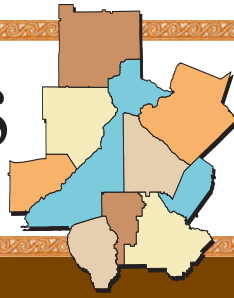


GLOBAL ATLANTA SnapSHOTS

A LOOK AT ETHNIC COMMUNITIES IN THE ATLANTA REGION



PAKISTANIS

Global Atlanta Snapshots, a component of the Atlanta Regional Commission's Global Atlanta Works program, help foster understanding among the rich ethnic and cultural diversity across the Atlanta region. Members of Atlanta's ethnic communities are recent arrivals or long-time residents and may have cultures and customs different from others in the region. But what they share with others who call the region home is that they all contribute to its success. Global Atlanta Snapshots introduce ethnic communities by exploring their backgrounds, customs and cultures, documenting their roles in the regional economy and highlighting available resources.



Who are the Pakistani-Americans?

Pakistan, part of the Indian subcontinent, is the world's sixth most populous country. With a population of 165 million, 96 percent of whom are Muslims, it is also the second largest Muslim nation after Indonesia. Pakistan's immediate neighbors are Iran to the west, Afghanistan and China to the north and India to the east.

Civilization on the Indian subcontinent dates back more than 5,000 years. Over the centuries, the region occupied by Pakistan has been invaded in succession by Afghans, a Greek army led by Alexander the Great, Persians and Arabs. Islam became an influence in the region in the 8th century C.E. The British staked their claim to the Indian subcontinent in the 17th century, with the British East India Company representing the interests of the British Crown. During the 19th century the entire region now occupied by Pakistan, India,

Bangladesh and Myanmar became a part of the British Empire, the *British Raj*. As colonial rule became more oppressive, anti-colonial movements developed. In the case of Pakistan, leadership of the movement that eventually achieved independence came from Mohammed Ali Jinnah, now revered as a national hero.

Pakistan and India both achieved independence from Britain in August 1947. A partition, based on the idea of creating a haven for the minority Muslims of India, resulted in a new nation divided into western and eastern sections. The partition also led to one of the greatest mass migrations in human history, as Muslims streamed into West Pakistan and Hindus migrated into India. One unresolved matter was the status of the state of Kashmir, claimed by both nations. Before the end of that first year of independence, India and Pakistan engaged in the first of what would become a series of cross-border wars or skirmishes. In 1971, East Pakistan became the independent nation of Bangladesh.

Pakistan has been governed in alternating stretches by democratically-elected civilian leaders and generals operating under martial law. In an army coup in 1999, General Pervez Musharraf took power and remains as president today. Pakistan recently became a key strategic partner with the U.S. as Musharraf supported the U.S. in its war to overturn the Taliban regime in neighboring Afghanistan.

The people of Pakistan identify themselves as members of several ethnic groups, each associated with the various regions of the country. The major ethnic groupings are Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashtun (Pathan) and Baluchi. Another group is the Muhajir, the immigrants from India at the time of partition and their descendants.

Urdu, an Indo-European tongue, is the national language of Pakistan, although English is widely used in both government and business. Punjabi, another regional language, is spoken by 60 million Pakistanis, far more than those speaking Urdu.

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• Customs and Culture • Celebrated Holidays • Resources



A PERSONAL STORY

Tehmina Zaidi was born in India. As a child, she and her parents migrated to Pakistan at the time of the India-Pakistan partition. She pursued her studies in London with the goal of becoming a Montessori teacher. In 1966, she moved to Atlanta to accept a position at a Montessori school in Buckhead. She was accompanied, both in London and Atlanta, by her aunt who acted as her chaperone and was also trained as a Montessori teacher. Zaidi later received her master's in education from Georgia State University.

Atlanta was where Zaidi met her husband, also a Pakistani born in India. He was a family friend who was studying at Emory University. They had a traditional arranged marriage and returned to Pakistan for the wedding. Zaidi and her husband returned to Atlanta so he could complete his advanced degree. The couple dreamed of returning to Pakistan to live, but that never happened. Atlanta has now been Zaidi's home for 40 years. Her husband works at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as a statistician. Zaidi, after continuing her career at a second Montessori school in Norcross, is now retired.

Initially, Zaidi did not want to stay in Atlanta. Other than her aunt, she had no friends or family here. In the 1960s there were no Indian or Pakistani communities to help make her feel at home. The bright spots then were her host family, the Montessori school and the parents of the children she taught.

Zaidi, an only child, is now part of a four-generation Pakistani-American family living in Atlanta. While her aunt eventually returned to Pakistan, Zaidi's mother came in 1980 to live with

her family. Zaidi's family also consists of three daughters and one grandson. The grandson is learning to speak both Urdu and English, which pleases his great-grandmother.

