



Immigrants in Idaho

Idaho has a small but growing immigrant population. While only 6 percent of the state's residents are immigrants, they represent a greater share of the workforce. Idaho's farming and fishing industry—one of the state's top economic drivers—benefits from immigrants who make up over 40 percent of its labor force. As workers, business owners, taxpayers, and neighbors, immigrants are an integral part of Idaho's diverse and thriving communities and make extensive contributions that benefit all.

Nearly 6 percent of Idaho residents are immigrants, while 7 percent are native-born U.S. citizens with at least one immigrant parent.

- In 2015, 94,364 immigrants (foreign-born individuals) comprised 5.7 percent of the population.¹
- Idaho was home to 44,478 women, 43,495 men, and 6,391 children who were immigrants.²
- The top countries of origin for immigrants were Mexico (53.2 percent of immigrants), Canada (4.5 percent), the Philippines (4.3 percent), China (3.6 percent), and Kuwait (2.7 percent).³
- 120,807 people in Idaho (7.3 percent of the state's population) were native-born Americans who had at least [one immigrant parent](#).⁴

Nearly two in five immigrants in Idaho are naturalized U.S. citizens.

- 35,909 immigrants (38 percent) had naturalized as of 2015,⁵ and 19,113 immigrants were eligible to become [naturalized U.S. citizens](#) in 2015.⁶
- The majority of immigrants (72.4 percent) reported speaking English "well" or "very well."⁷

Immigrants in Idaho have a range of educational experiences, and many lack a high school diploma.

- Nearly one in five adult immigrants had a college degree or more education in 2015, while over two in five had less than a high school diploma.⁸

Education Level	Share (%) of All Immigrants	Share (%) of All Natives
College degree or more	17.9	26.6
Some college	21.3	37.8
High school diploma only	20.0	28.0
Less than a high-school diploma	40.9	7.6

Nearly 30,000 U.S. citizens in Idaho live with at least one family member who is undocumented.

- 45,000 [undocumented immigrants](#) comprised 42 percent of the immigrant population and 2.7 percent of the total state population in 2014.⁹
- 58,327 people in Idaho, including 26,926 born in the United States, lived with at least one [undocumented family member](#) between 2010 and 2014.¹⁰
- During the same period, 1 in 20 children in the state was a U.S.-citizen child living with at least one undocumented family member (22,905 children in total).¹¹

Nearly 3,000 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients live in Idaho.¹²

- As of 2016, 81 percent of [DACA-eligible immigrants](#) in Idaho, or 3,383 people, had applied for DACA.¹³
- Up to 2,000 additional residents of the state satisfied all but the educational requirements for DACA, and up to 1,000 others would be eligible as they grew older.¹⁴

One in 12 workers in Idaho is an immigrant, together making up a vital part of the labor force across industries.

- 61,112 immigrant workers comprised 8 percent of the labor force in 2015.¹⁵

- Immigrant workers were most numerous in the following industries:

Industry	Number of Immigrant Workers
Manufacturing	13,118
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	10,735
Health Care and Social Assistance	6,808
Construction	6,549
Administrative & Support; Waste Management; and Remediation Services	5,968

Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2015 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

- The largest shares of immigrant workers were in the following industries:¹⁶

Industry	Immigrant Share (%) (of all industry workers)
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	22.6
Manufacturing	14.6
Administrative & Support; Waste Management; and Remediation Services	12.8
Construction	10.2
Real Estate Rental and Leasing	9.9

Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2015 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

Immigrants are an integral part of the Idaho workforce in a range of occupations.

- In 2015, immigrant workers were most numerous in the following occupation groups:¹⁷

Occupation Category	Number of Immigrant Workers
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	11,314
Office and Administrative Support	8,430
Construction and Extraction	6,779
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	6,187
Production	5,967

Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2015 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

- The largest shares of immigrant workers were in the following occupation groups:¹⁸

Occupation Category	Immigrant Share (%) (of all workers in occupation)
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	40.5
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	12.5
Construction and Extraction	11.9
Production	10.5
Architecture and Engineering	10.5

Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2015 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

- Undocumented immigrants comprised 4 percent of the state's workforce in 2014.¹⁹

Immigrants in Idaho have contributed millions of dollars in taxes.

- [Immigrant-led households in the state paid](#) \$306.7 million in federal taxes and \$154 million in state and local taxes in 2014.²⁰
- Undocumented immigrants in Idaho paid an estimated \$28.6 million in [state and local taxes](#) in 2014. Their contribution would rise to \$34.6 million if they could receive legal status.²¹
- [DACA recipients](#) in Idaho paid an estimated \$6 million in state and local taxes in 2016.²²

As consumers, immigrants add billions of dollars to Idaho's economy.

