



Immigrants in Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania is home to an increasing number of immigrants, many of whom hail from India and the Dominican Republic. About 1 in 14 residents of the state is an immigrant, while 1 in 10 Pennsylvania entrepreneurs is an immigrant. Much of Pennsylvania's economy relies on the manufacturing industry, which benefits from the state's growing immigrant population.

Several sectors benefit from immigrants' participation in the workforce; a fifth of Pennsylvanians working in the life, physical, and social sciences are immigrants, as are 11 percent of residents working in the food and accommodation industry. As neighbors, business owners, taxpayers, and workers, immigrants are an integral part of Pennsylvania's diverse and thriving communities and make extensive contributions that benefit all.

Seven percent of Pennsylvania residents are immigrants, while 9 percent of residents are native-born U.S. citizens with at least one immigrant parent.

- In 2018, 922,585 immigrants (foreign-born individuals) comprised 7 percent of the population.¹
- Pennsylvania was home to 444,824 women, 407,315 men, and 70,446 children who were immigrants.²
- The top countries of origin for immigrants were India (10 percent of immigrants), Dominican Republic (9 percent), China (7 percent), Mexico (6 percent), and Vietnam (3 percent).³
- In 2018, 1.1 million people in Pennsylvania (9 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.

- 496,501 immigrants (54 percent) had naturalized as of 2018,⁵ and 135,429 immigrants were eligible to become [naturalized U.S. citizens](#) in 2017.⁶
- Four in five (81 percent) immigrants reported speaking English "well" or "very well."⁷

Most immigrants in Pennsylvania have pursued education at or above the college level.

- Two-fifths (41 percent) of adult immigrants had a college degree or more education in 2018, while one-fifth (20 percent) had less than a high school diploma.⁸

Education Level	Share (%) of All Immigrants	Share (%) of All Natives
College degree or more	41	31
Some college	18	25
High school diploma only	22	36
Less than a high school diploma	20	8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

Nearly 85,000 U.S. citizens in Pennsylvania live with at least one family member who is undocumented.

- 170,000 [undocumented immigrants](#) comprised 19 percent of the immigrant population and 1 percent of the total state population in 2016.⁹
- 194,647 people in Pennsylvania, including 84,837 U.S. citizens, lived with at least one [undocumented family member](#) between 2010 and 2014.¹⁰
- During the same period, about 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

Pennsylvania is home to almost 5,000 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients.

- 4,480 [active DACA recipients](#) lived in Pennsylvania as of March 2020, while DACA has been granted to 5,699 people in total since 2012.¹²
- As of 2019, 32 percent of [DACA-eligible immigrants](#) in Pennsylvania had applied for DACA.¹³
- An additional 3,000 residents of the state would satisfy all but the educational requirements for DACA, and fewer than 1,000 would become eligible as they grew older.¹⁴

Immigrants are vital members of Pennsylvania's labor force, accounting for 9 percent of all workers across industries.

- 590,846 immigrant workers comprised 9 percent of the labor force in 2018.¹⁵

- Immigrant workers were most numerous in the following industries:

Industry	Number of Immigrant Workers
Health Care and Social Assistance	108,652
Manufacturing	87,486
Retail Trade	63,855
Accommodation and Food Services	59,336
Educational Services	56,680

Source: Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 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, and Hunting	12
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	11
Accommodation and Food Services	11
Other Services (except Public Administration)	10
Administrative & Support; Waste Management; and Remediation Services	10

Source: Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

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

- In 2018, immigrant workers were most numerous in the following occupation groups:¹⁷

Occupation Category	Number of Immigrant Workers
Transportation and Material Moving	65,511
Office and Administrative Support	56,788
Production	53,494
Management	51,659
Sales and Related	47,705

Source: Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 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 Science	20
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	18
Computer and Mathematical	17
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	13
Production	11

Source: Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

- Undocumented immigrants comprised 2 percent of Pennsylvania's workforce in 2016.¹⁹

Immigrants in Pennsylvania have contributed billions of dollars in taxes.

