

Faith on the Move: The Religious Affiliation of International Migrants

Fact Sheet: United States

KEY FINDINGS

- **The United States has been the leading destination for many, though not all, religious groups.** The U.S. has been the No. 1 destination for Christians. Of the 43 million foreign-born people living in the United States as of 2010, an estimated 32 million (74%) are Christian. The U.S. also has been the top destination for Buddhist migrants (including many from Vietnam) and for people with no particular religion (including many from China).
- The U.S. has been the world's second-leading destination for Hindu migrants, after India, and for Jewish migrants, after Israel. Among Muslim migrants, however, the U.S. ranks just seventh as a destination – behind Saudi Arabia, Russia, Germany, France, Jordan and Pakistan. There were more than 2 million Muslim immigrants living in the U.S. as of 2010, representing about 5% of the U.S. immigrant population. This is a much lower share of the immigrant population than in Europe, where Muslims represent about 25% or more of foreign-born people living in many countries, including France, the Netherlands, Italy and Germany.
- The U.S. leads all other countries as a destination for international migrants overall. The U.S. has more than three times as many migrants as Russia (12 million), the second-leading destination. One of every five international migrants alive today resides in the United States.
- Mexico has been by far the largest country of origin for U.S. immigrants. In fact, the U.S. has received about as many migrants from Mexico alone (more than 12 million, including both legal immigrants and unauthorized ones) as any other nation has received *from all sources combined*. Among the other leading countries of origin for U.S. immigrants are the Philippines (1.8 million), India (1.7 million), China (1.4 million) and Germany (1.2 million).
- While the U.S. has taken in more immigrants than any other country, the share of the U.S. population that is foreign-born (13%) is about average for Western industrial democracies. Indeed, among the 159 countries with populations of 1 million or more, the U.S. ranks 26th in the percentage of residents who were born abroad. By comparison, first-generation (foreign-born) immigrants make up more than 20% of the population in Canada and Australia, two other countries that historically have attracted a large number of immigrants.

Faith on the Move and the Global Religion and Migration Database are part of the [Pew-Templeton Global Religious Futures project](#), an effort funded by [The Pew Charitable Trusts](#) and the [John Templeton Foundation](#) to analyze religious change and its impact on societies around the world.

The full report, which includes a companion quiz, interactive map and sortable data tables, is available on the Pew Forum's [website](#). For a brief summary of the religious makeup of immigrants from a global perspective, see the [global fact sheet](#). For more on the European Union, see the [European Union fact sheet](#).