Zaidi and her husband visit Pakistan every other year. She enjoys the visits and experiencing the familiar scenes and flavors, the local clothes and food. But, she said, after a while you want to come back to the U.S. –“it's still the land of opportunity.” Zaidi said that her husband still romanticizes life back home, “but you'd need a time machine to go back to the life he misses.”

Zaidi now has a wide circle of friends, including a core of Pakistanis as well as American friends. “When we first started, we were all students,” she said. “Then we became families and stayed close all these years as the children grew up together. Now our children have children and they too are growing up together.”

Zaidi is a Shi'a Muslim and notes that her group was persecuted in Pakistan. She said her American friends are not uncomfortable with her religion, but she may get a reaction from strangers if her hair is in a traditional covering. Zaidi describes the mosque she attends in Atlanta as very moderate. The families who attend want to make Islam more acceptable to Westerners and they want their children to understand it. Now there are people who speak English and can explain the religion to a younger audience. The Imams come from various places; there is no permanent Imam in Atlanta yet. Some of them train in the U.S. and some come from Pakistan or India for special events.

Pakistanis in the Atlanta Economy

Many of the first Pakistanis to settle in the U.S. were urban, well-educated and were pursuing graduate studies or medical internships. Today in Atlanta there are people of Pakistani origin who are specialists at area hospitals and in the corporate world, including the information technology field. Others have become small business owners, particularly as owners of gas stations.

Data from the 2000 census document the occupational specializations of the local Pakistani labor force. Forty-one percent of the men are in management and professional fields. The dominance of participation in the IT field is clear; one of every seven is listed as a computer specialist. Another 5.4 percent are engineers and 3.7 percent are physicians and surgeons. Forty-two percent are in sales and related occupations. Industry specializations include Pakistani men in the manufacturing sectors (14.2 percent), notably in computer, electronics and electrical equipment. Another 16.1 percent work at gasoline stations and 11 percent at food and beverage stores.

About one-third of Pakistani women are in management and professional jobs, including 11 percent who are health care practitioners and technicians. The women are also heavily represented in sales and office positions (38.8 percent) and in food preparation.





PAKISTANI POPULATION IN ATLANTA Atlanta Region, 2000

By the Numbers: Pakistanis in the Atlanta Region

Cherokee – 43
Clayton – 494
Cobb – 684
DeKalb – 764
Douglas – 44

Fayette – 71
Fulton – 633
Gwinnett – 2,063
Henry – 7
Rockdale – 49

Total 10-county region – 4,852

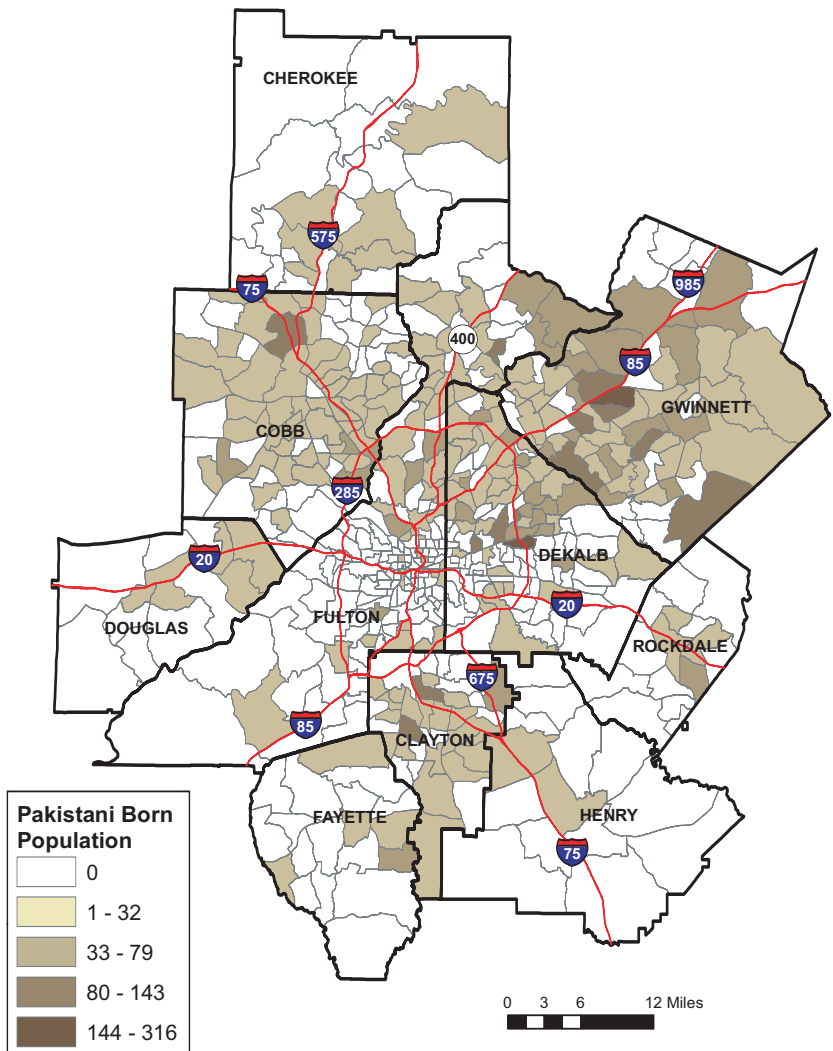
According to the 2000 Census:

