

South Asian Americans in the Workplace



What languages are spoken in South Asia?

Several hundred languages are spoken in South Asia. It is home to the fourth most spoken language in the world, **Hindi-Urdu**; the seventh most spoken language, **Bengali**; and thirteenth most spoken language, **Punjabi**.



Who is South Asian?

South Asian people include those who are born in or descend from modern South Asia, which includes the countries of **Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka**, with Afghanistan also often included, which may otherwise be classified as part of Central Asia.

Fun Fact:

South Asia, with a population of 2.04 billion, contains a quarter (25%) of the world's population.

What are the major religions practiced?

The major religions of South Asia are **Hinduism** and **Islam**, which are the two most widely practiced faiths in the region. Other significant religions include **Buddhism, Sikhism, and Christianity**. Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism all originated in South Asia.

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How many South Asians are there in the US?

Source: US Dept. of Health and Human Services of Minority Health

The percentage of the South Asian population in the U.S. is approximately **6.2%**, based on 2024 estimates for the "South Asian alone" group, which includes people of Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Nepali, Sri Lankan, and Bhutanese origin. This equates to about **6.4 million people** within the "South Asian alone" category of the U.S. population.

It is important to note that most workplace data includes South Asians in the Asian American and Pacific Islander rather than South Asians alone.

How many South Asian Americans are in the US Labor Force ?

Source: U. S Bureau of Labor Statistics

Of the Asian Americans surveyed, the percentage of each population that was employed in 2023 ranged from 54.3 percent of Japanese to **68.5 percent of Asian Indians**. Other South Asian groups were not identified in the survey.

Underrepresentation in the Workplace and the C- Suite

Source: 2024 Inclusive Leadership Index

While US Bureau of Labor Statistics show that the majority of South Asians (namely those of Indian descent) are employed, Asian Americans as whole only make up **6.2% of the U.S. Employee Base**. Less than **10% of Sr. Executive and C-Level Executives** are Asian American. Asian Americans make up **2.5% of Directors on Boards**. Additionally, **only 3% of Recruiters** are Asian American

Best Practices:

- Leverage ERGS to provide mentorship and networking opportunities
- Review the potential for bias in advancement process. Companies have created task forces to review quarterly promotions by ethnic group and gender.