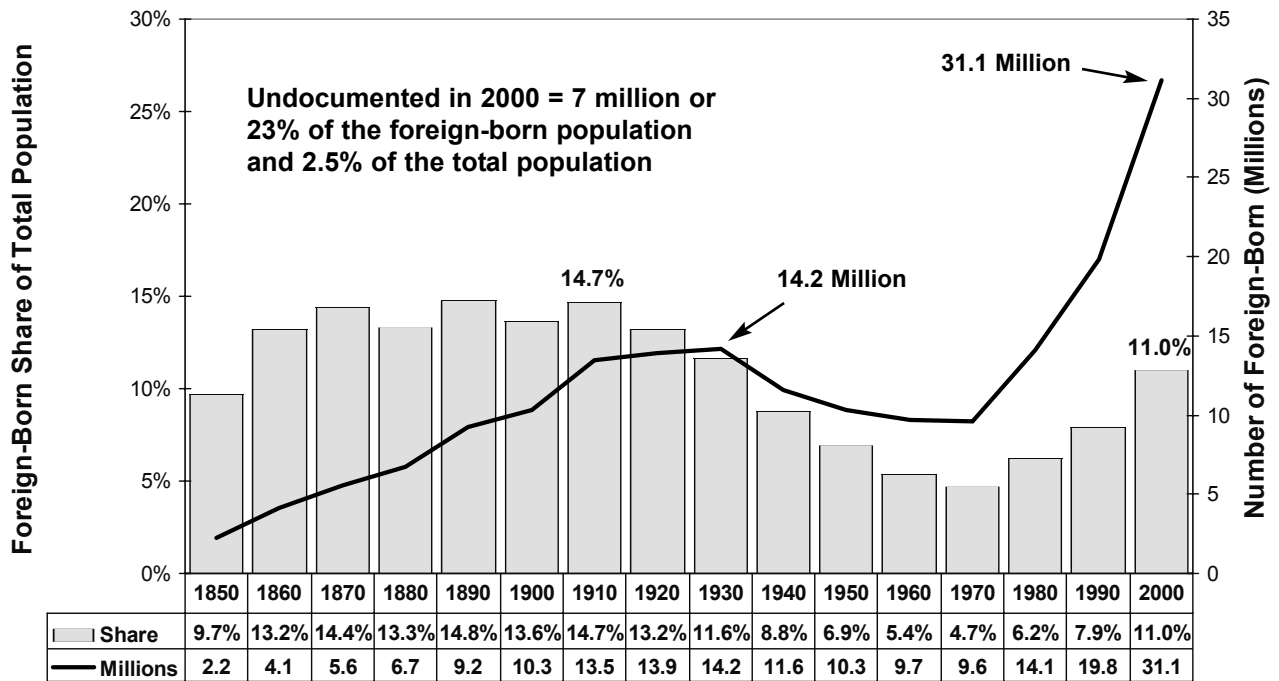
The large immigration to Utah over the past decade has dramatically increased the diversity of the state. Of particular significance is the more than doubling (138%) of the Hispanic population in Utah from 1990 to 2000, two-thirds of whom identify themselves as Mexican. The changing racial and ethnic composition of the state has been mainly determined by changes in immigration patterns over time. According to the census counts, Whites were at least 98% of the Utah population from 1850 through 1960. The official count of White non-Hispanics fell to 85% of the Utah population in 2000. The Hispanic population is by far Utah's largest minority group, composing 61% of all Utah minorities. Over the decade of the 1990s, the White non-Hispanic majority population grew by 21% while the minority population (Hispanic and non-White, non-Hispanic) grew by 117%. The Utah population grew by over half a million during the 1990s. About 35% of this population increase has occurred in the minority population.

Even though the White population continues to be the largest (albeit with a declining share) race group in Utah, it is far from a homogeneous group. About 44% of Hispanics identified themselves as White in the 2000 Census. The dissolution of the Soviet Union and the fall of the communist governments in the former Soviet satellites initiated a migration of Eastern Europeans to Utah over the last decade. These have included Russians, Polish, Bosnians and Croatians. The failed attempt to add Arab Americans as a separate race category in the 2000 census resulted in their continued categorization as White. All of these populations were classified along with the original Mormon Pioneers (LDS immigrants) of Northern and Western European nativity as "White" in the census counts. A great cultural, ethnic, and national diversity has been hidden within this category.

