Tennessee Demographics

This project was supported by Grant Nos. 15JOVW-24-GK-03012-MUMU and 15JOVW-23-GK-05119-MUMU awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this program are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

Tennessee (2024)*

- Total foreign-born population – 472,751
- 6.5% of the state's ~ 7.2 million people are foreign born
  - 39.6% naturalized citizens
  - 24% legal permanent residents (as of 2023)*
  - 36% temporary visa holders or undocumented immigrants
- 197.3% rise in immigrant population from 2000 to 2024
- Length of time immigrants have lived in the U.S.
  - 24% entered before 1999
  - 23.6% entered 2000 - 2009
  - 48.5% since 2010
- 15.1% of children under age 18 have one or more immigrant parents
  - 79.1% of these children are native-born U.S. citizens

*Source: Migration Policy Institute (MPI), Migration Data Hub, "State Immigration Data Profiles: Demographics," (April 2026).

Tennessee – Countries/Regions of Origin & Limited English Proficiency (LEP)(2024)*

- Latin America – 52.8%
  - Mexico (20.8%)
  - Other Central America (18.6%)
  - South America (8.4%)
  - Caribbean (4.9%)
- Asia – 21.4%
  - Southeastern Asia (7.6%)
  - Eastern Asia (6.0%)
  - India (5.7%)
- Africa – 10.6%
- Europe – 9.3%
- Middle East – 3.1%
- Canada – 2.3%
- Oceania – 0.5%
- Language spoken
  - 9.3% of people in the state who speak a language other than English at home
  - 47.6% of foreign-born persons are LEP - speak English less than "very well"

Source: MPI Data Hub, "State Immigration Data Profiles: Demographics," (April, 2026)

Tennessee - Languages Spoken at Home (2024)*

- Spanish (394,033)
- Arabic (30,232)
- French (including Cajun) (16,016)
- Chinese (including Mandarin, Cantonese) (15,846)
- German (13,235)
- Swahili or Other Languages of Central, Eastern, and Southern Africa (12,576)
- Vietnamese (12,316)
- Tagalog (including Filipino) (12,055)
- Korean (10,738)
- Hindi (8,608)
- Nepali, Marathi, or Other Indic Languages (8,477)
- Yiddish, Pennsylvania Dutch, or Other West Germanic Languages (6,565)
- Thai, Lao, or Other Tai-Kadai Languages (5,953)
- Amharic, Somali, or Other Afro-Asiatic Languages (5,005)
- Yoruba, Twi, Igbo, or Other Languages of Western Africa (4,914)
- Portuguese (4,504)
- Hebrew (4,501)
- Telugu (4,374)

* Source: MPI Data Hub, "State Immigration Data Profiles: Language and Education," (April, 2026)

Tennessee - LEP (2024)*

- Limited English Proficiency (Speak English less than very well)
  - Naturalized citizens – 31.8%
  - Noncitizens – 58.2%
- Limited English Proficiency by language spoken at home
  - Vietnamese (62.7%)
  - Arabic (58.7%)
  - Thai, Lao, or Other Tai-Kadai Languages (54.4%)
  - Spanish (48.2%)
  - Korean (46.3)
  - Chinese (including Mandarin, Cantonese) (40.8%)
  - Swahili or Other Languages of Central, Eastern, and Southern Africa (36.9%)
  - Nepali, Marathi, or Other Indic Languages (28.3%)
  - Tagalog (including Filipino) (23.5%)
  - Yiddish, Pennsylvania Dutch, or Other West Germanic Languages (20.9%)
  - French (including Cajun) (17.1%)
  - German (7.8%)

* Source: MPI Data Hub, "State Immigration Data Profiles: Language and Education," (April, 2026)