

**WHO AND WHERE THE DREAMERS ARE, REVISED ESTIMATES:  
A Demographic Profile of Immigrants Who Might Benefit from the Obama  
Administration's Deferred Action Initiative**

There are roughly 1.8 million immigrants in the United States who might be, or might become, eligible for the Obama Administration's "deferred action" initiative for unauthorized youth brought to this country as children. This initiative, announced on June 15, offers a two-year, renewable reprieve from deportation to unauthorized immigrants who are under the age of 31; entered the United States before age 16; have lived continuously in the country for at least five years; have not been convicted of a felony, a "significant" misdemeanor, or three other misdemeanors; and are currently in school, graduated from high school, earned a GED, or served in the military. Within this population of potential beneficiaries, however, are three distinct groups:

- 1.) Those who are between the ages of 15 and 30 who are either in high school or already have high school diplomas. This group is immediately eligible for deferred action.
- 2.) Those between the ages of 5 and 14 who will be eligible at some point in the future *if* the deferred action initiative remains in place.
- 3.) Those between the ages of 15 and 30 who are not in high school and don't have high school diplomas. Members of this group might be eligible for deferred action *if* they get a GED.

A previous IPC [analysis](#) described in detail the demographic characteristics of the first two of these groups of potential beneficiaries.<sup>1</sup> This analysis captures the third group as well. More precisely, potential beneficiaries are broken down by age, gender, and nationality at the state and national level. In reviewing these numbers, it is important to keep in mind that they are approximations and not precise figures.

Taken as a whole, unauthorized immigrants who qualify for the deferred action initiative are commonly referred to as "DREAMers" because they comprise most (though not all) of the individuals who meet the general requirements of the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act.<sup>2</sup> As our analysis shows, most DREAMers are Mexican and are found in big immigrant-receiving states with large unauthorized populations, such as California and Texas. Yet DREAMers are also found in virtually every state, and significant numbers are non-Mexicans who hail from all corners of the globe. Just under half of DREAMers are female. The majority of DREAMers are 15 or older and are eligible to apply for deferred action right now. However, nearly a quarter of DREAMers are 14 or younger and are not yet eligible to apply, but will be eligible at some point in the future *if* the deferred action initiative still exists. And close to another quarter of the DREAMer population could become eligible for deferred action *if* they earn a GED. Demographic details such as these should inform the decision-making

process of the federal government as it implements the deferred action initiative, as well as community groups assisting the populations they serve in taking advantage of this opportunity.

**There are approximately 1.8 million immigrants currently in the United States who might meet the requirements of the deferred action initiative, either now or when they are older.**

- Roughly 936,933 immigrants between the ages of 15 and 30 might immediately meet the requirements of the deferred action initiative. They comprise 53 percent of all potential beneficiaries {Chart 1}.
- Approximately 426,329 immigrants between the ages of 5 and 14 might meet the requirements of the deferred action initiative at some point in the future if the initiative remains in place. They comprise 24 percent of all potential beneficiaries {Chart 1}.
- Roughly 401,280 immigrants between the ages of 15 and 30 might meet the requirements of the deferred action initiative at some point in the future if they earn a GED. They comprise 23 percent of all potential beneficiaries {Chart 1}.

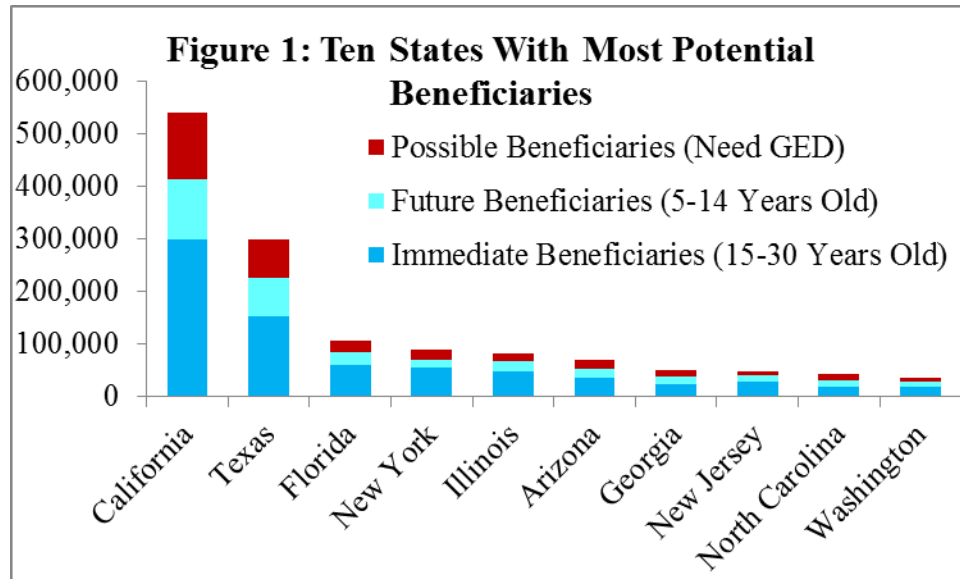
**Chart 1: Potential Beneficiaries by State**

