



Immigrants in Pennsylvania

Much of Pennsylvania's economy relies on the manufacturing industry, which benefits from the state's growing immigrant population. Immigrants now make up over 6 percent of all residents and also account for a large share of the state's entrepreneurs. As workers, business owners, taxpayers, and neighbors, immigrants are an integral part of Pennsylvania's diverse and thriving communities and make extensive contributions that benefit all.

Immigrants make up slightly more than 6 percent of Pennsylvania residents, while another 8 percent of residents are native-born U.S. citizens who have at least one immigrant parent.

- In 2015, 837,159 immigrants (foreign-born individuals) comprised 6.5 percent of the state's population.¹
- Pennsylvania was home to 402,706 women, 371,636 men, and 62,817 children who were immigrants.²
- The top countries of origin for immigrants were India (10.7 percent of immigrants), China (8.9 percent), Mexico (6.2 percent), Dominican Republic (6 percent), and Vietnam (4.6 percent).³
- In 2016, 911,353 people in Pennsylvania (8.2 percent of the state's population) were native-born Americans who had at least [one immigrant parent](#).⁴

Over half of all immigrants in Pennsylvania are naturalized U.S. citizens.

- 440,198 immigrants (52.6 percent) had naturalized as of 2015,⁵ and 142,978 immigrants were eligible to become [naturalized U.S. citizens](#) in 2015.⁶
- More than three-quarters of immigrants (79.1 percent) reported speaking English "well" or "very well."⁷

Immigrants in Pennsylvania are distributed across the educational spectrum.

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

Education Level	Share (%) of All Immigrants	Share (%) of All Natives
College degree or more	38.4	28.9
Some college	18.0	24.9
High school diploma only	23.0	36.8
Less than a high-school diploma	20.5	9.4

Tens of thousands of U.S. citizens in Pennsylvania live with at least one family member who is undocumented.

- 180,000 [undocumented immigrants](#) comprised 22 percent of the immigrant population and 1.4 percent of the total state population in 2014.⁹
- 194,647 people in Pennsylvania, including 66,576 born in the United States, lived with at least one [undocumented family member](#) between 2010 and 2014.¹⁰
- During the same period, 2 percent of children in the state were U.S. citizens living with at least one undocumented family member (56,141 children in total).¹¹

Nearly 5,000 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients live in Pennsylvania.¹²

- As of 2016, 46 percent of [DACA-eligible immigrants](#) in Pennsylvania, or 7,144 people, had applied for DACA.¹³
- An additional 3,000 residents of the state satisfied all but the educational requirements for DACA, and another 2,000 would be eligible as they grew older.¹⁴

Immigrants are an integral part of the Pennsylvania workforce in a range of industries.

- 495,780 immigrant workers comprised 7.6 percent of the labor force in 2015.¹⁵

- Immigrant workers were most numerous in the following industries:

Industry	Number of Immigrant Workers
Health Care and Social Assistance	90,302
Manufacturing	80,217
Accommodation and Food Services	58,061
Retail Trade	52,877
Educational Services	47,001

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	12.7
Administrative & Support; Waste Management; and Remediation Services	10.1
Accommodation and Food Services	9.9
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	9.7
Management of Companies and Enterprises	9.4

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

Immigrants are a vital part of the Pennsylvania labor force in a range of occupations.

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

Occupation Category	Number of Immigrant Workers
Management	53,340
Office and Administrative Support	48,012
Production	46,436
Sales and Related	42,898
Healthcare Practitioners, Technologists, and Technicians	42,501

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)
Life, Physical, and Social Sciences	18.6
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	17.7
Computer and Mathematical Sciences	15.2
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	10.8
Production	9.3

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

- Undocumented immigrants comprised 2 percent of the state's workforce in 2014.¹⁹

Immigrants in Pennsylvania have contributed billions of dollars in taxes.

- [Immigrant-led households in the state paid](#) \$5 billion in federal taxes and \$2.1 billion in state and local taxes in 2014.²⁰
- Undocumented immigrants in Pennsylvania paid an estimated \$134.9 million in [state and local taxes](#) in 2014. Their contribution would rise to \$186.2 million if they could receive legal status.²¹
- [DACA recipients](#) in Pennsylvania paid an estimated \$20.8 million in state and local taxes in 2016.²²

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

- Pennsylvania residents in immigrant-led households had \$18.6 billion in [spending power](#) (after-tax income) in 2014.²³

Immigrant entrepreneurs in Pennsylvania generate billions of dollars in business revenue.

- 51,291 immigrant business owners accounted for 9.3 percent of all self-employed Pennsylvania residents in 2015 and generated \$1.2 billion in business income.²⁴
- In 2015, immigrants accounted for 13.7 percent of business owners in the Pittsburgh metropolitan area and 13.1 percent in the Philadelphia metro area.²⁵

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 August 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, 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,” 2016.
20. New American Economy, *The Contributions of New Americans in Pennsylvania* (New York, NY: August 2016), 7, <http://www.newamericaneconomy.org/research/the-contributions-of-new-americans-in-pennsylvania/>.
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 Pennsylvania*, 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.
25. American Immigration Council analysis of 2016 CPS data. Flood, King, Ruggles, and Warren, *IPUMS CPS* dataset.