



Immigrants in Arizona

Arizona has a growing population of immigrants, making up more than 12 percent of the state's residents. While one in six Arizona workers is an immigrant, state industries like agriculture depend on an even greater share of immigrants. As workers, business owners, taxpayers, and neighbors, immigrants are an integral part of Arizona's diverse and thriving communities and make extensive contributions that benefit all.

More than one in eight Arizona residents is an immigrant, while nearly one in five is a native-born U.S. citizen with at least one immigrant parent.

- In 2015, 914,400 immigrants (foreign-born individuals) comprised 13.4 percent of the state's population.¹
- Arizona was home to 452,530 women, 413,289 men, and 48,581 children who were immigrants.²
- The top countries of origin for immigrants were Mexico (56.1 percent of immigrants), Canada (4.2 percent), India (4.1 percent), the Philippines (2.9 percent), and Vietnam (2.7 percent).³
- In 2016, 1.2 million people in Arizona (18.4 percent of the state's population) were native-born Americans who had at least [one immigrant parent](#).⁴

Over 40 percent of all immigrants in Arizona are naturalized U.S. citizens.

- 380,187 immigrants had naturalized as of 2015,⁵ and 205,923 immigrants were eligible to become [naturalized U.S. citizens](#) in 2015.⁶
- More than two-thirds of immigrants (69.6 percent) reported speaking English "well" or "very well."⁷

Immigrants in Arizona are distributed across the educational spectrum.

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

Education Level	Share (%) of All Immigrants	Share (%) of All Natives
College degree or more	21.2	29.1
Some college	19.4	37.0
High school diploma only	22.5	24.9
Less than a high-school diploma	36.9	9.0

More than a quarter-million U.S. citizens in Arizona live with at least one family member who is undocumented.

- Roughly 325,000 [undocumented immigrants](#) comprised 35 percent of the immigrant population and 4.9 percent of the total state population in 2014.⁹
- 466,047 people in Arizona, including 232,241 born in the United States, lived with at least one [undocumented family member](#) between 2010 and 2014.¹⁰
- During the same period, one in nine children in the state was a U.S.-citizen living with at least one undocumented family member (192,896 children in total).¹¹

More than 2525,000 recipients of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) live in Arizona.¹²

- As of 2016, 88 percent of [DACA-eligible immigrants](#) in Arizona, or 30,652 people, had applied for DACA.¹³
- An additional 11,000 residents of the state satisfied all but the educational requirements for DACA, and another 6,000 would be eligible as they grew older.¹⁴

One in six workers in Arizona is an immigrant, together making up an integral part of the state's labor force in a range of industries.

- 524,203 immigrant workers comprised 16.6 percent of the labor force in 2015.¹⁵

- Immigrant workers were most numerous in the following industries:

Industry	Number of Immigrant Workers
Construction	67,752
Health Care and Social Assistance	64,089
Accommodation and Food Services	63,331
Administrative & Support; Waste Management; and Remediation Services	58,510
Retail Trade	57,144

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	45.3
Construction	26.7
Administrative & Support; Waste Management; and Remediation Services	25.9
Other Services (except Public Administration)	23.3
Manufacturing	21.1

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 Arizona 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
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	76,563
Construction and Extraction	60,947
Office and Administrative Support	50,261
Food Preparation and Serving Related	49,036
Sales and Related	48,011

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	52.5
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	42.1
Construction and Extraction	31.6
Production	25.8
Personal Care and Service	19.4

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

- Undocumented immigrants comprised 6.6 percent of the state's workforce in 2014.¹⁹

Immigrants in Arizona have contributed billions of dollars in taxes.

- [Immigrant-led households in the state paid](#) \$3.7 billion in federal taxes and \$1.7 billion in state and local taxes in 2014.²⁰
- Undocumented immigrants in Arizona paid an estimated \$213.6 million in [state and local taxes](#) in 2014. Their contribution would rise to nearly \$253 million if they could receive legal status.²¹
- [DACA recipients in Arizona](#) paid an estimated \$61.4 million in state and local taxes in 2016.²²

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

- Arizonans in immigrant-led households had \$16 billion in [spending power](#) (after-tax income) in 2014.²³

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

- 70,916 immigrant business owners accounted for 21.9 percent of all self-employed Arizona residents in 2015 and generated more than \$1.8 billion in business income.²⁴
- Immigrants accounted for 22.7 percent of business owners in the Phoenix/Mesa/Scottsdale metropolitan area in 2015.²⁵

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, 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 Arizona* (New York, NY: August 2016), 5, <http://www.newamericaneconomy.org/research/the-contributions-of-new-americans-in-arizona/>.
- ²¹ Institute on Taxation & Economic Policy (ITEP), *Undocumented Immigrants’ State & Local Tax Contributions* (Washington, DC: March 2017), 3, www.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, www.itep.org/state-local-tax-contributions-of-young-undocumented-immigrants/.
- ²³ New American Economy, *The Contributions of New Americans in Arizona*, 5.
- 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.