	All Potential Beneficiaries	Immediate Beneficiaries (15-30 Years Old)	Share of All Potential Beneficiaries	Future Beneficiaries (5-14 Years Old)	Share of All Potential Beneficiaries	Possible Beneficiaries (Need GED)	Share of All Potential Beneficiaries
United States	1,764,542	936,933	53.1%	426,329	24.2%	401,280	22.7%
Alabama	8,947	3,086	34.5%	3,133	35.0%	2,728	30.5%
Alaska	575	324	56.3%	81	14.1%	170	29.6%
Arizona	71,046	34,836	49.0%	19,040	26.8%	17,170	24.2%
Arkansas	9,165	4,469	48.8%	2,392	26.1%	2,304	25.1%
California	539,774	298,026	55.2%	114,533	21.2%	127,215	23.6%
Colorado	33,448	15,848	47.4%	9,760	29.2%	7,840	23.4%
Connecticut	10,928	6,674	61.1%	2,696	24.7%	1,558	14.3%
Delaware	2,779	1,579	56.8%	656	23.6%	544	19.6%
District of Columbia	1,711	960	56.1%	225	13.2%	526	30.7%
Florida	106,481	60,185	56.5%	25,562	24.0%	20,734	19.5%
Georgia	51,457	24,356	47.3%	14,143	27.5%	12,958	25.2%
Hawaii	3,615	2,381	65.9%	862	23.8%	372	10.3%
Idaho	6,472	3,232	49.9%	1,873	28.9%	1,367	21.1%
Illinois	83,088	48,593	58.5%	18,864	22.7%	15,631	18.8%
Indiana	14,255	5,980	42.0%	4,537	31.8%	3,738	26.2%
Iowa	6,021	3,152	52.4%	1,438	23.9%	1,431	23.8%
Kansas	11,086	5,168	46.6%	3,662	33.0%	2,256	20.3%
Kentucky	5,090	2,103	41.3%	1,934	38.0%	1,053	20.7%

	All Potential Beneficiaries	Immediate Beneficiaries (15-30 Years Old)	Share of All Potential Beneficiaries	Future Beneficiaries (5-14 Years Old)	Share of All Potential Beneficiaries	Possible Beneficiaries (Need GED)	Share of All Potential Beneficiaries
Louisiana	5,646	2,682	47.5%	1,635	29.0%	1,329	23.5%
Maine	571	267	46.8%	290	50.8%	14	2.5%
Maryland	21,371	11,266	52.7%	4,681	21.9%	5,424	25.4%
Massachusetts	19,525	12,211	62.5%	4,825	24.7%	2,489	12.7%
Michigan	14,903	7,553	50.7%	4,543	30.5%	2,807	18.8%
Minnesota	11,530	6,008	52.1%	3,557	30.8%	1,965	17.0%
Mississippi	2,885	970	33.6%	1,069	37.1%	846	29.3%
Missouri	8,361	3,898	46.6%	2,613	31.3%	1,850	22.1%
Montana	108	74	68.5%	12	11.1%	22	20.4%
Nebraska	6,611	2,921	44.2%	2,145	32.4%	1,545	23.4%
Nevada	30,574	15,052	49.2%	8,246	27.0%	7,276	23.8%
New Hampshire	1,132	726	64.1%	293	25.9%	113	10.0%
New Jersey	48,327	28,464	58.9%	11,181	23.1%	8,682	18.0%
New Mexico	16,988	8,235	48.5%	4,602	27.1%	4,151	24.4%
New York	88,889	55,486	62.4%	14,683	16.5%	18,720	21.1%
North Carolina	42,702	18,147	42.5%	12,859	30.1%	11,696	27.4%
North Dakota	226	146	64.6%	59	26.1%	21	9.3%
Ohio	9,893	5,167	52.2%	3,020	30.5%	1,706	17.2%
Oklahoma	13,038	6,225	47.7%	2,945	22.6%	3,868	29.7%
Oregon	22,148	10,416	47.0%	6,187	27.9%	5,545	25.0%
Pennsylvania	15,855	8,576	54.1%	3,994	25.2%	3,285	20.7%
Rhode Island	3,364	1,689	50.2%	757	22.5%	918	27.3%
South Carolina	10,530	4,462	42.4%	3,064	29.1%	3,004	28.5%
South Dakota	563	164	29.1%	173	30.7%	226	40.1%
Tennessee	14,184	5,871	41.4%	4,496	31.7%	3,817	26.9%
Texas	298,133	152,551	51.2%	74,151	24.9%	71,431	24.0%
Utah	16,744	7,802	46.6%	5,261	31.4%	3,681	22.0%
Vermont	282	220	78.0%	43	15.2%	19	6.7%
Virginia	25,086	14,027	55.9%	6,285	25.1%	4,774	19.0%
Washington	35,059	18,127	51.7%	9,362	26.7%	7,570	21.6%
West Virginia	558	339	60.8%	122	21.9%	97	17.4%
Wisconsin	11,922	5,861	49.2%	3,467	29.1%	2,594	21.8%
Wyoming	896	378	42.2%	318	35.5%	200	22.3%

**Nearly half of potential beneficiaries live in California and Texas, but there are significant numbers in other states across the country.**

- The states with the most potential beneficiaries are California (539,774), Texas (298,133), Florida (106,481), New York (88,889), and Illinois (83,088) {Figure 1}.