Conclusions

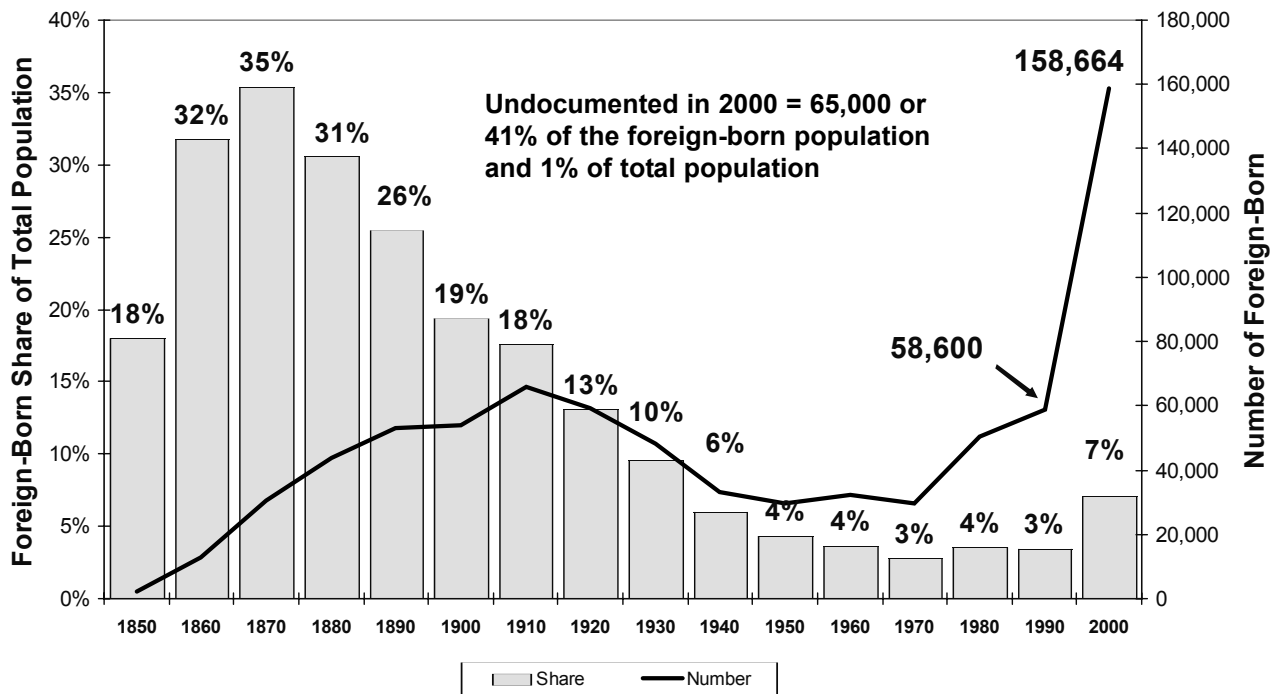
The Utah population is becoming more diverse, primarily as a result of increased international immigration, and this trend is expected to continue. Numerically, the greatest contribution to this has been the international immigration of Hispanics to Utah, especially from Mexico. This migration is national in scope and also has brought more Asians, Pacific Islanders, and Eastern Europeans. This represents a significant change from the past when Western and Northern Europe were the majority source regions for all previous census counts. Certainly, Utah will continue to be less racially diverse than the nation in the foreseeable future. However, the forces encouraging immigration to this country will continue to attract diverse populations, particularly Hispanics.

