



## Immigrants in Illinois

Illinois has a growing community of immigrants, many hailing from Mexico. While one in seven residents in the state is an immigrant, over 20 percent of all business owners in the Chicago metropolitan area are immigrants. As workers, business owners, taxpayers, and neighbors, immigrants are an integral part of Illinois' diverse and thriving communities and make extensive contributions that benefit all.

### **One in seven Illinois residents is an immigrant, while one in eight is a native-born U.S. citizen with at least one immigrant parent.**

- In 2015, 1.8 million immigrants (foreign-born individuals) comprised 14.2 percent of the population.<sup>1</sup>
- Illinois was home to 870,770 women, 863,196 men, and 92,190 children who were immigrants.<sup>2</sup>
- The top countries of origin for immigrants were Mexico (38.2 percent of immigrants), India (8.1 percent), Poland (7 percent), the Philippines (5 percent), and China (4.3 percent).<sup>3</sup>
- In 2016, 1.6 million people in Illinois (12.6 percent of the state's population) were native-born Americans who had at least [one immigrant parent](#).<sup>4</sup>

### **Nearly half of all immigrants in Illinois are naturalized U.S. citizens.**

- 880,242 immigrants (48.2 percent) had naturalized as of 2015,<sup>5</sup> and 326,135 immigrants were eligible to become [naturalized U.S. citizens](#) in 2015.<sup>6</sup>
- Nearly three-quarters (73.2 percent) of immigrants reported speaking English "well" or "very well."<sup>7</sup>

### **Immigrants in Illinois are concentrated at both ends of the educational spectrum.**

- Almost one in three adult immigrants had a college degree or more education in 2015, while one in four had less than a high school diploma.<sup>8</sup>

Education Level	Share (%) of All Immigrants	Share (%) of All Natives
College degree or more	30.2	33.6
Some college	17.9	31.4
High school diploma only	24.4	27.3
Less than a high-school diploma	27.6	7.7

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

- 450,000 [undocumented immigrants](#) comprised 24 percent of the immigrant population and 3.5 percent of the total state population in 2015.<sup>9</sup>
- 817,066 people in Illinois, including 343,532 born in the United States, lived with at least one [undocumented family member](#) between 2010 and 2014.<sup>10</sup>
- During the same period, 1 in 10 children in the state was a U.S. citizen living with at least one undocumented family member (395,179 children in total).<sup>11</sup>

**More than 35,000 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients live in Illinois.<sup>12</sup>**

- As of 2016, 73 percent of [DACA-eligible immigrants](#) in Illinois, or 45,663 people, had applied for DACA.<sup>13</sup>
- An additional 18,000 residents of the state satisfied all but the educational requirements for DACA, and another 9,000 would be eligible as they grew older.<sup>14</sup>

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

- 1.2 million immigrant workers comprised 17.9 percent of the labor force in 2015.<sup>15</sup>

- Immigrant workers were most numerous in the following industries:

Industry	Number of Immigrant Workers
Manufacturing	229,025
Health Care and Social Assistance	156,964
Accommodation and Food Services	138,107
Retail Trade	121,769
Administrative & Support; Waste Management; and Remediation Services	97,043
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:<sup>16</sup>

Industry	Immigrant Share (%) (of all industry workers)
Administrative & Support; Waste Management; and Remediation Services	27.2
Manufacturing	25.6
Accommodation and Food Services	24.5
Construction	22.3
Other Services (except Public Administration)	20.3
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 Illinois workforce in a range of occupations.**

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

Occupation Category	Number of Immigrant Workers
Production	159,976
Transportation and Material Moving	126,768
Food Preparation and Serving Related	111,804
Office and Administrative Support	109,283
Sales and Related	103,265

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:<sup>18</sup>

Occupation Category	Immigrant Share (%) (of all workers in occupation)
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	34.5
Production	32.1
Computer and Mathematical Sciences	27.4
Food Preparation and Serving Related	24.5
Life, Physical, and Social Sciences	24.3

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

- Five percent of Illinois' workforce consisted of undocumented immigrants in 2014.<sup>19</sup>

## **Immigrants in Illinois have contributed billions of dollars in taxes.**

- [Immigrant-led households in the state paid](#) \$9.8 billion in federal taxes and \$5.2 billion in state and local taxes in 2014.<sup>20</sup>
- Undocumented immigrants in Illinois paid an estimated \$758.9 million in [state and local taxes](#) in 2014. Their contribution would rise to over \$917.4 million if they could receive legal status.<sup>21</sup>
- [DACA recipients](#) in Illinois paid an estimated \$131 million in state and local taxes in 2016.<sup>22</sup>

## **As consumers, immigrants add tens of billions of dollars to Illinois' economy.**

- Illinois residents in immigrant-led households had \$40.1 billion in [spending power](#) (after-tax income) in 2014.<sup>23</sup>

## **Immigrant entrepreneurs in Illinois generate billions of dollars in business revenue.**

- 119,404 immigrant business owners accounted for 21.3 percent of all self-employed Illinois residents in 2015 and generated more than \$2.5 billion in business income.<sup>24</sup>
- In 2015, immigrants accounted for 20.3 percent of business owners in the Chicago/Naperville/Joliet metropolitan area (which stretches from Wisconsin to Indiana through Illinois) and 6.5 percent of business owners in the St. Louis metro area (which straddles Illinois and Missouri).<sup>25</sup>

## 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](http://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. Ibid.
9. Pew Research Center, “U.S. unauthorized immigration population estimates,” November 3, 2016, [www.pewhispanic.org/interactives/unauthorized-immigrants/](http://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/](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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 Illinois* (New York, NY: August 2016), 7, <http://www.newamericaneconomy.org/research/the-contributions-of-new-americans-in-illinois/>.
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 Illinois*, 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.