**Just under half of potential beneficiaries are female.**

- Females comprise 46 percent (808,123) of all potential beneficiaries in the United States {Chart 2}.
- Females account for only 39 percent (155,650) of those potential beneficiaries who need a GED in order to qualify for deferred action {Chart 2}.

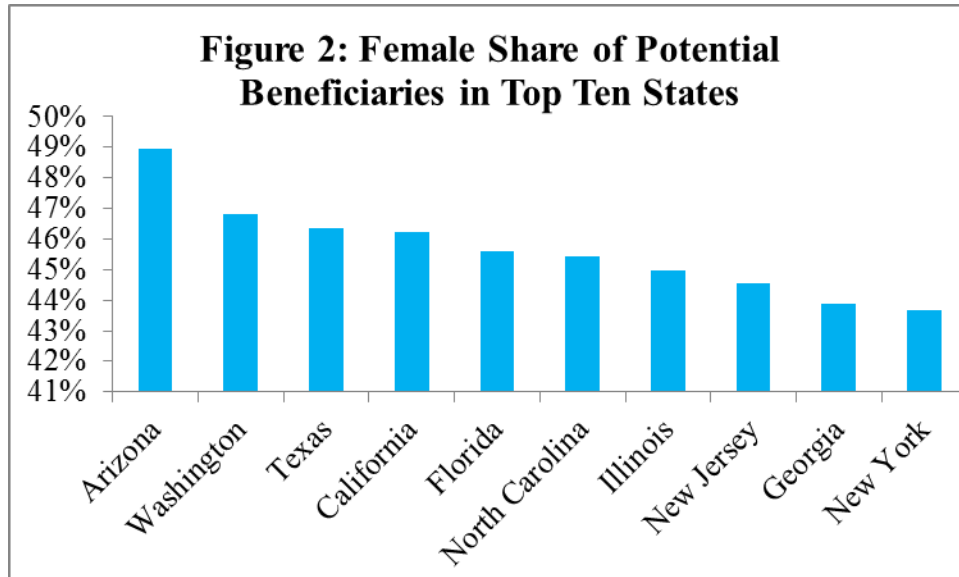
**Chart 2: Potential Beneficiaries by Gender**

	All Potential Beneficiaries		Immediate Beneficiaries (15-30 Years Old)		Future Beneficiaries (5-14 Years Old)		Possible Beneficiaries (Need GED)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
United States	956,419	808,123	492,599	444,334	218,190	208,139	245,630	155,650
Alabama	4,832	4,115	1,631	1,455	1,728	1,405	1,473	1,255
Alaska	400	175	184	140	54	27	162	8
Arizona	36,266	34,780	17,065	17,771	9,898	9,142	9,303	7,867
Arkansas	4,934	4,231	2,511	1,958	1,003	1,389	1,420	884
California	290,299	249,475	155,733	142,293	57,741	56,792	76,825	50,390
Colorado	18,189	15,259	8,125	7,723	5,189	4,571	4,875	2,965
Connecticut	6,145	4,783	3,598	3,076	1,473	1,223	1,074	484
Delaware	1,468	1,311	759	820	342	314	367	177
District of Columbia	850	861	418	542	122	103	310	216
Florida	57,909	48,572	31,616	28,569	13,209	12,353	13,084	7,650
Georgia	28,879	22,578	13,287	11,069	7,366	6,777	8,226	4,732