Figure 73
U.S. Foreign-Born Population: 1850 to 2000



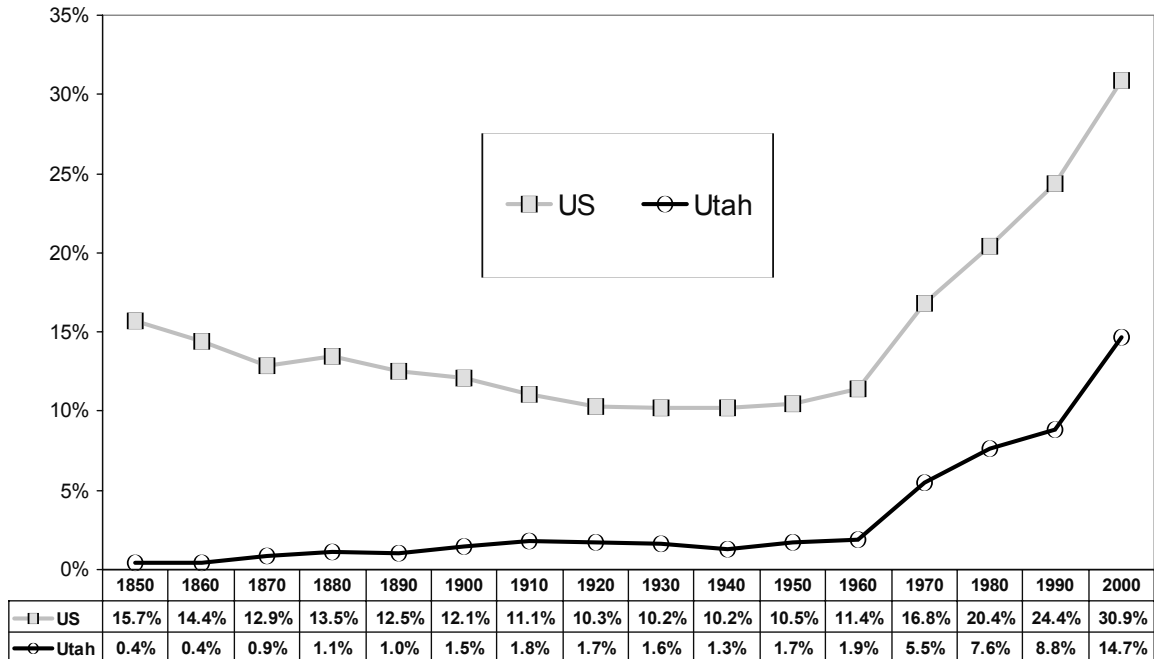
Sources: Bureau of the Census, Immigration and Naturalization Service, BEBR Calculations.

Figure 74
Utah Foreign-Born Population: 1850 to 2000



Sources: Bureau of the Census, Immigration and Naturalization Service, BEBR Calculations.

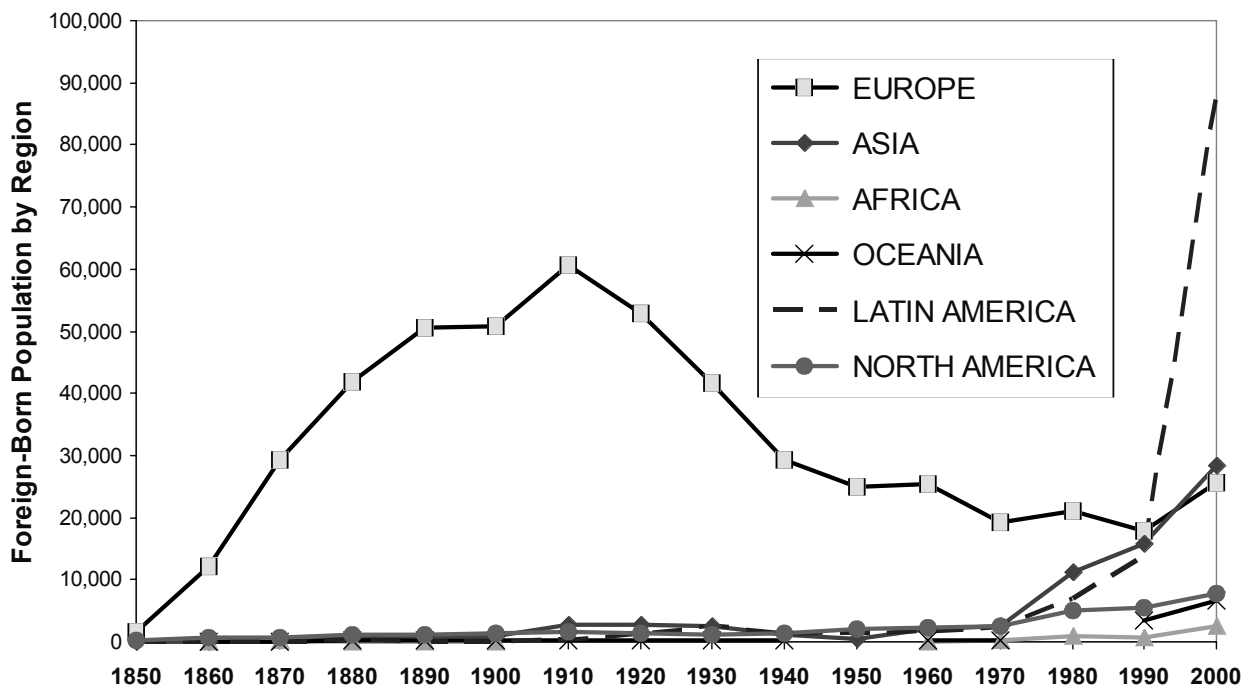
Figure 75
Minority Share of the Population: Utah & US