Gwinnett County is home to the largest population of Pakistani, by far, with 2,063. **DeKalb County** is next with 764.

Gwinnett County is home to **43 percent** of the Pakistanis in the Atlanta region and **34 percent** of the Pakistanis living in Georgia.

The 10-county Atlanta region is home to approximately **42 percent of Georgia's total population**, but represents **81 percent of the state's Pakistani population**.

The largest concentrations of Pakistani are found in Gwinnett County along I-85. There are also large concentrations in DeKalb County along I-285, including one near Avondale Estates.



(Source: 2000 Census Data on Foreign-Born Population by Region, Country or Area of Birth)

Celebrated Holidays

In addition to Western holidays, Pakistanis may celebrate the following:

Pakistani Independence Day

Aug. 14

Islamic Holidays (2006 and 2007)

Muharram (Islamic New Year)

Jan. 31, 2006, Jan. 20, 2007

Mawlid al-Nabi (Muhammad's Birthday)

April 11, 2006, March 31, 2007

Ramadan (month of fasting)

Sept. 24 – Oct. 24, 2006

Sept. 13 – Oct. 13, 2007

Eid al-Adha (Festival of Sacrifice)

Dec. 31, 2006, Dec. 20, 2007

Note: Islamic holidays vary according to the lunar calendar.



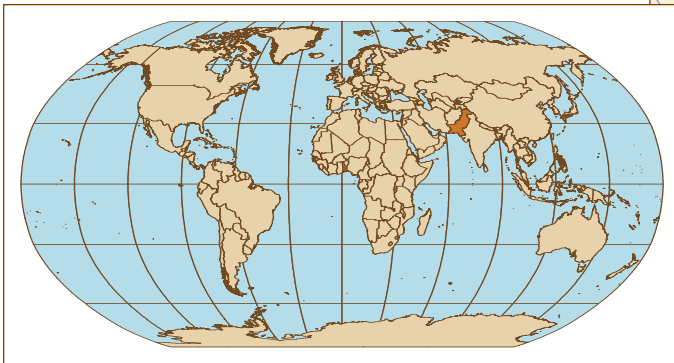


Who are the Pakistani-Americans? (continued)

As noted, most Pakistanis are Muslims, of whom 80 percent are Sunni Muslims; almost all of the rest are Shi'a Muslims.

Pakistanis first began migrating to America in significant numbers in 1965, many as college or graduate students. As of 1990, there were 100,000 Pakistanis living in the U.S., with significant populations in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia and Los Angeles; by 2000 that number reached to 204,000. That same year there were 4,850 Pakistanis in the 10-county Atlanta region.

Urdu, an Indo-European tongue, is the national language of Pakistan, although English is widely used in both government and business. Punjabi, another regional language, is spoken by 60 million Pakistanis, far more than those speaking Urdu.



What are Pakistani Customs and Culture?

As in their home country, family and the Islamic faith are central to the culture and customs of Atlanta's Pakistani community. In their earlier days in Atlanta, local Pakistanis celebrated religious holidays and held family gatherings at home. As the community has grown, special occasions are observed at community centers or in rented space at hotels. A major celebration marks Pakistan's Independence Day on Aug. 14; Gwinnett County's Convention Center has become the site for this annual event.

The Pakistan community and other local Muslims have their own religious center now. The Mosque of Atlanta, also known as Al-Farooq Masjid of Atlanta, is located on 14th Street in the City of Atlanta. Another important institution is the Zainabia Islamic Education Center in Roswell.

Pakistani crafts are well appreciated around the world. High standards of craftsmanship are found in many different media, including glass, silver, wooden furniture, pottery, marble and objects made of animal skins.

Pakistan is a multicultural and multiethnic society. Although almost all Pakistanis are Muslims by birth, some of their traditions have been influenced by other societies with which they have had contact. For example, the dowry system and the very substantial sums spent for a daughter's wedding are derived from Hindu society.



Pakistani cuisine can be compared to that of India, with additional Persian and Middle Eastern influences. Meals will typically include baked or deep-fried breads (*roti*, *halwa*, and *nan* are among several varieties prepared), meat curries, spicy vegetable dishes and peas, rice or lentils (*dhal*). *Gulab jamun* (pictured) is a popular sweet dish, consisting of brightly colored balls made of dried milk, sugar, slivered almonds and cardamom sauce.

