

# DATA PROFILES OF IMMIGRANTS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

## CARIBBEAN IMMIGRANTS

Demographics

Economic Opportunity

Education

Health

Housing

This is part of a data series on immigrants in the District of Columbia to help the Mayor's Office and its partners better understand and serve DC's immigrant community. The city's immigrant population has grown steadily, from 33,600 to 95,400 people between 1970 and 2012–16 estimates. Today, immigrants make up 15 percent of DC's population and have contributed to the demographic, economic, and cultural growth of our nation's capital. The series highlights four major groups, Latinos, Asians and Pacific Islanders (AAPI), Africans, and Caribbean Islanders, who collectively represent 3 out of 4 immigrants living in DC.

The main sources of data used in these fact sheets were microdata from the 2000 Decennial Census long form and 2012–16 American Community Survey, obtained from IPUMS-USA.<sup>1</sup> Immigrants are defined as people who were born outside of the US, excluding people born overseas to parents who were US citizens and people born in most US territories. Populations included in the analysis were determined by the Mayor's Office of Community Affairs according to places of origin that the office felt aligned best with the populations it served. These fact sheets include immigrants from the Caribbean islands, except for people from Spanish-speaking countries and territories who are included in the analysis of Latino immigrants because of shared culture and characteristics, as well as people born in the US Virgin Islands.

<sup>1</sup> Steven Ruggles, Katie Genadek, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, and Matthew Sobek, *Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 7.0 [dataset]* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.18128/D010.V7.0>.

# DEMOGRAPHICS

DECEMBER 2018

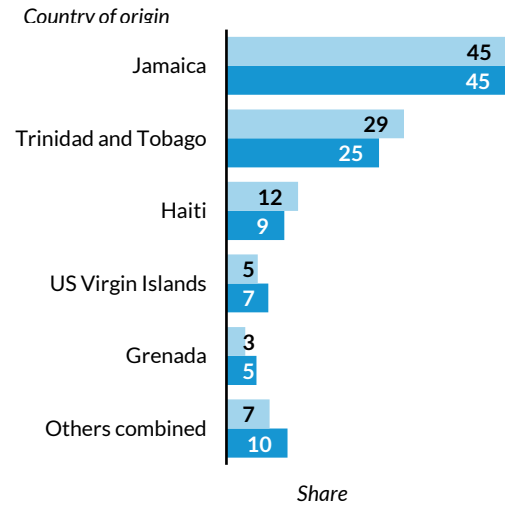
Between 2000 and 2012–16, the size of DC’s Caribbean population stayed relatively stable, with around 6,000 immigrants from Caribbean islands residing in DC. Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Haiti are the most-represented countries among DC’s Caribbean immigrants. As noted on the cover, Caribbean immigrants included in this analysis exclude immigrants from Spanish-speaking islands that are featured in the Latino fact sheets.

Caribbean immigrants in DC have a long tenure in the US. On average, over 60 percent of DC’s Caribbean population has been in the country for 21 years or more. Since 2000, the average tenure in the United states has increased and there are fewer recent arrivals from the Caribbean.

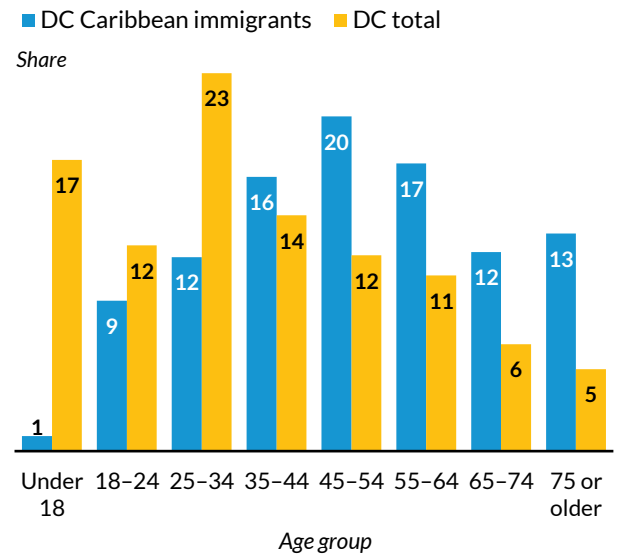
DC’s Caribbean immigrants are significantly older than DC’s population overall. Seniors age 65 and older represented a growing share of DC’s Caribbean immigrants, having risen from 15 to 25 percent. The share of children younger than 18 among Caribbean immigrants declined since 2000.

