

# FACT SHEET

## Citizenship and Assimilation Grant Program Fact Sheet



U.S. Citizenship and  
Immigration Services

Office of Policy and Strategy  
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From fiscal years 2009 to 2015, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) provided citizenship preparation services through the Citizenship and Assimilation Grant Program (CAGP)<sup>1</sup> to over 138,000 Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs) in the District of Columbia and 35 states across the United States.<sup>2</sup> This fact sheet provides information on the characteristics of and resulting outcomes for individuals who received citizenship preparation services during fiscal year 2014 based on analyses conducted by USCIS' Office of Policy and Strategy, Research and Evaluation Division.

CAGP grant recipients provided USCIS with data on the type of services provided and CAGP participant scores on nationally normed standardized tests of English proficiency. Using Alien Registration Numbers, the data provided by CAGP grant recipients was merged with data maintained by USCIS from applications for LPR status and naturalization. The characteristics of program participants that USCIS examined included age, gender, marital status, occupation, immigration admission type, and length of time in LPR status. Naturalization outcomes such as naturalization application submission rates, civics and English test results, test exemptions, and naturalization rates were also analyzed.<sup>3</sup> The information on naturalization outcomes was based on USCIS naturalization records from October 1, 2014, through July 15, 2015, to allow sufficient time for CAGP participants to complete the naturalization process after receiving citizenship preparation services through CAGP grant recipients.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The program was formerly known as the Citizenship and Integration Grant Program (CIGP).

<sup>2</sup> See: <https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/citizenship-and-assimilation-grant-program>.

<sup>3</sup> The CAGP serves LPRs who are interested in applying for naturalization. In order to apply for naturalization, LPRs must be 18 years or older, meet the residence requirements (continuous and physical presence in the U.S. for 5 years for most LPRs and 3 years for spouses of U.S. citizens), maintain a good moral character, and pass (or be exempt from) the English and civics portions of the naturalization test. Any exemption (either from the English or civics test) is classified as "pass." For naturalization eligibility requirements, see: <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/files/article/chapter4.pdf>.

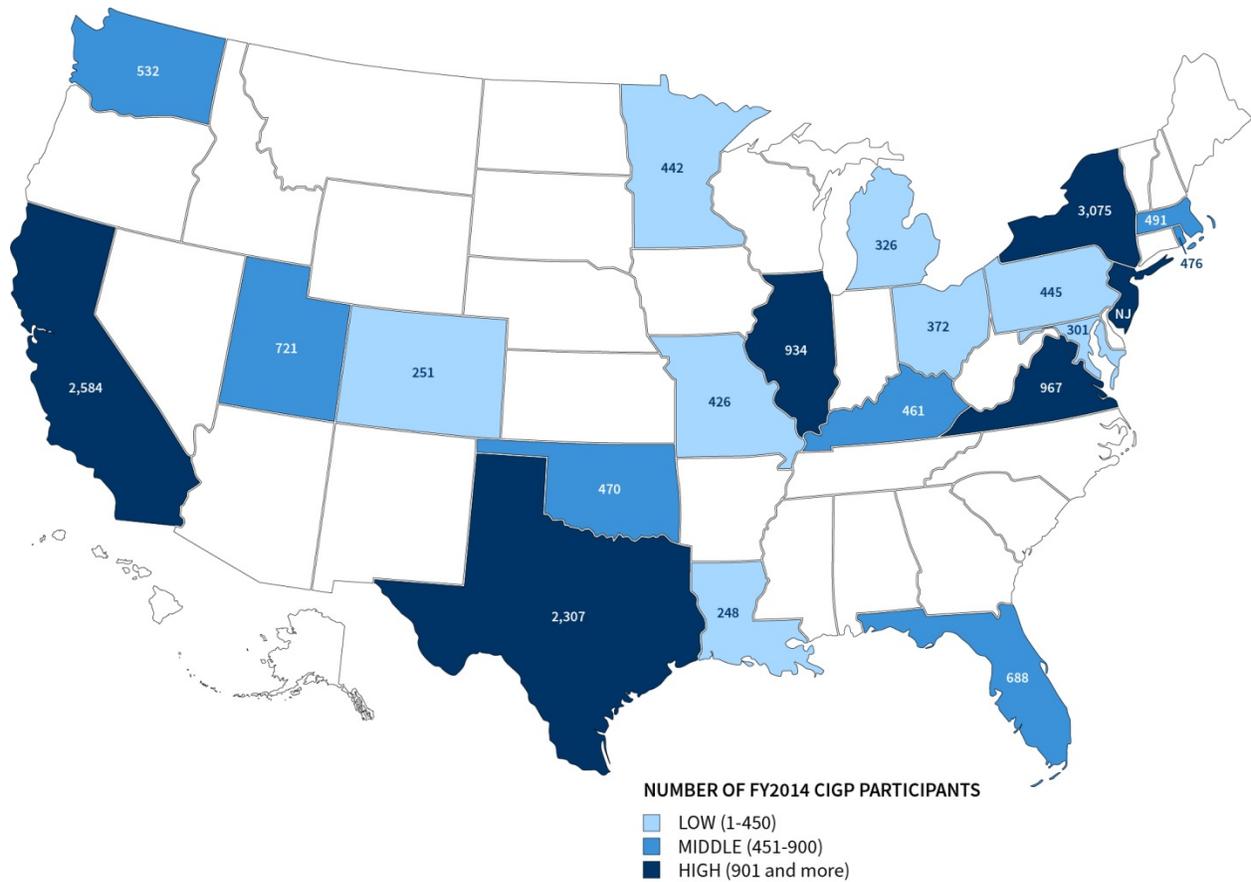
<sup>4</sup> The average naturalization processing time as of December 2015 was 6 months.

