

A brief on Taiwanese in Hawaii

Prepared by DBEDT Research Division, February 2025

Information on Taiwanese living in the U.S. can be found in the data from the Decennial Census (every 10 years) and the American Community Survey (annual), both provided by the U.S. Census Bureau. Measuring the Taiwanese population in the U.S. is tricky, however, because people’s response on their race may vary by how the question is asked.

Race related questions in the Decennial Census and American Community Survey (ACS)

On the right is how the race question was asked in the 2020 Decennial Census. It provides a check box for 6 Asian races including Chinese. For the respondents who can’t find their race from the check boxes, the question instructs to write in their race in the space provided below with examples of “Other Asians”. Unfortunately, Taiwanese population in the U.S. was not big enough to be included in the example of “Other Asian” increasing the chance of Taiwanese identifying them as Chinese rather than writing in Taiwanese in the Census.

The race question in the recent ACS was exactly same as the race question in the Decennial Census.

9. What is Person 1's race?
Mark one or more boxes AND print origins.

White – Print, for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Lebanese, Egyptian, etc.

Black or African Am. – Print, for example, African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Somali, etc.

American Indian or Alaska Native – Print name of enrolled or principal tribe(s), for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow, Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.

Chinese Vietnamese Native Hawaiian
 Filipino Korean Samoan
 Asian Indian Japanese Chamorro

Other Asian – Print, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.

Other Pacific Islander – Print, for example, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc.

Some other race – Print race or origin.

American Community Survey asks a few more questions related to the race that are useful in identifying Taiwanese in Hawaii: question on **ancestry** and the **county where they were born**. Unlike the race question, these two questions were asked in a way that the respondents are more easily answer Taiwan or Taiwanese.

7 Where was this person born?

In the United States – Print name of state.

Outside the United States – Print name of foreign country, or Puerto Rico, Guam, etc.

13 What is this person's ancestry or ethnic origin?

(For example: Italian, Jamaican, African Am., Cambodian, Cape Verdean, Norwegian, Dominican, French Canadian, Haitian, Korean, Lebanese, Polish, Nigerian, Mexican, Taiwanese, Ukrainian, and so on.)

For more discussion about identifying Taiwanese in the U.S, please refer to [How many Taiwanese live in the U.S. by the Pew Research Center \(Sep 2021\)](#)

Taiwanese in Hawaii in 2020 (based on the 2020 Decennial Census)

A total of 2,307 Taiwanese were living in Hawaii in 2020. Among those, 1,604 people were Taiwanese alone, not mixed with other races, while 703 people were Taiwanese mixed with other race(s).

	Taiwanese alone or mixed	Taiwanese alone	Taiwanese mixed with other races
Taiwanese in Hawaii in 2020	2,307	1,604	703

Age distribution (2020)

	Taiwanese alone or mixed	Taiwanese alone	Taiwanese mixed with other races
All ages	2,307 (100%)	1,604 (100%)	703 (100%)
Under 5 years	7.2%	2.6%	17.8%
5-17 years	17.0%	9.5%	34.1%
18-24 years	7.4%	6.2%	10.1%
25-44 years	28.5%	31.2%	22.5%
45-64 years	22.9%	27.7%	11.9%
65 and over	16.9%	22.8%	3.6%

Taiwanese population by county (2020)*

	State	Hawaii County	Honolulu County	Maui County	Kauai County
Taiwanese alone	1,604 (100%)	82 (5.1%)	1,481 (92.3%)	34 (2.1%)	NA**
Taiwanese alone or mixed with other races	2,307 (100%)	130 (5.6%)	2,080 (90.2%)	72 (3.1%)	NA**

* Due to the differential privacy protection of Census data, counties don't add up to the state

** No data was released for Taiwanese in Kauai County, which means zero or a very small number of Taiwanese in Kauai in 2020

