

Immigrants and the economy in United States of America

Source: New American Economy <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/locations/national/>

Immigrant Residents - 44,406,371
Immigrant Share of Population - 13.6%
Immigrant Taxes Paid - \$405.4B
Immigrant Spending Power - \$1.1T
Immigrant Entrepreneurs - 3,157,765
Employees at Immigrant-Owned Firms - 7,975,310

Demographics

In the United States, immigrants are more likely to be working-age than their U.S.-born counterparts. This means they are more likely to be active in the labor force, allowing them to contribute to the economy not only as consumers but also as taxpayers, helping fund social services and programs like Medicare and Social Security.

Age Group	Foreign-Born Population Share	U.S.-Born Population Share
0-15	4.6%	22.4%
16-64	79.9%	62.0%
65+	15.6%	15.6%

Entrepreneurship

It is hard to overstate the importance of entrepreneurship since new businesses are the main driver of job growth in the United States. Immigrants play a particularly important role in this—founding businesses at far higher rates than the U.S. population overall. Today, millions of American workers are employed at immigrant-founded and immigrant-owned companies.

People employed by immigrant-owned firms	7,975,310
Immigrant entrepreneurs	3,157,765
Total sales of immigrant-owned firms	\$1.3T

Taxes & Spending Power

Immigrant households contribute hundreds of billions of dollars in federal income, state, and local taxes nationwide and hold a tremendous amount of spending power. This gives them significant economic clout, helping support local communities as consumers and taxpayers. Like all residents in the United States regardless of where they were

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born, immigrants make use of public services like education, healthcare, and public safety. Even with these costs, however, immigrants' economic contributions far outweigh the extra cost of additional public services they incur.

Immigrant Household Income	\$1.5T
Taxes Paid	\$405.4B
— State & Local Taxes	\$125.1B
— Federal Taxes	\$280.3B
Total Spending Power	\$1.1T

Workforce

The growth in the immigrant population has helped to strengthen America's labor force. As baby boomers retire, younger immigrants are filling crucial gaps in the market. Nationally, immigrants are more likely to hold an advanced degree than the U.S.-born. They are also more likely to have less than a high school education. Uniquely, this allows them to fill critical shortages at both ends of the skill spectrum, from high-tech fields to agriculture, hospitality, and service industries.

Educational Attainment by Nativity, Age 25+

Workforce Education	Foreign-Born Population	U.S.-Born Population
Less Than High School	27.3%	8.7%
High School & Some College	41.5%	59.1%
Bachelor's Degree	17.8%	20.1%
Graduate Degree	13.4%	12.1%

Top Industries with Highest Share of Foreign-Born Workers

Cut and sew apparel manufacturing	50.4%
Taxi and limousine service	49.3%
Nail salons and other personal care services	46.4%
Private households	44.0%
General food industries	42.4%

Top Occupations with Highest Share of Foreign-Born Workers

Personal appearance workers, nec	63.2%
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Graders and sorters, agricultural products	62.0%
Plasterers and stucco masons	58.8%
Drywall installers, ceiling tile installers, and tapers	56.1%
Tailors, dressmakers, and sewers	53.2%

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math

Jobs in fields related to science, technology, engineering, and math—or “STEM”—fields are some of the most productive jobs in the U.S. economy. These jobs are also expected to experience some of the highest growth rates in the next decade, second only to healthcare jobs. While immigrants already play a huge part in maintaining the United States’ role as a leading innovator, they will also be instrumental in helping high-tech industries meet their full potential as their needs for high-skilled STEM workers increase rapidly in the future.

STEM workers who are immigrants	22.8%
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Healthcare

As millions of baby boomers become elderly, the U.S. healthcare system is facing unprecedented demand, adding jobs faster than any other segment of the economy. Many healthcare businesses and providers are struggling with finding enough workers, and in some rural areas, shortages are particularly acute. Immigrants have already been filling some of our most glaring healthcare needs. They are twice as likely as the U.S.-born to work as home health aides, but also twice as likely to be physicians and surgeons.

Nurses who are foreign-born	14.7%
Health aides who are foreign-born	22.7%

Housing

Immigrant families have long played an important role helping to build housing wealth in the United States. In recent decades, the more than 40 million immigrants collectively in the country increased U.S. housing wealth by \$3.7 trillion. Much of this was possible because immigrants moved into neighborhoods once in decline, helping to revitalize communities and make them more attractive to U.S.-born residents.

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Immigrant homeowners	9,519,183
Share of recent homebuyers who were foreign-born	14.4%
Housing wealth held by immigrant households	\$3.8T
Amount paid by immigrant-led households in rent	\$114.5B

International Students

International students in the United States contribute tens of billions of dollars to the U.S. economy every year and support a significant number of U.S. jobs through their tuition payments and day-to-day spending. Research has also found that increases in the number of international students at American universities boost innovation and patent creation.

Students at U.S. colleges and universities who are international students	5.2%
Economic contribution of international students	\$39.0B
Jobs supported by international students	455,622

Voting Power

As more immigrants naturalize and become eligible to vote, they continue to gain power at the voting booth. The number of immigrant voters is only projected to rise in the next decade, but already in some states, foreign-born voters are already capable of deciding elections.

Immigrants eligible to vote	20,740,956
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Undocumented Immigrants

The presence of the significant number of undocumented immigrants in the United States, the vast majority of whom have lived in the country for more than five years, poses many legal and political challenges. But while politicians continue to debate what to do about illegal immigration without any resolution, millions of undocumented immigrants are working across the country, collectively contributing billions to the U.S. economy.

Undocumented immigrants	10,954,337
Share of undocumented immigrants, working age	89.6%
Undocumented Entrepreneurs	815,624

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Undocumented Household Income	\$227.8B
Taxes Paid	\$27.2B
— State & Local Taxes	\$9.9B
— Federal Taxes	\$17.3B
Total Spending Power	\$200.6B

The DACA-Eligible Population

DACA-eligible people contribute billions of dollars to the U.S. economy. Clawing back the protections afforded to DACA recipients will likely upset local economies, communities, and schools, hurting employers and businesses dependent these young immigrants as workers and customers.

Number of DACA Eligible Residents	1,250,202
Share of DACA Eligible Population in Labor Force that is Employed	93.3%
Number of DACA-Eligible Entrepreneurs	43,115
DACA-Eligible Household Income	\$23.4B
Taxes Paid	\$4.0B
— State & Local Taxes	\$1.8B
— Federal Taxes	\$2.2B
Total Spending Power	\$19.4B

Temporary Protected Status Holders

Recipients of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) have made enormous contributions to various industries and paid a significant amount in federal, state, and local taxes in the United States. Forcing them to leave the country not only risks putting these individuals in danger, but also threatens significant disruption to local economies.

Number of TPS Holders	318,170
Share of TPS Holders, Working Age	96.3%
Share of TPS Holders in Labor Force, Employed	94.1%
TPS Holders' Household Income	\$7.3B
Taxes Paid	\$1.5B
— State & Local Taxes	\$653.8M
— Federal Taxes	\$891.2M
Total Spending Power	\$5.8B