New Americans in Greater Salem
The Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants in Beverly, Danvers, Peabody, and Salem

Population

16,600
the number of immigrants living in Greater Salem, Massachusetts, in 2019. Immigrants made up

10.0%
of the total population of the region in 2019.

Between 2014 and 2019, the total population of the region increased by

2.6%
of the total population growth in the region was attributable to immigrants.

Demographics

14.8%
of households in Greater Salem in 2019 had at least one immigrant.

In the region, immigrants were

18.4%
more likely to be of working age than their U.S.-born counterparts, allowing them to actively participate in the labor force and contribute to the economy as taxpayers and consumers.

12.4%
of immigrants in Greater Salem were recent arrivals, with five years of residency in the United States or less, meaning

87.6%
of immigrants in the region had resided in the United States for more than five years.

Immigrants were

10.5%
of the total population growth in the region.

The immigrant population increased by

+2.7%
during the same time period.

18.4%
of the total population growth in the region was attributable to immigrants.

In the region, immigrants were

18.4%
more likely to be of working age than their U.S.-born counterparts, allowing them to actively participate in the labor force and contribute to the economy as taxpayers and consumers.

12.4%
of immigrants in Greater Salem were recent arrivals, with five years of residency in the United States or less, meaning

87.6%
of immigrants in the region had resided in the United States for more than five years.

Shares of population by age groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>U.S.-born</th>
<th>Immigrant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-15</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-64</td>
<td>61.9%</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Estimates provided in this report may slightly undercount the immigrant population. The American Community Survey historically undersamples the immigrant population, especially among lower income, more recently arrived, and less English-fluent immigrant populations.

2. Unless otherwise specified, data comes from 5-year samples of the American Community Survey from 2014 and 2019 and figures refer to the cities of Beverly, Danvers, Peabody, and Salem, Massachusetts.

3. We define “immigrant” as any non-citizen or any naturalized U.S. citizen. They include naturalized citizens, green card holders, temporary visa holders, refugees, asylees, and undocumented immigrants, among others.

4. We define working age as 16-64 years of age.

5. Totals may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.
Demographics

The top languages spoken at home other than English among immigrants:

- Spanish: 24.4%
- Portuguese: 18.5%
- Russian: 6.5%
- Albanian: 5.3%
- Italian: 4.5%

The top five regions of origin for immigrants living in the region:

- Other Regions: 32.6%
- Mexico, Central America, and Caribbean: 20.6%
- Southern Europe: 18.4%
- Northern Europe: 13.2%
- India/Southwest Asia: 8.8%

The top five countries of origin for immigrants living in the region:

- Other Countries: 63.3%
- Dominican Republic: 12.7%
- Brazil: 9.4%
- India: 5.5%
- Italy: 5.1%
- Canada: 4.0%

Immigrants with Limited English Language Proficiency

3,100 immigrants living in the region had limited English language proficiency, making up 19.1% of the immigrant population.

Among those with limited English language proficiency, educational attainment was as follows:

- Less than a high-school diploma: 50.8%
- A high-school diploma or some college: 38.6%
- Other: 10.6%

Among those, the top languages spoken at home other than English were:

- Spanish: 35.3%
- Portuguese: 26.5%

6. For the purpose of this report, we define people with limited English language proficiency as those who do not speak English at all or do not speak English well.
Spending Power and Tax Contributions

Immigrants paid a significant amount in federal, state, and local taxes, including property, sales, and excise taxes levied by state and local governments.

In 2019, immigrant households’ in Greater Salem earned:

- $746.1 million
- $144.9 million went to federal taxes
- $64.3 million went to state & local taxes
- $536.9 million left in spending power

This means that immigrant households held 9.6% of all spending power in the region.

In 2019, immigrants in the region contributed $2.5 billion to the region’s gross domestic product (GDP), or 10.7% of the total GDP for that year.

Immigrants in the region also supported federal social programs. In 2019, they contributed

- $70.1 million to Social Security
- $20.0 million to Medicare

43.5% of immigrants in the region received Medicare or Medicaid in 2019, compared with 33.1% of U.S.-born residents in 2019.

About 64.9% of immigrants had private health care coverage, while 43.6% had public health care coverage.

