



Immigrants in New Mexico

New Mexico has a sizable immigrant community, more than 70 percent of which hails from Mexico. Almost one in ten residents was born in another country, while one in nine residents is a native-born U.S. citizen with at least one immigrant parent.

Foreign-born residents are vital members of New Mexico's communities and labor force, with immigrants accounting for two-fifths of the state's fishers, farmers, and foresters, and about one-quarter of employees in the construction industry. As neighbors, business owners, taxpayers, and workers, immigrants are an integral part of New Mexico's diverse and thriving communities and make extensive contributions that benefit all.

Nearly one in ten New Mexico residents is an immigrant, while one in nine residents is a native-born U.S. citizen with at least one immigrant parent.

- In 2018, 198,522 immigrants (foreign-born individuals) comprised 9 percent of the population.¹
- New Mexico was home to 92,604 women, 95,014 men, and 10,904 children who were immigrants.²
- The top countries of origin for immigrants were Mexico (72 percent of immigrants), the Philippines (3 percent), India (2 percent), Germany (1 percent), and Cuba (1 percent).³
- In 2018, 214,918 people in New Mexico (11 percent of the state's population) were native-born Americans who had at least one immigrant parent.⁴

More than two in five immigrants in New Mexico are naturalized U.S. citizens.

- 81,684 immigrants (41 percent) had naturalized as of 2018,⁵ and 50,913 immigrants were eligible to become [naturalized U.S. citizens](#) in 2017.⁶
- Two-thirds (67 percent) of immigrants reported speaking English "well" or "very well."⁷

Most immigrants in New Mexico have at least a high school education.

- Nearly one-fifth percent (18 percent) of adult immigrants had a college degree or more education in 2018, while over two-fifths (42 percent) had less than a high school diploma.⁸

Education Level	Share (%) of All Immigrants	Share (%) of All Natives
College degree or more	18	29
Some college	18	34
High school diploma only	22	27
Less than a high school diploma	42	11

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

Nearly 58,000 U.S. citizens in New Mexico live with at least one family member who is undocumented.

- 60,000 [undocumented immigrants](#) comprised 29 percent of the immigrant population and 3 percent of the total state population in 2016.⁹
- 115,331 people in New Mexico, including 57,959 U.S. citizens, lived with at least one [undocumented family member](#) between 2010 and 2014.¹⁰
- During the same period, about 1 in 11 children in the state was a U.S. citizen living with at least one undocumented family member (44,653 children in total).¹¹

New Mexico is home to thousands of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients.

- Approximately 5,690 [active DACA recipients](#) lived in New Mexico as of March 2020, while DACA has been granted to about 7,616 people in total since 2012.¹²
- As of 2019, 70 percent of [DACA-eligible immigrants](#) in New Mexico had applied for DACA.¹³
- An additional 2,000 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

One in eight New Mexico workers is an immigrant, together making up a vital part of the state’s labor force across industries.

- 111,453 immigrant workers comprised 12 percent of the labor force in 2018.¹⁵

- Immigrant workers were most numerous in the following industries:

Industry	Number of Immigrant Workers
Construction	17,946
Accommodation and Food Services	17,588
Health Care and Social Assistance	12,618
Retail Trade	10,135
Educational Services	9,929

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	28
Construction	22
Manufacturing	18
Accommodation and Food Services	17
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil & Gas Extraction	17

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 New Mexico 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
Construction and Extraction	17,815
Food Preparation and Serving Related	13,180
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	12,251
Sales and Related	9,819
Transportation and Material Moving	8,871

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	40
Construction and Extraction	24
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	23
Production	17
Food Preparation and Serving Related	17

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 4 percent of New Mexico's workforce in 2016.¹⁹

Immigrants in New Mexico have contributed hundreds of millions of dollars in taxes.

- [Immigrant-led households in the state paid](#) \$603.1 million in federal taxes and \$393 million in state and local taxes in 2018.²⁰
- Undocumented immigrants in New Mexico paid an estimated \$49.5 million in federal taxes and \$40.5 million in [state and local taxes](#) in 2018.²¹
- New Mexico [DACA recipients](#) and DACA-eligible individuals paid an estimated \$16.5 million in state and local taxes in 2018.²²

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

- New Mexico residents in immigrant-led households had \$3.2 billion in [spending power](#) (after-tax income) in 2018.²³

Immigrant entrepreneurs in New Mexico generate hundreds of millions of dollars in business revenue.

- 18,935 immigrant business owners accounted for 17 percent of all self-employed New Mexico residents in 2018 and generated \$319.5 million in business income.²⁴

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.