



## Immigrants in New York

New York is often considered one of the greatest cultural hubs in the country, having welcomed immigrants long before the days of Ellis Island. Immigrants now account for one-fifth of the state's total population and make up a staggering 25 percent of its labor force. As workers, business owners, taxpayers, and neighbors, immigrants are an integral part of New York's diverse and thriving communities and make extensive contributions that benefit all.

### **One in five New Yorkers is an immigrant, while one in six is a native-born U.S. citizen with at least one immigrant parent.**

- In 2015, more than 4.5 million immigrants (foreign-born individuals) comprised 22.9 percent of the state's population.<sup>1</sup>
- New York was home to 2.3 million women, 2 million men, and 217,102 children who were immigrants.<sup>2</sup>
- The top countries of origin for immigrants were the Dominican Republic (11.2 percent of immigrants), China (8.7 percent), Jamaica (5.2 percent), Mexico (5.2 percent), and Ecuador (4.2 percent).<sup>3</sup>
- In 2016, 3.4 million people in New York (17.2 percent of the state's population) were native-born Americans who had at least [one immigrant parent](#).<sup>4</sup>

### **More than half of all immigrants in New York are naturalized U.S. citizens.**

- 2.5 million immigrants (55.2 percent) had naturalized as of 2015,<sup>5</sup> and 891,416 immigrants were eligible to become [naturalized U.S. citizens](#) in 2015.<sup>6</sup>
- Nearly three-quarters (73.9 percent) of immigrants reported speaking English "well" or "very well."<sup>7</sup>

### **Immigrants in New York are distributed across the educational spectrum.**

- About 3 in 10 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	37.0
Some college	18.3	27.0
High school diploma only	25.4	27.0
Less than a high-school diploma	26.2	9.0

**Over half a million U.S. citizens in New York live with at least one family member who is undocumented.**

- 775,000 [undocumented immigrants](#) comprised 17 percent of the immigrant population and 3.9 percent of the total state population in 2014.<sup>9</sup>
- 1.2 million people in New York, including 410,525 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 12 children in the state was a U.S. citizen living with at least one undocumented family member (351,146 children in total).<sup>11</sup>

**More than 30,000 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients live in New York.**<sup>12</sup>

- As of 2016, 60 percent of [DACA-eligible immigrants](#) in New York, or 45,663 people, had applied for DACA.<sup>13</sup>
- An additional 21,000 residents of the state satisfied all but the educational requirements for DACA, and another 10,000 would be eligible as they grew older.<sup>14</sup>

**Immigrants make up more than a quarter of the labor force in New York and are integral to a range of industries.**

- 2.8 million immigrant workers comprised 27.8 percent of the labor force in 2015.<sup>15</sup>

- Immigrant workers were most numerous in the following industries:

Industry	Number of Immigrant Workers
Health Care and Social Assistance	590,921
Accommodation and Food Services	320,089
Retail Trade	297,246
Construction	231,459
Other Services (except Public Administration)	221,118

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)
Other Services (except Public Administration)	38.2
Transportation and Warehousing	37.1
Accommodation and Food Services	35.8
Construction	35.3
Health Care and Social Assistance	31.7

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

**Immigrants are a vital part of the New York 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
Office and Administrative Support	315,099
Sales and Related	280,553
Food Preparation and Serving Related	235,950
Transportation and Material Moving	232,353
Management	226,914

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)
Healthcare Support	49.1
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	43.2
Construction and Extraction	37.8
Personal Care and Service	35.4
Transportation and Material Moving	34.7

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

- Undocumented immigrants comprised 5.9 percent of the state's workforce in 2014.<sup>19</sup>

**Immigrants in New York have contributed billions of dollars in taxes.**

- [Immigrant-led households in the state paid](#) \$26.5 billion in federal taxes and \$15.9 billion in state and local taxes in 2014.<sup>20</sup>
- Undocumented immigrants in New York paid an estimated \$1.1 billion in [state and local taxes](#) in 2014. Their contribution would increase to \$1.3 billion if they could receive legal status.<sup>21</sup>
- [DACA recipients](#) in New York paid an estimated \$140 million in state and local taxes in 2016.<sup>22</sup>

**As consumers, immigrants add a hundred billion dollars to New York's economy.**

- New Yorkers in immigrant-led households had \$103.3 billion in [spending power](#) (after-tax income) in 2014.<sup>23</sup>

**Immigrant entrepreneurs in New York generate billions of dollars in business revenue.**

- 347,573 immigrant business owners accounted for 33.8 percent of all self-employed New York residents in 2015 and generated \$7.2 billion in business income.<sup>24</sup>
- In 2015, immigrants accounted for 35.2 percent of business owners in the New York/Northern New Jersey/Long Island metropolitan area.<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 New York* (New York, NY: August 2016), 7, <http://www.newamericaneconomy.org/research/the-contributions-of-new-americans-in-new-york/>.
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/](http://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, <https://itep.org/state-local-tax-contributions-of-young-undocumented-immigrants/>.
23. New American Economy, *The Contributions of New Americans in New York*, 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.