	All Potential Beneficiaries		Immediate Beneficiaries (15-30 Years Old)		Future Beneficiaries (5-14 Years Old)		Possible Beneficiaries (Need GED)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Hawaii	1,654	1,961	1,111	1,270	367	495	176	196
Idaho	3,659	2,813	1,812	1,420	963	910	884	483
Illinois	45,714	37,374	25,582	23,011	9,634	9,230	10,498	5,133
Indiana	7,470	6,785	3,088	2,892	2,097	2,440	2,285	1,453
Iowa	3,497	2,524	1,966	1,186	579	859	952	479
Kansas	6,088	4,998	2,541	2,627	2,095	1,567	1,452	804
Kentucky	2,787	2,303	1,256	847	847	1,087	684	369
Louisiana	2,903	2,743	1,386	1,296	693	942	824	505
Maine	274	297	183	84	80	210	11	3
Maryland	11,922	9,449	5,876	5,390	2,227	2,454	3,819	1,605
Massachusetts	10,778	8,747	6,906	5,305	2,540	2,285	1,332	1,157
Michigan	7,906	6,997	3,827	3,726	2,312	2,231	1,767	1,040
Minnesota	5,855	5,675	2,954	3,054	1,716	1,841	1,185	780
Mississippi	1,761	1,124	580	390	669	400	512	334
Missouri	4,863	3,498	2,071	1,827	1,614	999	1,178	672
Montana	100	8	66	8	12	0	22	0
Nebraska	4,184	2,427	1,695	1,226	1,234	911	1,255	290
Nevada	15,903	14,671	7,663	7,389	4,135	4,111	4,105	3,171
New Hampshire	538	594	406	320	66	227	66	47
New Jersey	26,799	21,528	15,205	13,259	5,855	5,326	5,739	2,943
New Mexico	9,127	7,861	4,134	4,101	2,400	2,202	2,593	1,558
New York	50,068	38,821	29,860	25,626	8,033	6,650	12,175	6,545
North Carolina	23,303	19,399	9,921	8,226	6,237	6,622	7,145	4,551
North Dakota	154	72	104	42	38	21	12	9
Ohio	5,555	4,338	2,845	2,322	1,489	1,531	1,221	485
Oklahoma	7,118	5,920	3,257	2,968	1,501	1,444	2,360	1,508
Oregon	11,944	10,204	5,086	5,330	3,607	2,580	3,251	2,294
Pennsylvania	8,757	7,098	4,774	3,802	2,037	1,957	1,946	1,339
Rhode Island	1,888	1,476	975	714	291	466	622	296
South Carolina	6,151	4,379	2,611	1,851	1,720	1,344	1,820	1,184
South Dakota	410	153	123	41	85	88	202	24
Tennessee	8,133	6,051	3,184	2,687	2,517	1,979	2,432	1,385
Texas	159,985	138,148	79,357	73,194	38,070	36,081	42,558	28,873
Utah	8,839	7,905	3,977	3,825	2,719	2,542	2,143	1,538
Vermont	117	165	85	135	13	30	19	0
Virginia	14,009	11,077	7,572	6,455	3,363	2,922	3,074	1,700

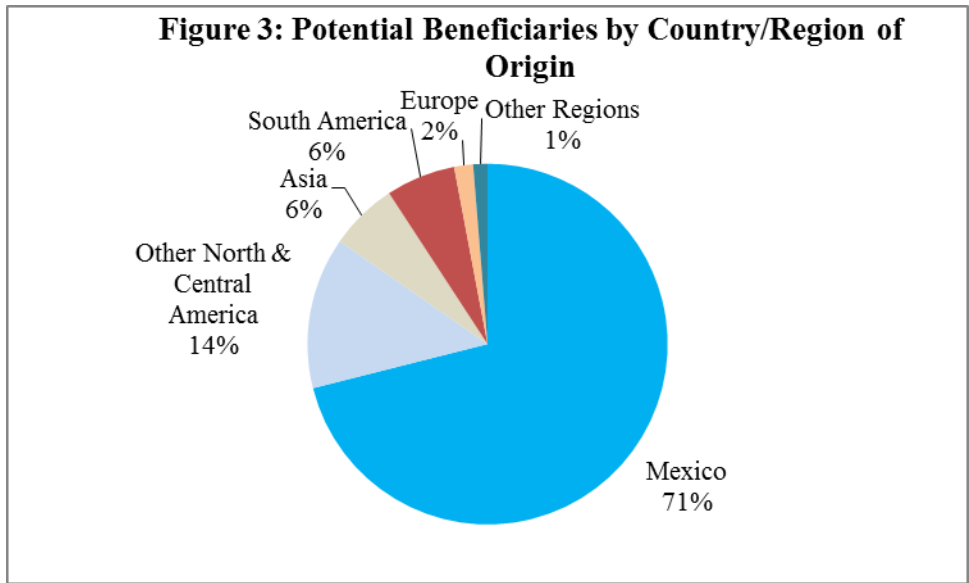
	All Potential Beneficiaries		Immediate Beneficiaries (15-30 Years Old)		Future Beneficiaries (5-14 Years Old)		Possible Beneficiaries (Need GED)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Washington	18,653	16,406	9,924	8,203	4,456	4,906	4,273	3,297
West Virginia	313	245	212	127	34	88	67	30
Wisconsin	6,545	5,377	3,219	2,642	1,621	1,846	1,705	889
Wyoming	524	372	278	100	99	219	147	53

- Among the top-ten states, the female share of potential beneficiaries ranges from a high of 49 percent in Arizona to a low of 44 percent in New York (Figure 2).