Eighty-eight percent of Caribbean immigrants included in the analysis speak English at home and small percentages of Caribbean immigrants speak French, Spanish, or Haitian Creole. Linguistic isolation is less of a challenge for Caribbean immigrants compared with other immigrant groups. Less than 2 percent of Caribbean immigrants live in linguistically isolated households in which no one age 14 or older in the home speaks English at least very well.

## Jamaicans Represent Almost Half of DC’s Caribbean Immigrant Population



## Caribbean Immigrants in DC Are Significantly Older than the Population at Large



# ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

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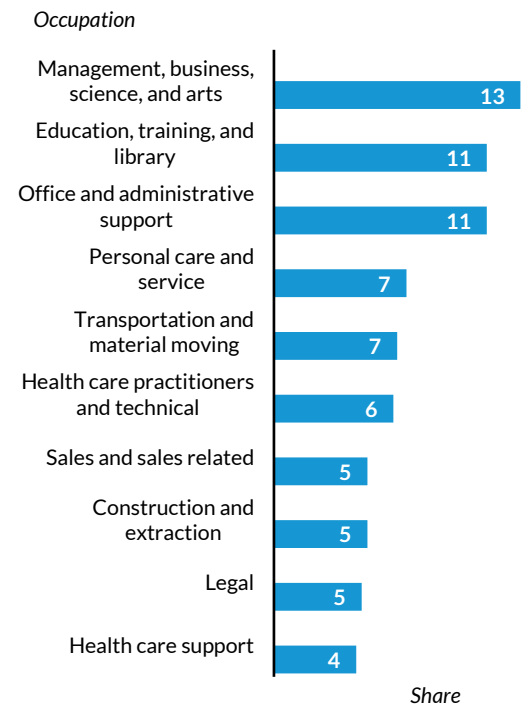
Caribbean immigrants made up 3,680 of the 381,500 members of DC's labor force in 2012–16. The unemployment rate for Caribbean workers age 16 and older was 8.0 percent, slightly lower than DC's overall rate of 8.7 percent.

- 13 percent of Caribbean immigrants worked in management, business, science, and arts occupations
- 11 percent were in education, training, and library jobs
- 11 percent were in office and administrative support jobs

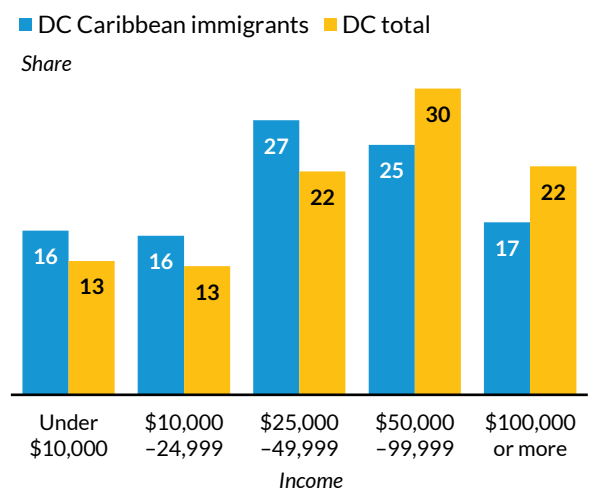
Despite many of these occupations paying relatively higher wages, earnings for Caribbean workers tended to be lower compared with all DC workers. For example, fewer Caribbean workers earned \$100,000 or more annually than DC workers overall.

Caribbean immigrants were slightly more likely to have income from their own business (8 percent) than DC residents overall (6 percent). They were much less likely to have investment income, however. Only 11 percent of Caribbean immigrants had income from savings accounts, stocks, or other financial investments, compared with 15 percent of all DC residents.