## CAGP GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

During fiscal year 2014, 40 CAGP grant recipients provided citizenship preparation services to 17,465 LPRs in 21 states across the U.S. (see Figure 1). Almost half of all CAGP participants were located in New York, California, and Texas.

**Figure 1**

**Number of CAGP Participants Receiving Services in Fiscal Year 2014, by State**

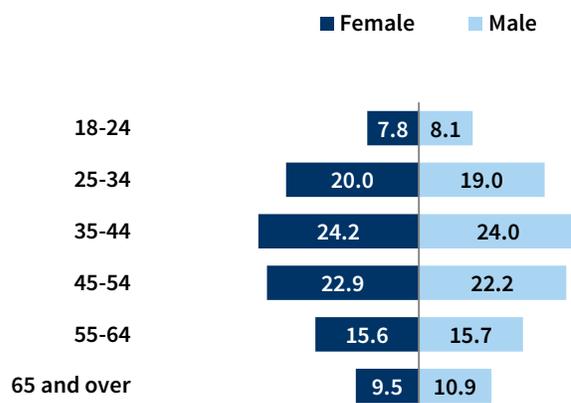


## CHARACTERISTICS OF CAGP PARTICIPANTS

Over two-thirds of all CAGP participants were 25 to 54 years of age with an average age of 45. Females accounted for 60.2 percent of all CAGP participants; however, the age distribution of CAGP participants was similar for both males and females (see Figure 2). The majority of CAGP participants were married (64.2 percent). More than a third of CAGP participants reported that they were either unemployed (20.3 percent) or homemakers (15.5 percent) at the time they applied for naturalization. Of the CAGP participants who were employed, 14.8 percent were in construction occupations and 14.3 percent were in service occupations (see Table 1).