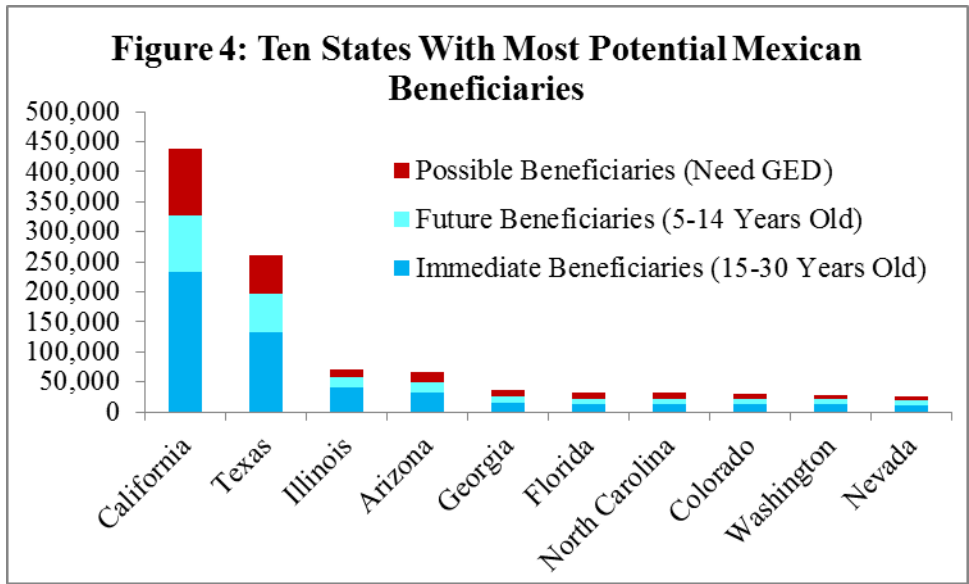
**More than seven-tenths of potential beneficiaries are Mexican, but immigrants who might be eligible come from all corners of the globe.**

- Roughly 71 percent of potential beneficiaries are Mexican, while 14 percent are from other countries in North and Central America (including the Caribbean) {Figure 3}.
- Approximately 6 percent of potential beneficiaries are from Asia, 6 percent from South America, 2 percent from Europe, and 1 percent from other parts of the world {Figure 3}.

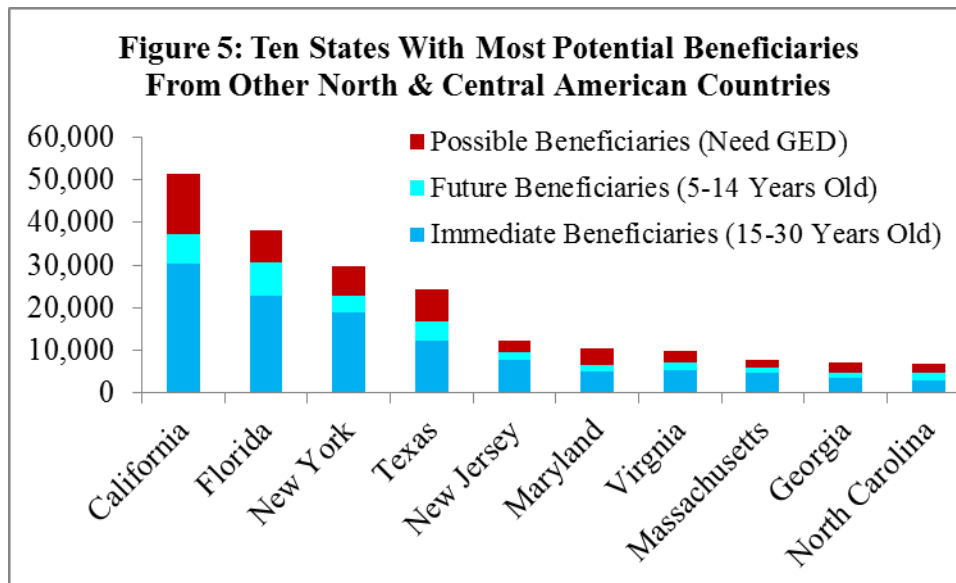


Potential beneficiaries from different parts of the world are distributed differently across the country.

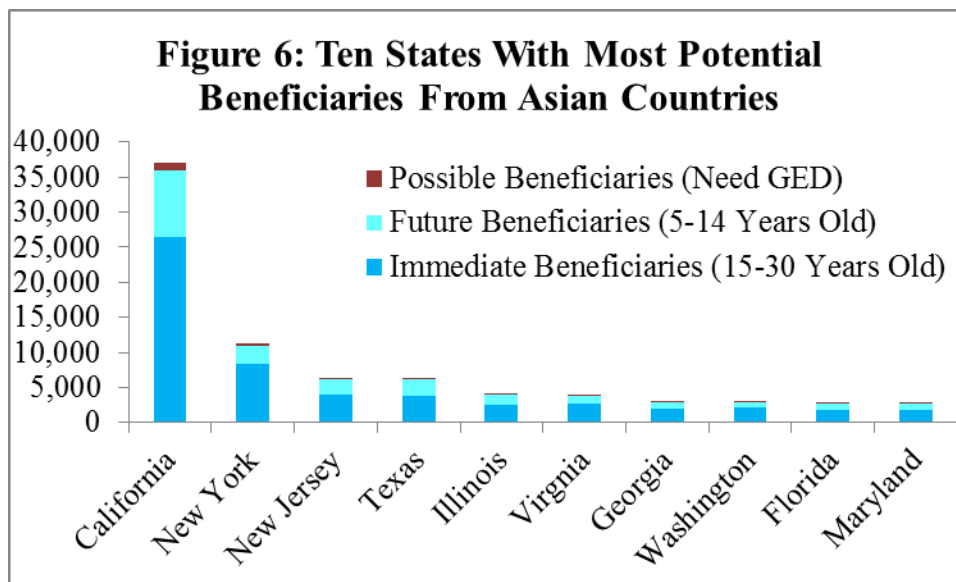
- The greatest numbers of potential beneficiaries from Mexico are found in California (437,662), Texas (259,880), Illinois (71,619), Arizona (66,301), and Georgia (35,723) {Figure 4 & Chart 3}.