About 81.8% of U.S.-born residents had private health care coverage, while 33.4% had public health care coverage.

6.0% of immigrants in Greater Salem were uninsured.

7. Immigrant households refer to those with an immigrant as head of the unit.
10. These figures derive from our calculations based on immigrants’ share of wage income and self-employment income in the 5-year ACS sample from 2019 and the statistics of GDP from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.
11. Including people who have both public and private healthcare coverage.
Spending Power & Tax Contributions (continued)

11.7% of residents in Greater Salem live at or below 150% of the poverty threshold.

20.5% of immigrants in Greater Salem live at or below 150% of the poverty threshold.

10.8% of U.S.-born residents in Greater Salem live at or below 150% of the poverty threshold.

Workforce

Although immigrants made up 10.0% of the region’s total population, they represented 11.6% of its working age population, 11.4% of its employed labor force, and 18.3% of its workers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields in 2019.¹²

Immigrant shares of the...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Age Population</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed Population</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEM Workers</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The immigrant working-age population was 52.6% female and 47.4% male.

The employed population was 46.6% female and 53.4% male.

Immigrants in the region were 18.4% more likely to be of working age than their U.S.-born counterparts.

The industries with the highest share of immigrant workers in 2019 includes:

<table>
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<th>Industry</th>
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<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
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<td>15.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care and Social Assistance</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Services¹³</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. STEM refers to occupations that require background or expertise in science, technology, engineering, or math.

13. Professional services: Most of these industries include professions that require a degree or a license, such as legal services, accounting, scientific research, consulting services, etc.
**Workforce (continued)**

Due to the role immigrants play in the workforce helping companies keep jobs on U.S. soil, we estimate that immigrants living in the region helped create or preserve **800 manufacturing jobs** that would have otherwise been eliminated or moved elsewhere by 2019."
New Americans in Greater Salem

**Education**

Share of the region’s population aged 25 or above that held a bachelor’s degree or higher in 2019:

- **49.8%** of U.S.-born
  - **53.9%** female, **46.1%** male
  - **48.2%** female, **51.8%** male

- **36.7%** of immigrants
  - **55.9%** female, **44.1%** male
  - **55.4%** female, **44.6%** male

Share of the region’s population aged 25 or above that held an advanced degree in 2019:

- **20.2%** of U.S.-born
  - **55.9%** female, **44.1%** male

- **16.6%** of immigrants
  - **44.6%** female, **55.4%** male

**5.3%** of K-12 students in the Greater Salem region were immigrants in 2019.

**18.9%** of K-12 students in the region were children of immigrants in 2019.\(^{16}\)

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**SPOTLIGHT ON University Population**

In fall 2021, **236** students enrolled in colleges and universities in Greater Salem were temporary U.S. residents.\(^{17}\)

- **47** jobs in higher education and other areas including accommodations, food, and transportation were supported by international students in the region.

- **$9.7M** was spent by international students in the 2021-2022 academic year in the region.\(^{18}\)

The universities with the largest international student populations were:

- Salem State University: **177 international students**
- Endicott College: **49 international students**

**16** international students graduated with STEM degrees from colleges and universities in the region in the 2018-19 academic year.

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16. Children of immigrants includes both U.S.-born and immigrants who are under the age of 18 with at least one immigrant parent.

17. Data on student enrollment in the region is derived from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System maintained by the National Center for Education Statistics. Temporary residents refer to people who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents.

18. Economic data is derived from the International Student Economic Value Tool maintained by NAFSA, the Association of International Educators.
In 2019, 51.7% of immigrant households in Greater Salem owned their own homes, compared with 71.5% of U.S.-born households.

Total property value of immigrant households was $2.1B

The average household size for immigrants is 3.0 compared to 2.5 for U.S.-born residents.

