

WEST VIRGINIA



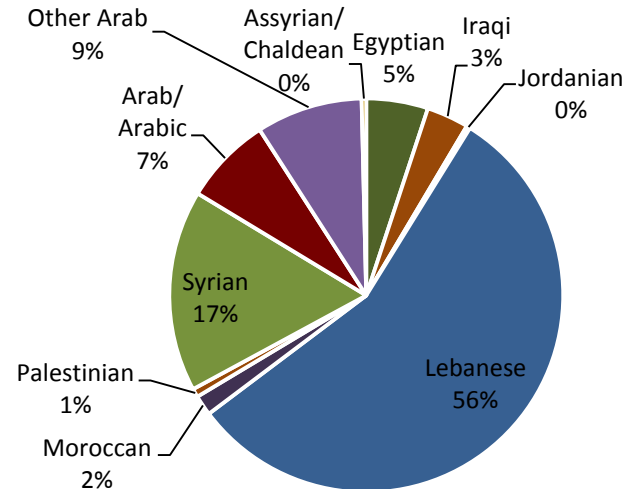
State's Rank by Arab American Population: **38**
 Census Estimated Arab American Population: **5,527***

Growth Trends

The population who identified as having Arabic-speaking ancestry in the U.S. Census grew by approximately 2% between 2000 and 2010. The number of West Virginians who claim an Arab ancestry more than doubled since the Census first measured ethnic origins in 1980 and is among the fastest growing Arab populations in the country. It is estimated that the statewide population, adjusting for under-reporting*, is close to 16,581.

Immigration

The largest number of new Arab immigrants to West Virginia came from Saudi Arabia, Syria and Lebanon.



Immigrants by Country of Origin

Saudi Arabia	206
Syria	167
Lebanon	142
Egypt	134
Iraq	85

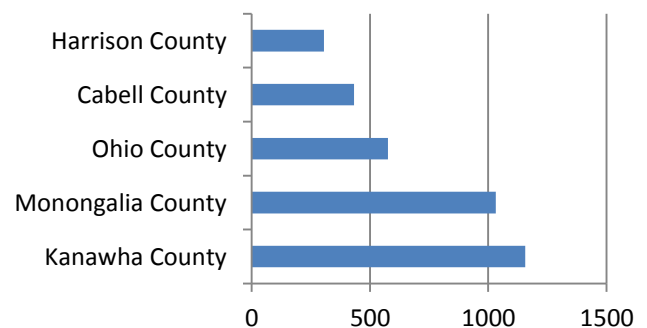
How do Arab Americans Identify Themselves?

Primary Ethnic Identification is derived from responses to the ancestry question on the long (sample) form of the 2010 U.S. Census. Census data on "Arabs" include the responses Lebanese, Syrian, Egyptian, Iraqi, Jordanian, Palestinian, Moroccan, Arab or Arabic, and the following countries collapsed as "Other Arab": Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

We also include Arabic-speaking persons who identify as Assyrian/Chaldean, Somali or Sudanese, identities which are not aggregated as Arab in Census reports. In West Virginia, according to the 2010 Census, roughly 73% of Arab Americans in the state have Lebanese or Syrian roots. Since 1990, significant increases appear in the number of West Virginians who are of Saudi Arabian and Egyptian descent. Roughly 7% of ancestry respondents chose the generic identity of "Arab/Arabic."

Where do West Virginian Arab Americans Live?

Arab Americans in West Virginia reside in 39 of the 55 counties in the state.



**Research by AAI and Zogby International suggest that the number above is likely significantly lower than the actual number of Arab Americans in the state. The decennial Census identifies only a portion of the Arab population through a question on "ancestry" on the census long form. Reasons for the undercount include the placement of and limit of the ancestry question (as distinct from race and ethnicity); the effect of the sample methodology on small, unevenly distributed ethnic groups; high levels of out-marriage among the third and fourth generations; and distrust/misunderstanding of government surveys among recent immigrants.*

Source: 2005-2009 American Community Survey Rolling 5-Year Average – U.S. Census Bureau

©2011 Arab American Institute Foundation