



Immigrants in Arizona

Arizona has a growing population of immigrants. About 13 percent of the state's residents were born in another country, and 16 percent of residents are native-born Americans with at least one immigrant parent. One in six Arizona workers is an immigrant, and state industries like agriculture and construction depend on an even greater share of immigrants. As neighbors, business owners, taxpayers, and workers, immigrants are an integral part of Arizona's diverse and thriving communities and make extensive contributions that benefit all.

One in eight Arizona residents is an immigrant, while one in six is a native-born U.S. citizen with at least one immigrant parent.

- In 2018, 960,275 immigrants (foreign-born individuals) comprised 13 percent of the population.¹
- Arizona was home to 477,284 women, 437,218 men, and 45,773 children who were immigrants.²
- The top countries of origin for immigrants were Mexico (55 percent of immigrants), Canada (4 percent), India (4 percent), the Philippines (4 percent), and China (2 percent).³
- In 2018, 1.1 million people in Arizona (16 percent of the state's population) were native-born Americans who had at least one immigrant parent.⁴

Nearly half of all immigrants in Arizona are naturalized U.S. citizens.

- 431,667 immigrants (45 percent) had naturalized as of 2018,⁵ and 219,447 immigrants were eligible to become [naturalized U.S. citizens](#) in 2017.⁶
- Nearly three-quarters (72 percent) of immigrants reported speaking English "well" or "very well."⁷

Immigrants in Arizona are distributed across the educational spectrum.

- Nearly a quarter (23 percent) of adult immigrants had a college degree or more education in 2018, while a third (33 percent) had less than a high school diploma.⁸

Education Level	Share (%) of All Immigrants	Share (%) of All Natives
College degree or more	23	31
Some college	21	36
High school diploma only	23	24
Less than a high school diploma	33	8

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

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

- 275,000 [undocumented immigrants](#) comprised 28 percent of the immigrant population and 4 percent of the total state population in 2016.⁹
- 466,047 people in Arizona, including 255,489 U.S. citizens, lived with at least one [undocumented family member](#) between 2010 and 2014.¹⁰
- During the same period, about 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

Arizona is home to nearly 24,000 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients.

- Approximately 23,990 [active DACA recipients](#) lived in Arizona as of March 2020, while DACA has been granted to 30,358 people in total since 2012.¹²
- As of 2019, 70 percent of [DACA-eligible immigrants](#) in Arizona had applied for DACA.¹³
- An additional 10,000 residents of the state would satisfy all but the educational requirements for DACA, and fewer than a thousand would become 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.

- 576,640 immigrant workers comprised 17 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	72,994
Accommodation and Food Services	72,459
Construction	72,261
Administrative & Support; Waste Management; and Remediation Services	65,758
Retail Trade	63,867

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	40
Administrative & Support; Waste Management; and Remediation Services	27
Construction	27
Manufacturing	21
Other Services (except Public Administration)	20

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 Arizona 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
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	80,112
Construction and Extraction	62,815
Food Preparation and Serving Related	56,618
Transportation and Material Moving	55,531
Office and Administrative Support	52,926

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)
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	52
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	39
Construction and Extraction	30
Production	23
Healthcare Support	21

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 6 percent of Arizona’s workforce in 2016.¹⁹

Immigrants in Arizona have contributed billions of dollars in taxes.

- [Immigrant-led households in the state](#) paid \$4.7 billion in federal taxes and \$2.4 billion in state and local taxes in 2018.²⁰
- Undocumented immigrants in Arizona paid an estimated \$364.5 million in federal taxes and \$228.5 million in [state and local taxes](#) in 2018.²¹
- Arizona [DACA recipients](#) and DACA-eligible individuals paid an estimated \$50.7 million in state and local taxes in 2018.²²

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

- Arizona residents in immigrant-led households had \$21.1 billion in spending power (after-tax income) in 2018.²³

Immigrant entrepreneurs in Arizona generate more than a billion dollars in business revenue.

- 81,212 immigrant business owners accounted for 22 percent of all self-employed Arizona residents in 2018 and generated \$1.6 billion in business income.²⁴
- In the Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale metropolitan area in 2018, nearly one-third of business owners (31 percent) were immigrants.²⁵

Endnotes

- “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).
- Children are defined as people age 17 or younger. Men and women do not include children. Ibid.
- Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2018 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.
- 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>.
- 2018 ACS 1-Year Estimates.
- 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.
- 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.
- Data based on survey respondents age 25 and older. Ibid.
- Pew Research Center, “U.S. unauthorized immigration population estimates, 2016,” February 5, 2019, www.pewhispanic.org/interactives/unauthorized-immigrants/.
- 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/.
- 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).
- 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%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.
- 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.