88.2% of immigrant households in the region had access to broadband connection in their place of residence as compared with 91.9% of U.S.-born households in 2019.9

When eligible immigrants naturalize, their income increased, on average, by +8.9%21

Top five countries of origin for naturalized citizens in Greater Salem were:

- Dominican Republic: 13.1%
- Italy: 7.1%
- Other USSR/Russia: 5.4%
- Portugal: 4.5%
- Canada: 3.6%

Nationally, 48.7% of immigrants are naturalized citizens, 15.9% are likely eligible to naturalize, and 35.4% are not yet eligible.
Refugees

500

Immigrants, or 3.2% of the immigrant population in Greater Salem, were likely refugees in 2019.22

In 2019, refugee households in the region earned $28.4 million

- $5.5 million went to federal taxes23
- $2.4 million went to state & local taxes24
- $20.5 million left in spending power

Undocumented Immigrants

1,600

Undocumented immigrants lived in Greater Salem in 2019. They made up 9.6% of the region’s immigrant population.

In 2019, undocumented immigrant households earned $42.4 million

- $3.6 million went to federal taxes25
- $1.9 million went to state & local taxes26
- $36.9 million was left in spending power

H-1B Visas

270

H-1B visas were certified27 in Greater Salem during Fiscal Year 2022.

The top occupations among certified H-1B visa applications in Greater Salem, Massachusetts were:

- Software Developers, Applications (23 certifications)
- Physicians and Surgeons (245)
New Americans in Greater Salem, Massachusetts

**SPOTLIGHT ON**

Darguin Fortuna

*Founder, Flow Design Architects*

Darguin Fortuna grew up on his grandparents’ rice farm in the Dominican Republic, but threw himself into schoolwork to pursue a degree in architecture. At 20, he was two years into that program when he and his mother received green cards. “My mom had first applied years before, and I hadn’t known if I’d get mine while I was still young enough to qualify as her dependent,” he says.

Knowing he’d face a difficult path but would earn far more as an architect in the United States in the long run, Fortuna left college and moved with his family to Massachusetts in 2010. “My odds of succeeding as an architect were far better if I came,” he says. His mother became a home health aide, while Fortuna enrolled in English classes at North Shore Community College and worked at Wendy’s. After receiving his ESL Certificate, he transferred to Boston Architectural College.

Fortuna also married an American with whom he now has three children. It wasn’t easy to support the family while studying and working fast-food jobs, and for several years the family relied on food stamps and WIC support to get by. “I was so proud when we were finally told we no longer qualified — it meant we’d made it through and we were standing on our own feet,” he says.

After completing his certification exams, Fortuna worked at several large firms, but didn’t like the stuffy corporate environment. “I wanted a more diverse and equitable practice,” he says. To get that, he realized he would have to start his own. In 2016, he launched Flow Design Architects, which focuses on sustainable commercial and residential design—and brings Fortuna’s unique vibrancy to client relations/projects. “That first year, we did just 15 projects. Last year we did over 450,” he says. Flow Design Architects now employs 12 people in the Salem area.

Fortuna is grateful for the support he’s received from mentors at BAC and local design firms. The Massachusetts Small Business Development Center at Salem State University also helped him refine his business plan. “When you’re starting out, you come across these angels who help you on your way,” he says.

Now a U.S. citizen, Fortuna teaches aspiring architects at BAC, offers an online course, and gives career talks across the state. “I’m passionate about promoting diversity, and I want other young people to realize architecture is a career they can do too,” he says.

**SPOTLIGHT ON**

Laurier Hamidou Tabayi

*Manufacturing Supervisor, Thermos-Fisher*

Cameroonian-born and French-educated computer scientist, Laurier Hamidou Tabayi, received a diversity visa in 2011, and arrived in Massachusetts with her husband and two daughters. But it wasn’t the transition she expected. The visa program provided no guidance about how to get established with housing or work.

Soon after arriving, for instance, the family had the misfortune to be targeted by scammers who pretended to be landlords and made off with over $5,000. The police couldn’t help, and without any savings or housing, the family entered a homeless shelter in Danvers.

Meanwhile, Hamidou Tabayi had the rude awakening that employers weren’t impressed by her foreign master’s degrees. So she enrolled in an associate’s degree at North Shore Community College and took classes to improve her English. “I knew I couldn’t fall back — that I had to keep pushing forward,” she says.