- Idaho residents in immigrant-led households had \$1.5 billion in [spending power](#) (after-tax income) in 2014.²³

Immigrant entrepreneurs in Idaho generate a hundred million dollars in business revenue.

- 5,170 immigrant business owners accounted for 5.3 percent of all self-employed Idaho residents in 2015 and generated \$104.2 million in business income.²⁴

Endnotes

¹ “Foreign born” does not include people born in Puerto Rico or U.S. island areas or U.S. citizens born abroad of American parent(s). U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates. The American Immigration Council elected to use data from the 2015 ACS 1-Year estimates wherever possible to provide the most current information available. Since these estimates are based on a smaller sample size than the ACS 5-year, however, they are more sensitive to fluctuations and may result in greater margins of error (compared to 5-year estimates).

² Children are defined as people age 17 or younger. Men and women do not include children. Ibid.

³ Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2015 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

⁴ Analysis of data from the 2016 Current Population Survey by the American Immigration Council, using IPUMS-CPS. Sarah Flood, Miriam King, Steven Ruggles, and J. Robert Warren, *Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Current Population Survey: Version 5.0* [dataset] (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, 2017).

⁵ 2015 ACS 1-Year Estimates.

⁶ Augmented IPUMS-ACS data, as published in “State-Level Unauthorized Population and Eligible-to-Naturalize Estimates,” Center for Migration Studies data tool, accessed June 2017, data.cmsny.org/state.html.

⁷ Figure includes immigrants who speak only English. Data based on survey respondents age 5 and over. Analysis of 2015 ACS 1-Year Estimates by the American Immigration Council.

⁸ Data based on survey respondents age 25 and older. 2015 ACS 1-Year Estimates.

⁹ Pew Research Center, “U.S. unauthorized immigration population estimates,” November 3, 2016,

<http://www.pewhispanic.org/interactives/unauthorized-immigrants/>.

¹⁰ Silva Mathema, “State-by-State Estimates of the Family Members of Unauthorized Immigrants,” University of Southern California’s Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration and the Center for American Progress, March 2017,

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2017/03/16/427868/state-state-estimates-family-members-unauthorized-immigrants/>.

¹¹ American Immigration Council analysis of data from the 2010-2014 ACS 5-Year, using Silva Mathema’s “State-by-State Estimates of the Family Members of Unauthorized Immigrants” and IPUMS-USA. Steven Ruggles, Katie Genadek, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, and Matthew Sobek, *Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 7.0* [dataset] (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, 2017).

¹² The “Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals” (DACA) initiative began in 2012 and provides certain immigrants (those who were brought to the United States as children and meet specific requirements) with temporary relief from deportation, or deferred action. American Immigration Council, “Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals: A Q&A Guide,” August 17, 2012, www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/deferred-action-childhood-arrivals-qa-guide. The number of DACA recipients reflects USCIS’ estimate of those with active DACA grants as of September 4, 2017. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services CLAIMS3 and ELIS Systems, *Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals: Population Data* (Washington, DC: Dept. of Homeland Security, September 20, 2017), Approximate Active DACA Recipients: State of Residence as of September 4, 2017 [dataset], <https://www.uscis.gov/daca2017>.

¹³ “DACA-eligible” refers to immigrants who were immediately eligible to apply for DACA as of 2016. Migration Policy Institute analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data from the 2014 American Community Survey (ACS), 2010-14 ACS pooled, and the 2008 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), as cited in “Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Data Tools,” accessed June 2017, www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/deferred-action-childhood-arrivals-daca-profiles.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Analysis of 2015 ACS 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council. Categories are based on the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/index.html.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Analysis of 2015 ACS 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council. Categories are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system, www.bls.gov/soc/major_groups.htm.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Pew Research Center, “U.S. unauthorized immigration population estimates,” November 3, 2016.

²⁰ New American Economy, *The Contributions of New Americans in Idaho* (New York, NY: August 2016), 7,

<http://www.newamericaneconomy.org/research/the-contributions-of-new-americans-in-idaho/>.

²¹ Institute on Taxation & Economic Policy (ITEP), *Undocumented Immigrants’ State & Local Tax Contributions* (Washington, DC: March 2017), 3, <https://itep.org/undocumented-immigrants-state-local-tax-contributions-2/>.

²² ITEP, *State & Local Tax Contributions of Young Undocumented Immigrants* (Washington, DC: April 2017), Appendix 1, <https://itep.org/state-local-tax-contributions-of-young-undocumented-immigrants/>.

²³ New American Economy, *The Contributions of New Americans in Idaho*, 7.

²⁴ “Business owners” include people who are self-employed, at least 18 years old, and work at least 15 hours per week at their businesses. Analysis of 2015 ACS 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.