British colonial influence is found today in the favorite sports of Pakistanis, which include cricket and soccer. The current \$3.8 million expansion of the Mosque of Atlanta makes provision for youth facilities, including a soccer playing field.

Pakistani Life in Metro Atlanta

As the Pakistani community has grown, it has gravitated to suburban locations. The largest share of the region's population (2,063 residents, or 42.5 percent) is in Gwinnett County, in communities stretching from Duluth to Lawrenceville and Loganville, according to the 2000 U.S. Census. Other clusters are found in DeKalb County (764), Cobb County (684) and Fulton County (633), particularly in the northern suburbs of Roswell and Alpharetta.

With the maturing of the community, second-generation Pakistanis are now becoming involved in local affairs. The second generation understands and identifies with both its traditional Pakistani culture and its adopted American culture. Student associations encourage young people to become politically involved, as well as to participate in Muslim groups. The community encourages voter registration and involvement in politics. Pakistanis in Atlanta own gas stations, grocery stores and also work as doctors or lawyers. One observer stated that "the second generation has excelled in education – that was our dream, that if we stay on, they will succeed."



Pakistani Organizations, Associations and Resources

Below is a listing of selected organizations who work with the Pakistani communities. Additional resources are available at www.atlantaregional.com.

GENERAL

Center for Pan Asian Community Services Inc.
3760 Park Ave.
Doraville, GA 30340
Contact: Chaiwon Kim, Director
770-936-0969
Email: chaiwon.kim@cpacs.org
www.cpacs.org

ASSOCIATIONS

Indus Entrepreneurs, The Atlanta Chapter
1054 Redwood Drive
Norcross, GA 30093
Contact: Susan Stottlemeyer
770-381-9616; 678-302-7635 fax
Email: susan@tie-atlanta.org
<http://www.tie-atlanta.org/index.htm>

Pakistani American Community of Atlanta
355 Brogdon Road, Suite 103
Suwanee, GA 30024
Contact: Farooq Soomro
678-488-2446
Email: info@pakatlanta.com
www.pakatlanta.com

Atlanta Hindu Society
5280 Wickershire Drive
Norcross, GA 30092
Contact: Mr. K. Lal Sachdeva
770-248-9599

Atlanta Punjabi Society
415 Lakehill Court
Alpharetta, GA 30022-7452
Contact: Anurag Agnihotr
678-762-7589

BUSINESS

Pakistan International Chamber of Commerce
P. O. Box 451307
Atlanta, GA 31145
Contact: Ashraf Gohar Goreja
770-982-0577
Email: info@pakchamber.com
<http://www.pakchamber.com/>

MEDIA

Pakistan Television Corporation (PTV)
www.ptv.com.pk

Rivaaj Magazine
Published by Moonstone Media
1100 Hammond Drive
Suite 410A-146
Atlanta, GA 30328
404-514-0995
Email: info@rivaajmagazine.com
<http://www.geocities.com/sadafo70/>

RELIGIOUS

Al-Farooq Masjid of Atlanta
442 14th St. NW
Atlanta, GA 30318
404-874-7521
www.alfarooqmasjid.org

Zainabia Islamic Center
1100 Hope Road
Atlanta, GA 30350
Email: info@zainabia.com
www.zainabia.com

Contact:

E-mail: globalsnapshots@atlantaregional.com

Order printed copies from the ARC Information Center at 404-463-3102 or download free from the ARC website at www.atlantaregional.com

Atlanta Regional Commission • 40 Courtland St., NE, Atlanta, Georgia 30303 • 404.463.3100 • www.atlantaregional.com

Charles Krautler, Executive Director **Darlene Daly, Project Coordinator**

The Atlanta Regional Commission is the official planning agency for the 10-county Atlanta region including Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry and Rockdale, as well as the City of Atlanta and 62 other cities. ARC provides a forum where leaders come together to discuss and act on issues of region wide consequence.

The Community Foundation • 50 Hurt Plaza, Suite 449, Atlanta, Georgia 30303 • 404.688.5525 • www.atlcf.org

The Atlanta Regional Commission extends its appreciation to our research team, Urban Information Associates, Inc., in association with The Bridging the Gap Project, Inc., and to the other organizations and individuals that participated in the research and development of this publication. This 2006 series of 20 Global Atlanta Snapshots was financed in part by a grant from The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta, which manages and administers the charitable funds of 650 donors and their families and some \$400 million in assets. The foundation serves 22 metro area counties and awards approximately \$29 million a year to more than 1,300 nonprofit organizations. The Foundation educates donors and their families about critical issues facing the Atlanta region and connects them with nonprofit organizations and their interests.