## Many Caribbean Workers Held Management, Business, Science, and Arts Occupations



## Wages for Caribbean Immigrants Tended to Be Lower than DC Workers Overall



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# EDUCATION

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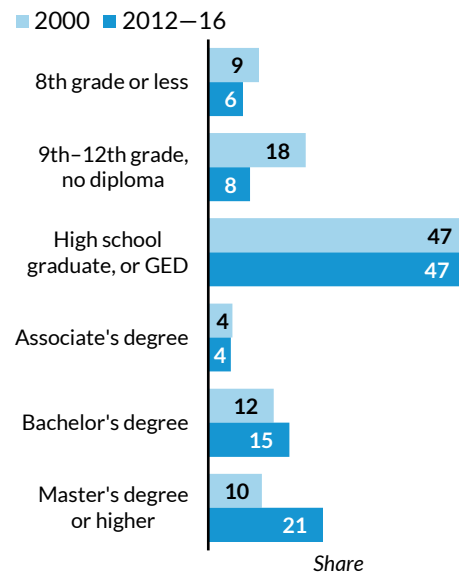
The Washington region is one of the most highly educated in the country, and many well-paying jobs with good benefits require a level of education beyond a high school diploma.

The share of Caribbean immigrants in DC with a four-year college education or better increased from 22 percent to 36 percent between 2000 and 2012–16, mainly driven by larger numbers of Caribbean immigrants who had earned a master’s degree or higher. In fact, the share of Caribbean immigrants with an advanced degree has doubled since 2000.

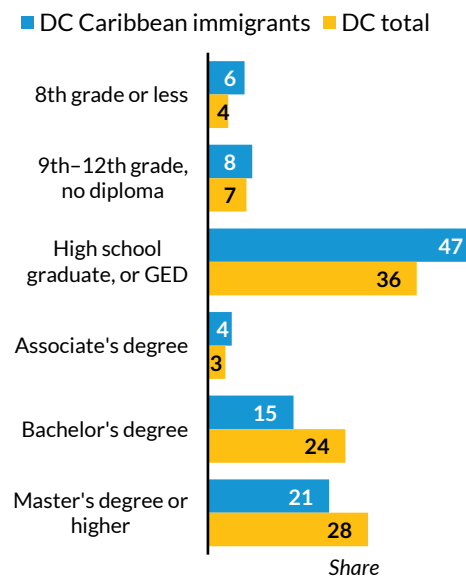
Nevertheless, when compared with all DC adults, fewer Caribbean immigrants in DC had bachelor’s or master’s degrees but more of them were high school graduates.

Caribbean immigrants younger than 18 only make up less than 1 percent of the total Caribbean immigrant population, making it hard to obtain information about where Caribbean immigrant youth are in the education system because of small sample sizes.

The Share of Caribbean Immigrants with a Master’s Degree More than Doubled Since 2000



Postsecondary Education Attainment Rate of Caribbean Immigrants Is Lower than DC Overall



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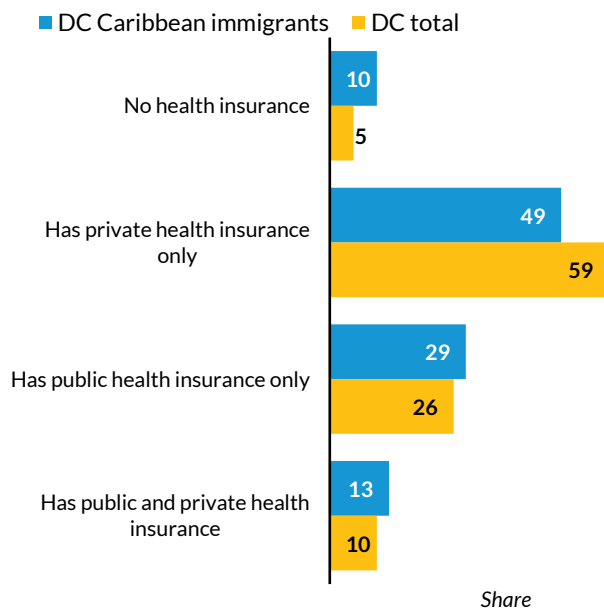
# HEALTH

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DC’s health insurance marketplace, DC Health Link, has helped increase the rates of health insurance coverage for the city’s residents. Nine out of ten Caribbean immigrants had some form of health insurance in 2012–16.