Sources: Bureau of the Census, Gibson and Jung (2002), Perlich (2002)

Note: Prior to 1970, minority is non-White. For 1970 and beyond, minority is non-White (may be Hispanic or non-Hispanic) plus Hispanic (may be of any race).

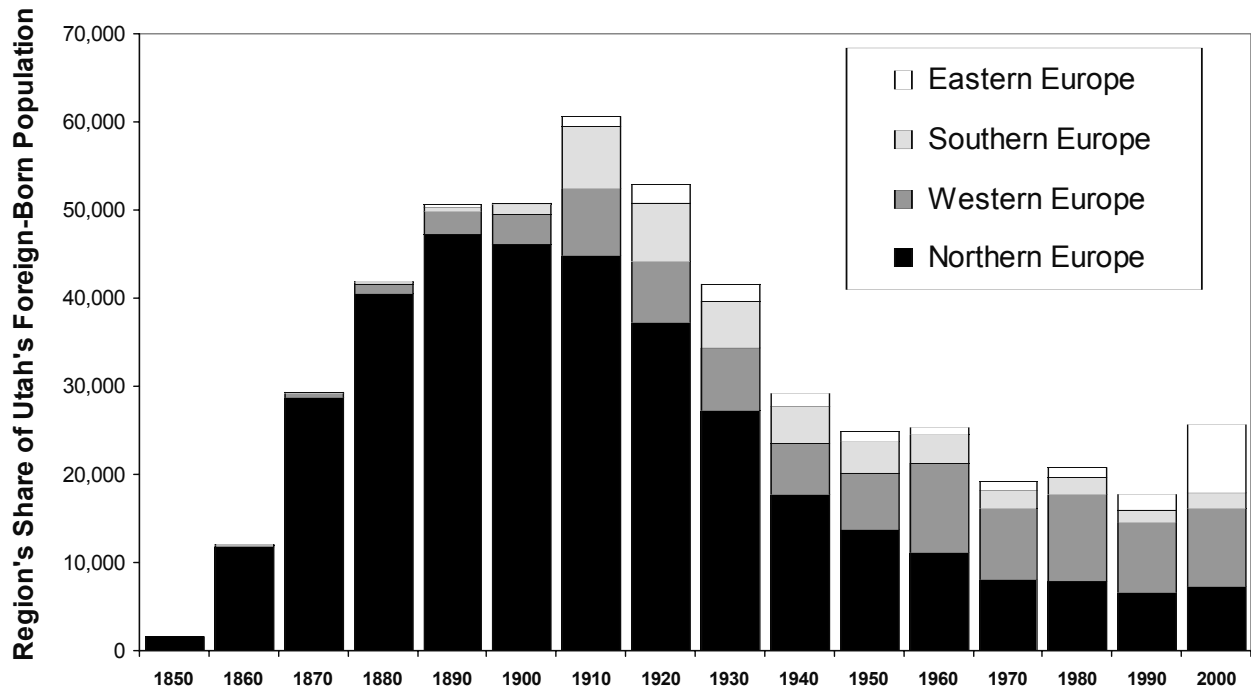
Figure 76
Source Regions of Utah's Foreign-Born Population



Sources: Bureau of the Census, Jensen (1994), BEBR Calculations.