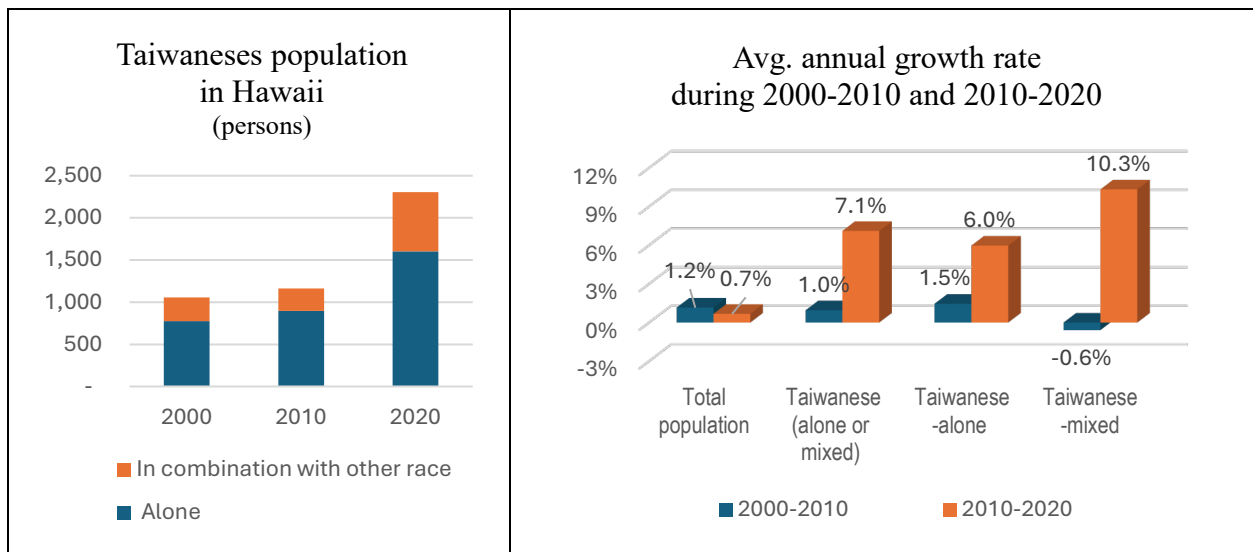
Taiwanese household by household type (2020)

Race	Total number of households	Family households			Non-family households		
		Total family HH	Married couple HH	Other family HH	Total non-family HH	Living alone HH	Not living alone HH
Taiwanese alone	663	451	335	116	212	183	29
Taiwanese alone or mixed with other races	817	546	412	134	271	221	50

Historical trend from Decennial Censuses

Comparing the size of Taiwanese population in Hawaii reported in the three previous decennial census shows almost no change between 2000 and 2010 and a significant increase between 2010 and 2020. It is not immediately clear if the big increase between 2010-2020 is the reflection of actual increase or the result of any change in the way that Taiwanese identifies their race.

Year	Taiwanese alone or mixed (persons)	Taiwanese Alone (persons)	Taiwanese mixed with other races (persons)
2000	1,056	777	279
2010	1,161	898	263
2020	2,307	1,604	703



Additional information about Taiwanese available from the 2023 5-year ACS

Caution: All figures presented below are DBEDT estimates based on public use microdata sample (PUMS) of American Community Survey (ACS) collected for 5 years from 2019 to 2023. Since ACS is a sample survey, the estimates are subject to sampling and non-sampling errors.

Estimated number of people who identifies their race as “Taiwanese alone” in the survey; 1,615

Nativity (among the estimated 1,530 Taiwanese alone)

Native	595	36.8%
Foreign born	1,020	63.2%

Year of entry to the U.S. (among the estimated 1,020 foreign born Taiwanese alone)

~1970	71	7.0%
1971-1980	269	26.4%
1981-1990	353	34.6%
1991-2000	136	13.3%
2001-2010	67	6.6%
2011~	124	12.2%

Language spoken at home (among the estimated 1,615 Taiwanese alone)

English only	344	21.3%
Chinese	167	10.3%
Mandarin	612	37.9%
Min Nan Chinese	429	26.6%
Cantonese	9	0.6%
Japanese	54	3.3%

Estimated number of people who indicated their ancestry as “Taiwanese”: 3,122

The ancestry question allows two entries

Who entered Taiwanese for the first entry	2,531
Who entered Taiwanese for the second entry	591

Race they reported in the survey (among the estimated 3,122 with Taiwanese ancestry).

Taiwanese alone	1,389	44.5%
Chinese, except Taiwanese, alone	904	29.0%
Other Asian alone	311	10.0%
Two or more races	518	16.6%

Estimated number of people who indicated their birthplace as “Taiwan”: 3,579

Race they reported in the survey (among the estimated 3,579 whose birthplace is Taiwan)

Chinese, except Taiwanese, alone	1,940	54.2%
Taiwanese alone	984	27.5%
Other Asian alone	237	6.6%
All other races alone	84	2.4%
Two or more races	334	9.3%

Year of entry to the U.S. (among the estimated 3,579 whose birthplace is Taiwan)

	People who identified them as Chinese		People who identified them as Taiwanese	
Total	1,940	100%	984	100%
~1970	205	10.6%	57	5.8%
1971-1980	383	19.7%	261	26.5%
1981-1990	602	31.0%	397	40.4%
1991-2000	172	8.9%	115	11.7%
2001-2010	395	20.4%	53	5.4%
2011~	183	9.4%	101	10.3%