- The greatest numbers of potential beneficiaries from other countries in North and Central America (including the Caribbean) are found in California (51,454), Florida (38,240), New York (29,654), Texas (24,203), and New Jersey (12,142) {Figure 5 & Chart 3}.



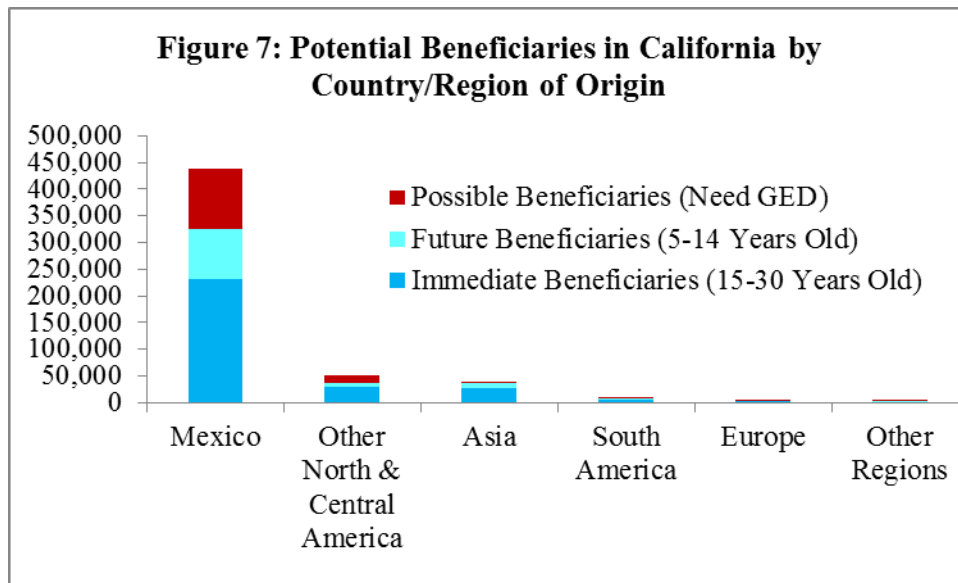
- The greatest numbers of potential beneficiaries from Asian countries are found in California (37,033), New York (11,275), New Jersey (6,245), Texas (6,184), and Illinois (3,958) {Figure 6 & Chart 3}.



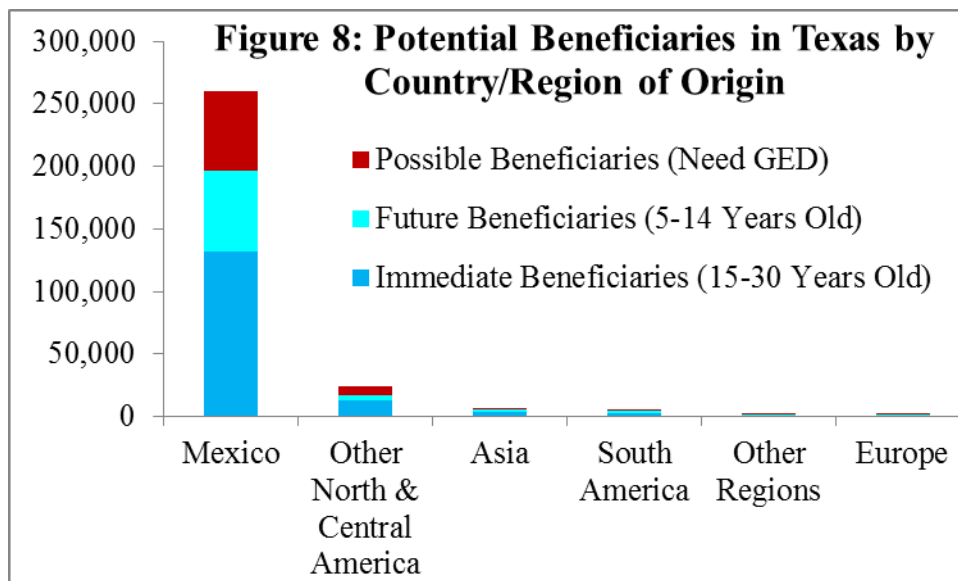
**In the biggest immigrant-receiving states, Mexicans predominate among potential beneficiaries.**

- In California, the largest numbers of potential beneficiaries are from Mexico (437,662), followed by other countries in North and Central America (including the Caribbean) (51,454), and Asia (37,033) {Figure 7 & Chart 3}.