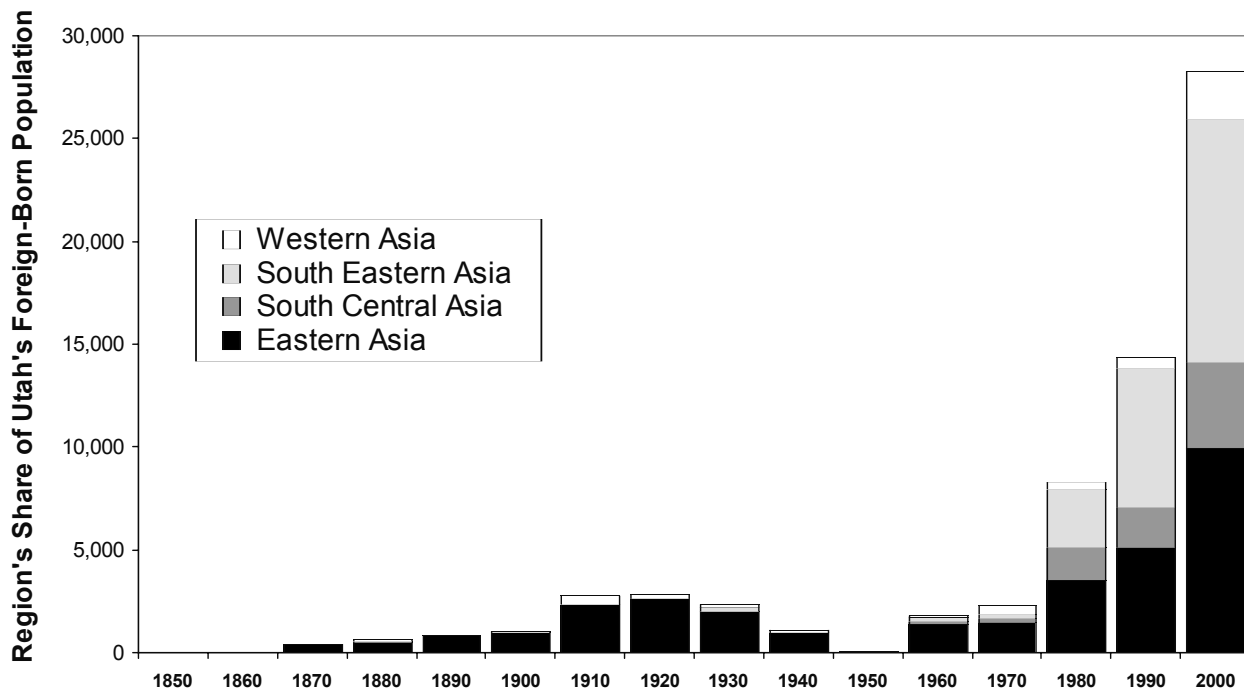
Note: Individuals not otherwise classified are omitted from the figure.

