

King County Blooms with International Immigration Boom

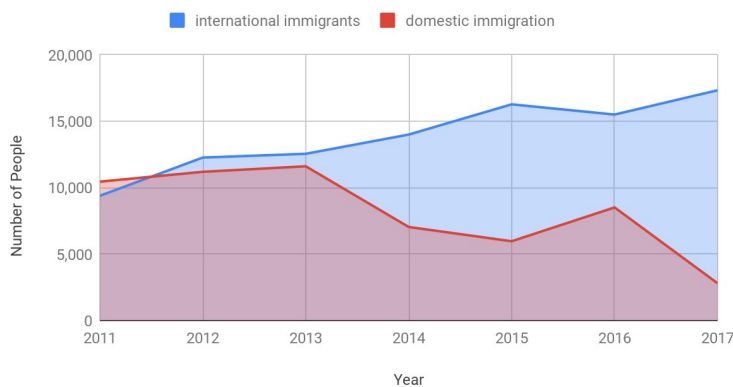
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It's no secret that Seattle has experienced a population boom over the past decade. This increase has been attributed to the growth of tech companies like Amazon and Microsoft, and has boosted immigration throughout King County. Looking closer at these numbers, it's clear that this growth is hardly a domestic expansion, sourcing from all over the world, mainly Asian and Latin American countries. The foreign-born population of King County is an estimated 515,919 people as of 2017, while the total population of King County is 2,118,119 people. This means that about 24% of the total population are foreign-born. But where is King County's foreign-born population coming from?

Domestic vs. International Immigration

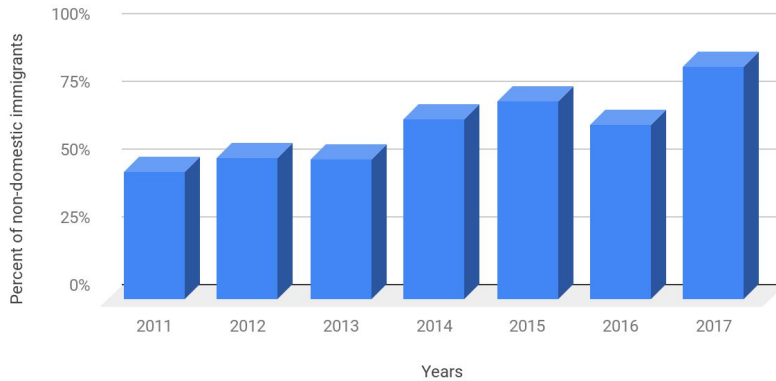
While domestic immigration (immigration from within US territories) decreased significantly since 2013—by nearly 13.3%—international immigration has only increased. As you can see on the graph below, domestic immigration was consistent with international immigration from 2011-2013, but 2013 was the turning point for international immigration to increase, and domestic immigration to decrease. The divide has only gotten larger and the trend for future predictions is pointing to international immigrants increasing more in numbers, and domestic immigrants decreasing sharply. Most of the immigrants entering King County each year are now international.

Annual domestic immigration vs. international immigration by year



Of the total annual immigrants, the percentage of international immigrants has nearly doubled from 47.3% in 2011 to 86.08% in 2017. With the exception of a slight lull in 2016, the percentage of immigrants will likely continue to increase.

Percent of immigrants to King County who are international by year

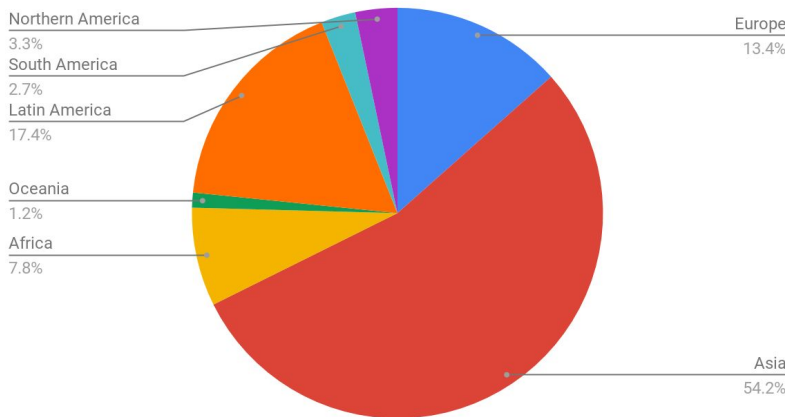


This is a huge rise, and it gets even more interesting when we compare it to the total growth of King County. From 2000 to 2017, King County’s population has grown by about 451,000 residents, of that 248,000 were foreign born, 54% of the total growth. It is clear that the foreign-born population has contributed greatly to the population boom of the past decade.