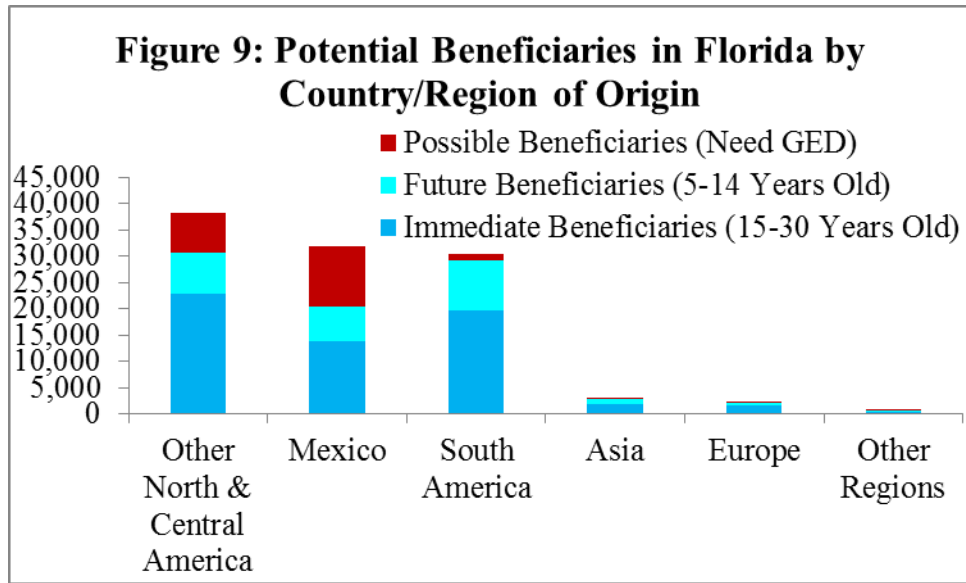


- In Texas, the largest numbers of potential beneficiaries are from Mexico (259,880), followed by other countries in North and Central America (including the Caribbean) (24,203) and Asia (6,184) {Figure 8 & Chart 3}.

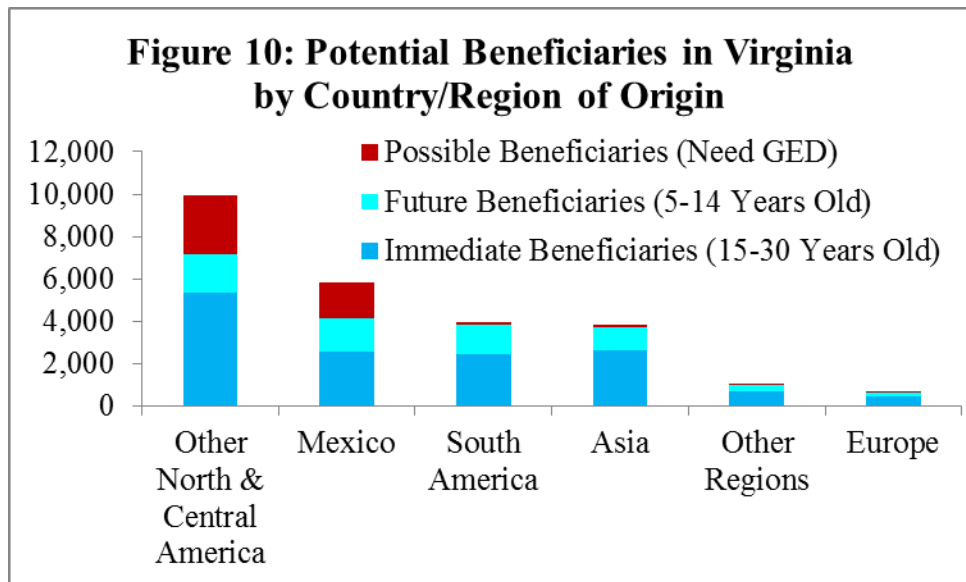


**In other states, Mexicans do not predominate among potential beneficiaries.**

- In Florida, the largest numbers of potential beneficiaries are from North and Central American countries other than Mexico (including the Caribbean) (38,240), followed by Mexico (31,879) and South America (30,527) {Figure 9 & Chart 3}.



- The largest groups of potential beneficiaries in Virginia are from North and Central American countries other than Mexico (including the Caribbean) (9,910), followed by Mexico (5,821), South America (3,940), and Asia (3,846) {Figure 9 & Chart 3}.