Figure 77
Utah's European Foreign-Born Population by Region



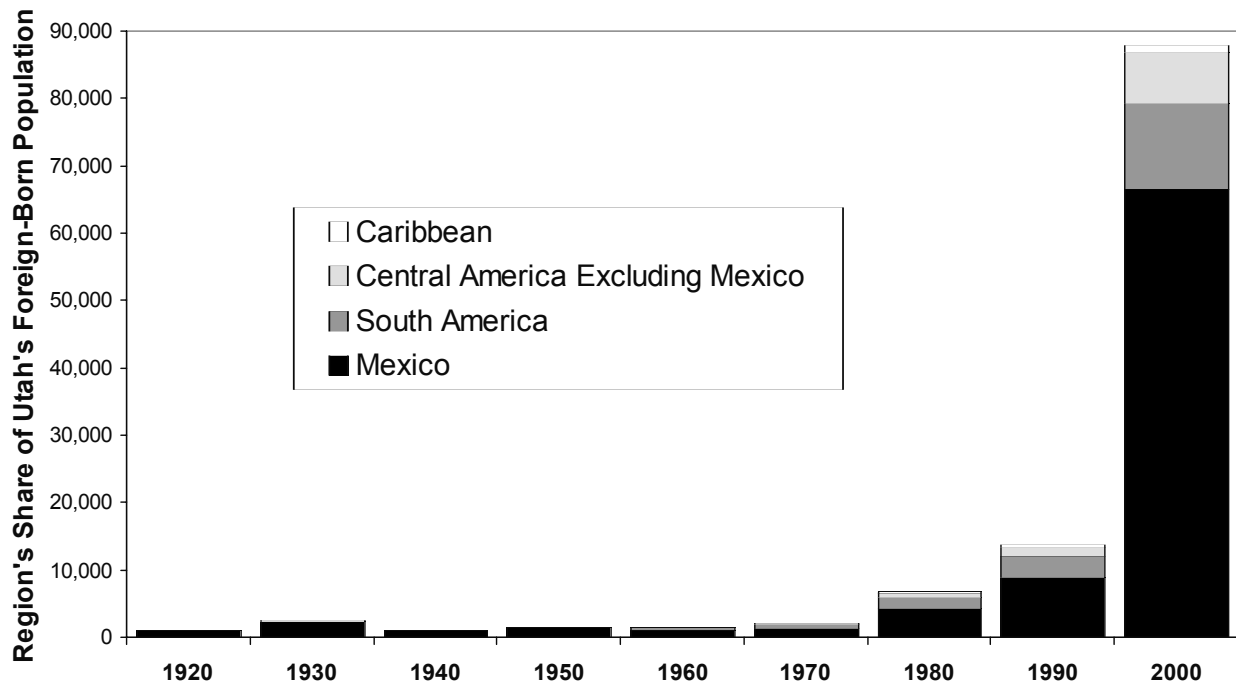
Sources: Bureau of the Census, Jensen (1994), BEBR Calculations.
 Note: Europeans not otherwise classified are omitted from the figure.

Figure 78
Utah's Asian Foreign-Born Population by Region



Source: Bureau of the Census, Jensen (1994), BEBR Calculations.
 Note: Asians not otherwise classified are omitted from the figure.

Figure 79
Utah's Latin American Foreign-Born Population by Region



Sources: Bureau of the Census, Jensen (1994), BEBR Calculations.

Table 90
Birthplace of the Foreign-Born Population: Utah and the U.S. (2000)

Region and country or area	Utah		United States	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Foreign-born population	158,664	100.0%	31,107,889	100.0%
Europe	25,640	16.2%	4,915,557	15.8%
Northern Europe	7,316	4.6%	974,619	3.1%
United Kingdom	4,784	3.0%	677,751	2.2%
Ireland	264	0.2%	156,474	0.5%
Sweden	613	0.4%	49,724	0.2%
Western Europe	8,777	5.5%	1,095,847	3.5%
Austria	238	0.2%	63,648	0.2%
France	839	0.5%	151,154	0.5%
Germany	5,086	3.2%	706,704	2.3%
Netherlands	2,020	1.3%	94,570	0.3%
Southern Europe	1,836	1.2%	934,665	3.0%
Greece	495	0.3%	165,750	0.5%
Italy	580	0.4%	473,338	1.5%
Portugal	161	0.1%	203,119	0.7%
Spain	594	0.4%	82,858	0.3%
Eastern Europe	7,675	4.8%	1,906,056	6.1%
Czechoslovakia*	460	0.3%	83,081	0.3%
Hungary	198	0.1%	92,017	0.3%
Poland	627	0.4%	466,742	1.5%
Romania	449	0.3%	135,966	0.4%
Belarus	68	0.0%	38,503	0.1%
Russia	1,392	0.9%	340,177	1.1%
Ukraine	518	0.3%	275,153	0.9%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2,526	1.6%	98,766	0.3%
Yugoslavia	454	0.3%	113,987	0.4%
Europe, not elsewhere classified	36	0.0%	4,370	0.0%
Asia	28,373	17.9%	8,226,254	26.4%
Eastern Asia	9,951	6.3%	2,739,510	8.8%
China	4,830	3.0%	1,518,652	4.9%
Hong Kong	537	0.3%	203,580	0.7%
Taiwan	1,098	0.7%	326,215	1.0%
Japan	1,908	1.2%	347,539	1.1%
Korea	3,013	1.9%	864,125	2.8%
South Central Asia	4,179	2.6%	1,745,201	5.6%
Afghanistan	104	0.1%	45,195	0.1%
Bangladesh	28	0.0%	95,294	0.3%
India	2,030	1.3%	1,022,552	3.3%
Iran	1,050	0.7%	283,226	0.9%
Pakistan	749	0.5%	223,477	0.7%
South Eastern Asia	11,822	7.5%	3,044,288	9.8%
Cambodia	944	0.6%	136,978	0.4%
Indonesia	323	0.2%	72,552	0.2%
Laos	1,659	1.0%	204,284	0.7%
Malaysia	233	0.1%	49,459	0.2%
Philippines	2,680	1.7%	1,369,070	4.4%
Thailand	959	0.6%	169,801	0.5%
Vietnam	4,920	3.1%	988,174	3.2%
Western Asia	2,307	1.5%	658,603	2.1%
Iraq	545	0.3%	89,892	0.3%
Israel	198	0.1%	109,719	0.4%
Jordan	113	0.1%	46,794	0.2%
Lebanon	339	0.2%	105,910	0.3%
Syria	99	0.1%	54,561	0.2%
Turkey	113	0.1%	78,378	0.3%
Armenia	377	0.2%	65,280	0.2%
Asia, not elsewhere classified	114	0.1%	38,652	0.1%