**Figure 2**

**Age of Fiscal Year 2014 CAGP Participants, by Gender (Percent of Total)**



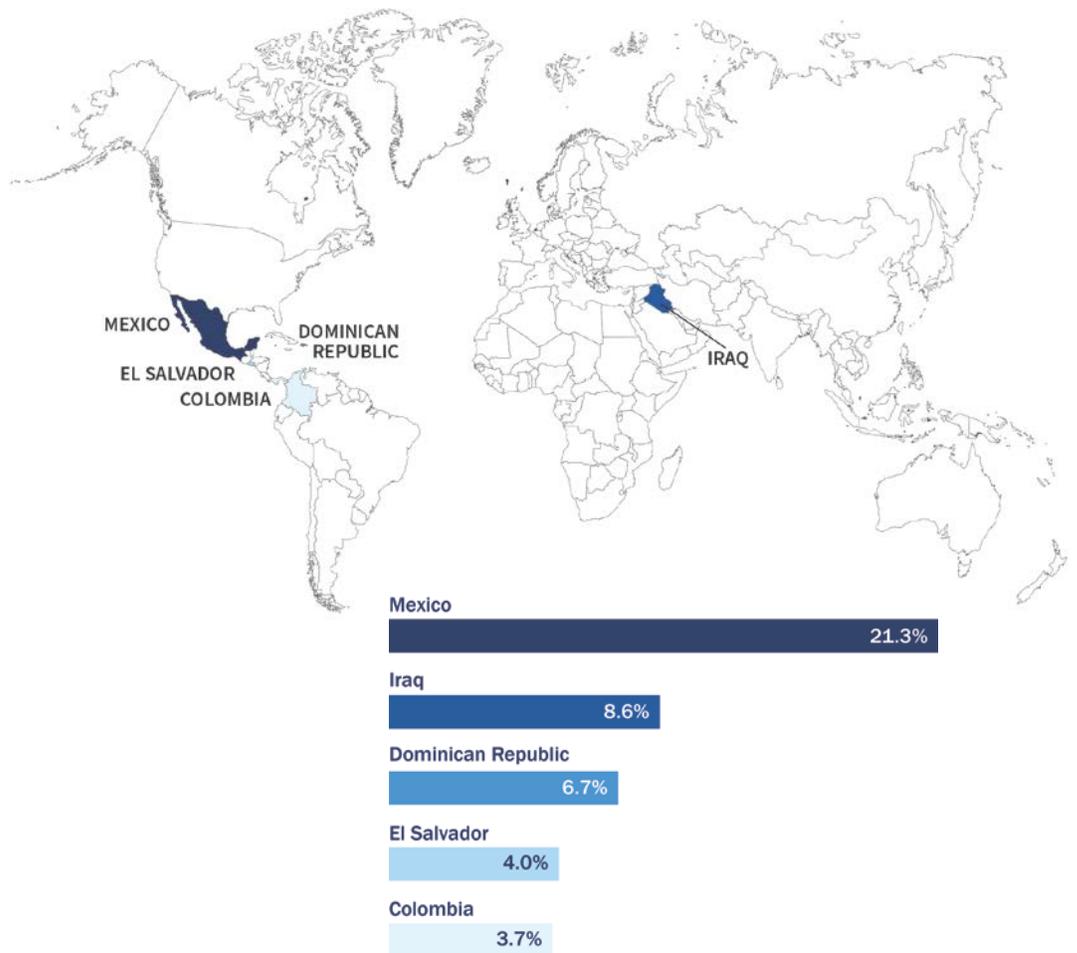
People from Asia comprised the largest share of CAGP participants (28.8 percent), followed by North America (21.5 percent), South America (13.2 percent) and the Caribbean (11.8 percent). The top 5 countries of birth comprised 44.3 percent of all CAGP participants and included Mexico, Iraq, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and Colombia (see Figure 3).<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The country of origin for CAGP participants was slightly different compared to all persons who naturalized in fiscal year 2014. The top 5 countries of origin for all persons who naturalized in fiscal year 2014 were Mexico, India, the Philippines, China, and the Dominican Republic. See: <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/USCIS/Citizenship/Citizenship%20Through%20Naturalization/CharacteristicsPeopleWhoNaturalizedBetweenFY2009FY2014.pdf>

**Figure 3**

**Leading Countries of Birth of Fiscal Year 2014 CAGP Participants (Percent of Total)**



The largest proportion of CAGP participants were admitted to the United States as immediate relatives of U.S. citizens (33.7 percent) followed by those who were admitted as refugees and asylees (27.7 percent) and under family preferences (19.4 percent). CAGP participants spent an average of 10.5 years in LPR status before becoming United States citizens (the median was 7.2 years).