The family eventually moved out of the shelter with a Section 8 housing voucher, and Hamidou Tabayi worked two jobs, stocking shelves at a local Market Basket and operating equipment at a medical devices manufacturer. Working 90-hour weeks, it took her five years to complete her degree. When she started applying for engineering jobs, some employers told her she was now overqualified. “I felt like I couldn’t win,” she says.

But in 2022, Hamidou Tabayi finally found a better-paid job as a manufacturing supervisor at the laboratory and biotech equipment company Thermos-Fisher. Though her husband, also a computer scientist, is still struggling to find work, Hamidou Tabayi has been able to buy her own home and dreams of one day getting a PhD.

For now, though, she’s focused on her daughters’ educations. Her eldest just graduated from UMass Lowell with a master’s degree in engineering management, and is working as a validation engineer, while her youngest attends Dartmouth College and hopes to become a lawyer. “God is good, and so is the American Dream,” she says. “But in the beginning it’s really hard — you have to keep hope, no matter what.”

She says transportation assistance would have helped the family leave the shelter much sooner, since they didn’t have a car to scout apartments. And career guidance would have helped her find work in her field. “There needs to be more guidance and support for people who are starting out in this country.”
New Americans in Essex County
The Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants in the County

Population

132,500
the number of immigrants living in Essex County, Massachusetts, in 2019.

Between 2014 and 2019, the total population of the county decreased by 
1.9%

Without immigrants moving to the county, the total population would have decreased by 
3.1%
between 2014 and 2019.

The immigrant population increased by 
+7.8% during the same time period.

Demographics

22.6%
of households in Essex County in 2019 had at least one immigrant.

In the county, immigrants were

28.3% more likely to be of working age than their U.S.-born counterparts, allowing them to actively participate in the labor force and contribute to the economy as taxpayers and consumers.

15.1%
of immigrants in Essex County were recent arrivals, with five years of residency in the United States or less, meaning 84.9% of immigrants in the county have resided in the United States for more than five years.

 Shares of population by age groups:

- U.S.-born
  - 0-15: 21.4%
  - 16-64: 61.7%
  - 65+: 16.9%

- Immigrant
  - 0-15: 6.3%
  - 16-64: 79.2%
  - 65+: 14.4%

The top five countries of origin for immigrants living in the county:

- Dominican Republic (35.6%)
- Brazil (4.0%)
- India (3.2%)
- Guatemala (6.7%)
- El Salvador (3.7%)

28. Unless otherwise specified, data comes from 5-year samples of the American Community Survey from 2014 and 2019 and figures refer to Essex County, MA.
29. We define working age as 16-64 years of age.
30. Totals may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.
Spending Power and Tax Contributions

Immigrants paid a significant amount in federal, state, and local taxes, including property, sales, and excise taxes levied by state and local governments.

In 2019, immigrant households in Essex County earned:

- **$4.8 billion**

  went to federal taxes

- **$841.7 million**

  went to state & local taxes

- **$425.4 million**

  left in spending power

- **$3.6 billion**

  left in spending power

This means that immigrant households held **15.5%** of all spending power in the county.

In 2019, immigrant residents in the county contributed **$9.5 billion** to the region’s gross domestic product (GDP), or **16.1%** of the total.

Immigrants in the region also supported federal social programs. In 2019, they contributed:

- **$470.8 million** to Social Security
- **$125.5 million** to Medicare


33. These figures derive from our calculations based on immigrants’ share of wage income and self-employment income in the 5-year ACS sample from 2019 and the statistics of GDP from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.
**Workforce**

The industries with the highest share of immigrant workers in 2019 includes:

<table>
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<tbody>
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<td>28.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and Warehousing</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Services</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care and Social Assistance</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Services</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Immigrants tended to work in these occupations in the county in 2019:

- Driver/Sales Workers and Truck Drivers (2.6%)
- Nursing Assistants (2.6%)
- Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners (2.5%)
- Cashiers (2.3%)
- Construction Laborers (1.9%)
- Taxi Drivers (1.8%)
- Software Developers (1.7%)

77.6% Other Occupations

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34. General services include personal services (e.g. laundry services, barber shops, and repair and maintenance), religious organizations, social services, and labor unions.

35. Professional services: Most of these industries include professions that require a degree or a license, such as legal services, accounting, scientific research, consulting services, etc.