- [Immigrant-led households in the state paid](#) \$6.9 billion in federal taxes and \$3.3 billion in state and local taxes in 2018.²⁰
- Undocumented immigrants in Pennsylvania paid an estimated \$418.1 million in federal taxes and \$238.3 million in [state and local taxes](#) in 2018.²¹
- Pennsylvania [DACA recipients](#) and DACA-eligible individuals paid an estimated \$17.4 million in state and local taxes in 2018.²²

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

- Pennsylvania residents in immigrant-led households had \$24.6 billion in [spending power](#) (after-tax income) in 2018.²³

Immigrant entrepreneurs in Pennsylvania generate more than \$1 billion in business revenue.

- 55,763 immigrant business owners accounted for 10 percent of all self-employed Pennsylvania residents in 2018 and generated \$1.2 billion in business income.²⁴
- In 2018, immigrants accounted for 14 percent of business owners in the Philadelphia/Camden/Wilmington metropolitan area (which extends from Pennsylvania into new Jersey and Delaware) and 10 percent in the Pittsburgh 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, 2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates. The American Immigration Council elected to use data from the 2018 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 2018 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.
4. Analysis of data from the 2018 Current Population Survey by the American Immigration Council, using IPUMS CPS. Sarah Flood, Miriam King, Renae Rodgers, Steven Ruggles and J. Robert Warren, *Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Current Population Survey: Version 7.0* [dataset] (Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.18128/D030.V7.0>.
5. 2018 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 April 2020, data.cmsny.org/state.html.
7. Figure includes immigrants who speak only English. Data based on survey respondents age 5 and over. Analysis of 2018 ACS 1-Year Estimates by the American Immigration Council.
8. Data based on survey respondents age 25 and older. Ibid.
9. Pew Research Center, “U.S. unauthorized immigration population estimates, 2016,” February 5, 2019, 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, 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 number of DACA recipients reflects USCIS’ estimate of those with active DACA grants as of March 31, 2020. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), “Approximate Active DACA Recipients: As of March 31, 2020” [dataset], July 22, 2020, <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/data/Approximate%20Active%20DACA%20Receipts%20-%20March%2031%2C%202020.pdf>. DACA grants reflect USCIS Form I-821D initial requests approved from Aug. 15, 2012-Mar. 31, 2020, as of April 2020. USCIS, “Number of Form I-821D, Consideration of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, Status, by Fiscal Year, Quarter, and Case Status: Aug. 15, 2012-Mar. 31, 2020,” July 22, 2020, https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/data/DACA_performance_data_fy2020_qtr2.pdf.
13. Estimates of the DACA-eligible population as of 2019 include unauthorized immigrant youth who had been in the United States since 2007, were under the age of 16 at the time of arrival, were under the age of 31 as of 2012, and who met DACA eligibility requirements as of 2016. Migration Policy Institute (MPI) analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data from the 2012-16 American Community Survey (ACS) pooled, and the 2008 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), with legal status assignments by James Bachmeier and Colin Hammar of Temple University and Jennifer Van Hook of The Pennsylvania State University, Population Research Institute, as cited in “Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Data Tools,” accessed April 2020, www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/deferred-action-childhood-arrivals-daca-profiles.
14. Ibid.
15. Analysis of 2018 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 2018 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,” 2019.
20. New American Economy analysis of 2018 ACS microdata using IPUMS. New American Economy, “Map the Impact,” section Taxes and Spending Power, January 31, 2020, <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/locations/>.
21. Ibid. at sec. Undocumented Immigrants.
22. Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, *State & Local Tax Contributions of Young Undocumented Immigrants* (Washington, DC: April 2018), Appendix 1, <https://itep.org/state-local-tax-contributions-of-young-undocumented-immigrants>.
23. New American Economy, “Map the Impact,” section Taxes and Spending Power.
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 2018 ACS 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.
25. American Immigration Council analysis of 2018 CPS data. Flood, King, Rodgers, Ruggles, and Warren, *IPUMS CPS* dataset.