### CAGP SERVICES

Through the CAGP, participants were able to access citizenship instruction services (English proficiency assessments and English and civics instruction), and naturalization application services (screening to determine naturalization eligibility, assistance with filing Form N-400, Application for Naturalization, or providing case-specific advice), depending on need. Over half of all CAGP participants (55 percent) used only naturalization application services, while over one quarter (28 percent) of CAGP participants used only citizenship instruction services. Less than one-fifth (17 percent) of all CAGP participants used both services.

In some cases, applicants may qualify for an exception to the English proficiency or civics portions of the naturalization test. Specifically, a person may qualify for an exception to both tests if he or she provides evidence of a medically determinable physical or developmental disability or mental impairment. In addition, a person may qualify for an exception to the English proficiency test based on age and number of years as an LPR.<sup>6</sup> About 1 in 7 CAGP participants received an exemption from one or both of the tests. Of those who received an exemption, the majority were for the English proficiency portion of the naturalization test (74 percent).

## CAGP OUTCOMES

About 80 percent of CAGP participants submitted Form N-400 within the study period. Of those who submitted Form N-400, 91 percent took the naturalization test.<sup>7</sup> The majority of applicants who took the test (84 percent) took it one time, compared to 16 percent who took the test more than once. Overall, of those who took the naturalization test, 92 percent passed. CAGP participants aged 18 to 24 had higher pass rates (97.8 percent) compared to participants aged 65 and over (84.3 percent).<sup>8</sup>

Overall, 67 percent of fiscal year 2014 CAGP participants became naturalized citizens within the study period. The majority of CAGP participants (93 percent) who took the naturalization test successfully naturalized.

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<sup>6</sup> For the details about naturalization test exceptions, see <https://www.uscis.gov/us-citizenship/citizenship-through-naturalization/exceptions-accommodations>

<sup>7</sup> This includes those who took both portions of the naturalization test (English and civics) or received an exemption from one or both tests.

<sup>8</sup> The national pass rate as of July 2015 was 91 percent. The overall national pass rate is based on an applicant's first test within their current naturalization application and includes new naturalization tests from October 1, 2009 through July 31, 2015 (see <https://www.uscis.gov/us-citizenship/naturalization-test/applicant-performance-naturalization-test>).

**Table 1****Characteristics of CAGP participants in Fiscal Year 2014**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
18 to 24 years	7.9
25 to 34 years	19.6
35 to 44 years	24.1
45 to 54 years	22.7
55 to 64 years	15.7
Over 65 years	10.1
<b>Gender</b>	
Female	60.2
Male	39.8
<b>Marital Status</b>	
Married	64.2
Single	29.0
Divorced	3.4
Widowed	2.7
Other	0.7
<b>Employment and Occupation</b>	
Unemployed	20.3
Homemaker	15.5
Student	8.7
Retired	3.8
Construction	14.8
Service	14.3
Sales and office	8.0
Production, transportation	7.5
Other	7.1
<b>Region of birth</b>	
Asia	28.8
North America	21.5
South America	13.2
Caribbean	11.8
Africa	9.6
Central America	9.3
Europe	5.7
<b>Country of birth</b>	
Mexico	21.3
Iraq	8.6
Dominican Republic	6.7
El Salvador	4.0
Colombia	3.7
Other	55.8
<b>Classes of Admission<sup>a</sup></b>	
Employment preferences	5.6
Family-sponsored preferences <sup>b</sup>	19.4
Immediate relatives of U.S. citizens <sup>c</sup>	33.7
Refugees and asylees	27.7
Other (Diversity Visa, IRCA, parolees, etc.)	13.6

Source: USCIS analysis of CAGP program data and applications for LPR status and naturalization of the Department of Homeland Security.

a Class of admission reflects the immigration category held when becoming a LPR.

b Preference categories apply to family members who are not immediate relatives such as adult sons and daughters of U.S. Citizens, brothers and sisters of adult U.S. citizens, spouses and unmarried children (those under the age of 21) of permanent residents, and unmarried adult sons and daughters (those 21 years of age or older) of permanent residents.

c Immediate relatives of U.S. citizens include: spouses, children (unmarried and under 21) and parents (where the petitioning U.S. citizen is 21 or older).