Breakdown By Country:

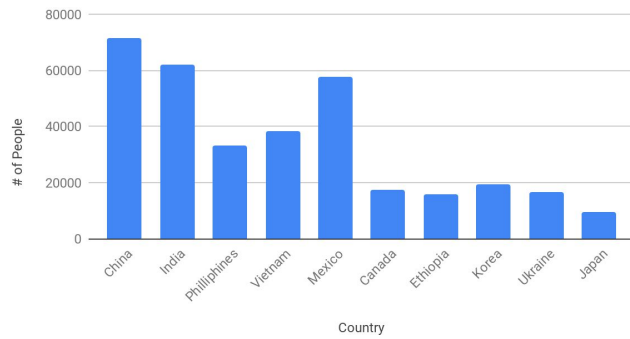
As you can see in this chart of regions, more than half of the foreign-born population of King County in 2017 was from Asia and nearly 20% was from Latin America.

Foreign Born Population by Region 2017



Of the above regions, the top 10 Countries that boast nearly 66% of the foreign born population in King County as of 2017, are China, India, the Philippines, Vietnam, Mexico, Canada, Ethiopia, Korea, Ukraine, and Japan. Here you can see that the three countries with the highest number of immigrants to King County are China, India, and Mexico. These countries have contributed the most to the population boom from 2000 to 2017.

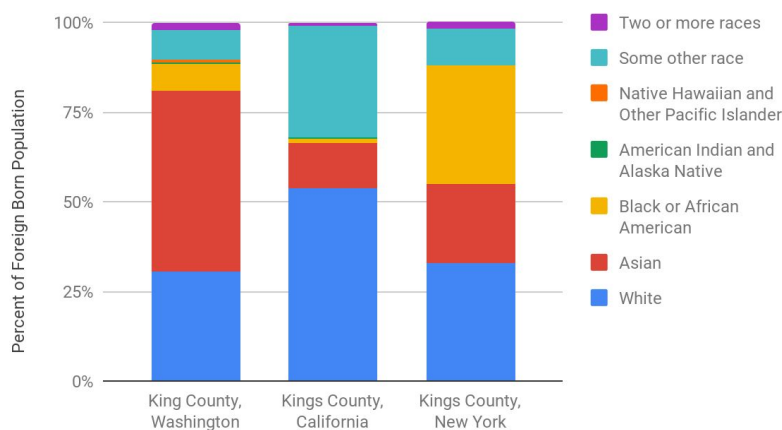
Foreign Born Population, by Top 10 Countries



Comparison to Other “King” Counties

The prominence of Asian countries of origin have visible effects on the racial makeup of King County’s foreign born population, which reflects a majority of Asian residents—just over 50%. These demographics have major differences when compared with other “King” counties. In Kings County, New York, white and black residents tie for the majority in the foreign born population, with 32.8% each, while Asian makes up approximately 20%. In Kings County, California, white residents make up just over 50% of foreign born residents, the Asian population is the smallest among the three counties, at about 10%. While the racial demographics of King County, Washington are decidedly different, the portion of the population that foreign born individuals represent lays between the other two “King” counties. Foreign born residents represent only 18.5% of the population in Kings County, California, and 37% in Kings County, New York. Foreign born individuals comprise 22% of King County, Washington, although this number has been on the rise.

Race of Foreign Born Population



Conclusion:

We found that the Seattle population boom is half in part to the boom in international immigration, especially from Asian countries, like China and India, and neighboring Mexico. International immigration is on the rise, as King County is becoming a coveted place to live, with major tech companies in the vicinity. King County is growing rapidly, and as a result diversifying rapidly, shaping a new era for our region.

Sources + URLs:

<https://www.kingcounty.gov/independent/forecasting/King%20County%20Economic%20Indicators/Demographics.aspx>

https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=PEP_2017_PEP_TCOMP&prodType=table

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Here's a link to our spreadsheet:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1aofVx7sPwOFIE1t_sqnyacylabaG0a7JfQC56OtV-tA/edit?usp=sharing