* Includes Czech Republic and Slovakia

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3, Matrix PCT19.

Table 90 (continued)
Birthplace of the Foreign-Born Population: Utah and the U.S. (2000)

Region and country or area	Utah		United States	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Foreign-born population	158,664	100.0%	31,107,889	100.0%
Africa	2,414	1.5%	881,300	2.8%
Eastern Africa	880	0.6%	213,299	0.7%
Ethiopia	151	0.1%	69,531	0.2%
Middle Africa	25	0.0%	26,900	0.1%
Northern Africa	590	0.4%	190,491	0.6%
Egypt	99	0.1%	113,396	0.4%
Southern Africa	620	0.4%	66,496	0.2%
South Africa	612	0.4%	63,558	0.2%
Western Africa	179	0.1%	326,507	1.0%
Ghana	80	0.1%	65,572	0.2%
Nigeria	71	0.0%	134,940	0.4%
Sierra Leone	-	0.0%	20,831	0.1%
Africa, not elsewhere classified	120	0.1%	57,607	0.2%
Oceania	6,612	4.2%	168,046	0.5%
Australia and New Zealand Subregion	1,516	1.0%	83,837	0.3%
Australia	713	0.4%	60,965	0.2%
Melanesia	123	0.1%	32,305	0.1%
Micronesia	311	0.2%	16,469	0.1%
Polynesia	4,662	2.9%	35,194	0.1%
Oceania, not elsewhere classified	-	0.0%	241	0.0%
Latin America	87,883	55.4%	16,086,974	51.7%
Caribbean	1,015	0.6%	2,953,066	9.5%
Barbados	35	0.0%	52,172	0.2%
Cuba	340	0.2%	872,716	2.8%
Dominican Republic	313	0.2%	687,677	2.2%
Haiti	112	0.1%	419,317	1.3%
Jamaica	73	0.0%	553,827	1.8%
Trinidad and Tobago	35	0.0%	197,398	0.6%
Central America	74,123	46.7%	11,203,637	36.0%
Mexico	66,478	41.9%	9,177,487	29.5%
Other Central America	7,645	4.8%	2,026,150	6.5%
Costa Rica	444	0.3%	71,870	0.2%
El Salvador	3,201	2.0%	817,336	2.6%
Guatemala	2,389	1.5%	480,665	1.5%
Honduras	865	0.5%	282,852	0.9%
Nicaragua	405	0.3%	220,335	0.7%
Panama	267	0.2%	105,177	0.3%
South America	12,745	8.0%	1,930,271	6.2%
Argentina	1,735	1.1%	125,218	0.4%
Bolivia	428	0.3%	53,278	0.2%
Brazil	2,507	1.6%	212,428	0.7%
Chile	1,405	0.9%	80,804	0.3%
Colombia	1,450	0.9%	509,872	1.6%
Ecuador	889	0.6%	298,626	1.0%
Guyana	78	0.0%	211,189	0.7%
Peru	2,357	1.5%	278,186	0.9%
Venezuela	1,581	1.0%	107,031	0.3%
Northern America	7,735	4.9%	829,442	2.7%
Canada	7,722	4.9%	820,771	2.6%
Born at sea	7	0.0%	316	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3, Matrix PCT19.