Approximately 60 percent of all Caribbean immigrants had some form of private health insurance. Caribbean immigrants were more likely to depend solely on private insurance than the DC population overall. Another 29 percent of Caribbean immigrants had only public insurance coverage, and 13 percent had both private and public health insurance. Coverage gaps were higher for Caribbean immigrants than all DC residents. Ten percent of Caribbean immigrants had no health insurance at all, two times higher than in the rate for DC.

## The Most Common Insurance Source for Caribbean Immigrants Was Public Insurance in 2012–16



90 percent of Caribbean immigrants had some form of health insurance.

Health insurance coverage for Caribbean immigrants is not evenly distributed across demographics and socioeconomic status. Caribbean immigrants ages 25 to 34 had the lowest rates of coverage, with only 73 percent having some form of health insurance.

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# HOUSING

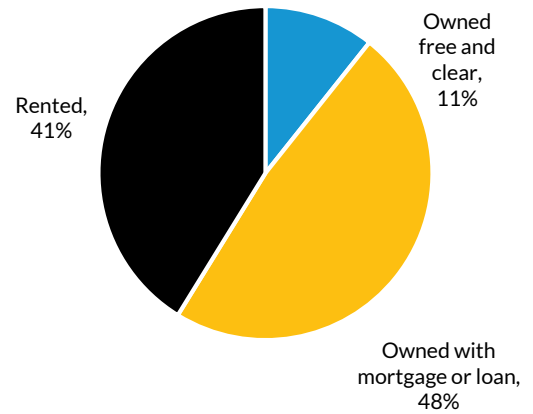
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In 2012–16, approximately 41 percent of Caribbean immigrants rented and 59 percent owned their home. Caribbean immigrants had a higher homeownership rate than the city average (43 percent). One in ten Caribbean immigrants owned their homes free and clear, and 48 percent were paying a loan or mortgage on the property. The percentage of homes owned free and clear for Caribbean immigrants increased more than 5 percentage points since 2000, while the share of homes owned with mortgage or loan stayed roughly the same.

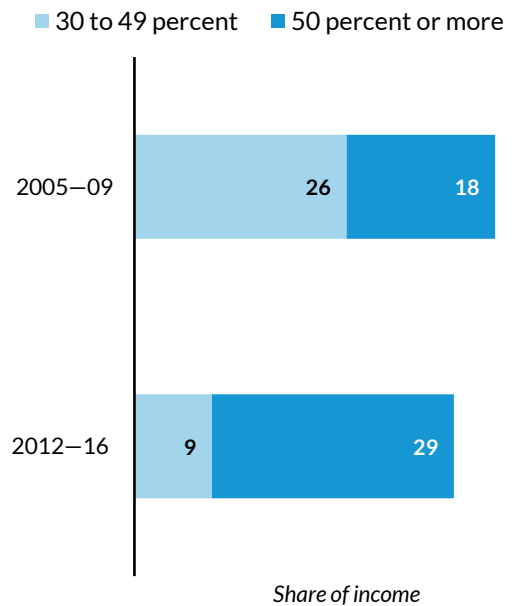
Caribbean immigrants were less likely to be rent burdened in 2012–16 than renters in DC overall. Sixty-one percent of Caribbean immigrants are spending less than 30 percent of their income on rent, compared with 54 percent in DC overall.

- Two thirds of Caribbean immigrant renters spent less than 30 percent of their income on rent.
- Although a lower percentage were rent burdened compared with all DC renters, the share of Caribbean renters who were severely burdened (spent 50 percent or more of their income on rent) was higher than DC renters overall.
- In addition, the share of severely burdened Caribbean renters increased more than 10 percentage points since 2005–09.

Most Caribbean Immigrants in 2012–16 Owned Their Homes



Severe Rent Burden Increased for Caribbean Immigrants between 2005–09 and 2012–16



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