**Chart 3: Potential Beneficiaries by Country/Region of Origin**

	Mexico	Other North & Central America	Asia	South America	Europe	Other Regions
United States	1,254,083	239,750	108,024	110,016	29,990	22,679
Alabama	7,337	739	448	252	104	67

	Mexico	Other North & Central America	Asia	South America	Europe	Other Regions
Alaska	304	30	81	105	51	4
Arizona	66,301	2,331	1,037	420	563	394
Arkansas	7,746	986	222	58	15	138
California	437,662	51,454	37,033	7,597	3,820	2,208
Colorado	29,633	1,596	1,068	450	445	256
Connecticut	2,159	2,769	1,034	3,748	959	259
Delaware	1,801	347	203	186	28	214
District of Columbia	387	1,041	70	47	61	105
Florida	31,879	38,240	2,834	30,527	2,259	742
Georgia	35,723	7,215	3,054	3,711	848	906
Hawaii	308	114	2,617	82	69	425
Idaho	5,907	212	88	113	99	53
Illinois	71,619	2,604	3,958	1,839	2,547	521
Indiana	11,625	1,102	737	346	255	190
Iowa	4,606	608	359	101	193	154
Kansas	9,547	842	365	164	39	129
Kentucky	3,379	790	324	127	291	179
Louisiana	2,843	1,741	386	499	109	68
Maine	15	81	88	3	116	268
Maryland	3,811	10,462	2,712	2,416	502	1,468
Massachusetts	1,163	7,589	2,490	6,249	1,087	947
Michigan	9,660	1,429	2,105	298	940	471
Minnesota	7,347	756	1,322	557	496	1,052
Mississippi	2,128	374	227	78	46	32
Missouri	5,565	971	662	336	460	367
Montana	44	19	16	21	8	0
Nebraska	5,208	712	257	74	38	322
Nevada	24,869	3,044	1,753	569	235	104
New Hampshire	258	183	102	346	146	97
New Jersey	14,539	12,142	6,245	12,851	1,589	961
New Mexico	16,286	478	86	80	51	7
New York	24,167	29,654	11,275	18,512	3,396	1,885
North Carolina	31,782	6,896	1,508	1,261	655	600
North Dakota	0	16	22	0	61	127
Ohio	4,700	1,618	1,375	596	794	810
Oklahoma	10,938	1,008	334	380	97	281
Oregon	18,702	1,418	899	264	667	198
Pennsylvania	6,275	2,996	2,694	1,982	985	923
Rhode Island	330	1,969	193	481	147	244

	Mexico	Other North & Central America	Asia	South America	Europe	Other Regions
South Carolina	7,846	868	478	904	298	136
South Dakota	288	135	59	8	33	40
Tennessee	9,944	2,499	773	349	246	373
Texas	259,880	24,203	6,184	4,838	1,261	1,767
Utah	13,616	1,087	296	1,277	185	283
Vermont	30	135	50	0	31	36
Virginia	5,821	9,910	3,846	3,940	601	968
Washington	27,586	1,682	2,895	436	1,713	747
West Virginia	94	211	106	98	34	15
Wisconsin	9,667	421	995	389	312	138
Wyoming	758	23	59	51	5	0

### Methodology Used by [Rob Paral and Associates](#)

#### Estimating Immigration Status of Countries and Regions of Origin

- Develop [estimates of unauthorized populations](#) for 10 countries of origin from the Office of Immigration Statistics (OIS) of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security; develop five-year estimate using 2006-2010 annual reports from OIS.<sup>3</sup>
- Develop estimates of unauthorized populations for residual world regions based on the 2010 OIS report.<sup>4</sup>
- Tabulate numbers of foreign-born noncitizens for these same 10 countries and residual world regions using the American Community Survey (ACS) 2006-2010 Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS).
- Estimate rate of unauthorized immigrants in the ACS data by dividing the OIS unauthorized numbers by ACS 2006-2010 PUMS noncitizen estimates. Use country- and region-specific rates to re-weight PUMS records of noncitizens.

#### Define Persons Potentially Eligible

- Determine universe of persons potentially eligible for deferred action by using eligibility specifications described in [Secretary Napolitano memorandum](#) of June 15, 2012.
- Tabulate ACS data by country/region of origin, age, school enrollment, educational attainment, citizenship and year of entry to the United States to correspond to the policy memorandum.<sup>5</sup>

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Immigration Policy Center, [Who and Where the DREAMers Are: A Demographic Profile of Immigrants Who Might Benefit from the Obama Administration's Deferred Action Initiative](#) (Washington, DC: American Immigration Council, August 2012).

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<sup>2</sup> See Roberto G. Gonzales, [\*Investing in the American DREAM\*](#) (Washington, DC: Immigration Policy Center, American Immigration Council, December 2010). While the specific eligibility criteria of the DREAM Act as introduced in different sessions of Congress has varied, its essential scope covers those young people who were brought to the United States as children, have resided in the country for a prolonged period, and have been educated in U.S. schools.

<sup>3</sup> These estimates are found in annual publications, e.g., Michael Hoefer, Nancy Rytina, and Bryan C. Baker, [\*Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: January 2010\*](#) (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics, February 2011).

<sup>4</sup> We used the 2010 report only because five years' of data were not available for world regions; specifically, 2006 is not found in the OIS publications. Residual world regions were developed by subtracting country estimates in Table 3 from world regions in Figure 2 in the 2010 OIS report.

<sup>5</sup> Although the memorandum cited veteran status as one condition of eligibility, all veterans were removed from the potentially eligible population.