



## New Americans in Massachusetts: The Political and Economic Power of Immigrants, Latinos, and Asians in the Bay State

Immigrants, Latinos, and Asians account for growing shares of the economy and electorate in Massachusetts. Immigrants (the foreign-born) make up roughly 1 in 6 Bay Staters, and more than half of them are naturalized U.S. citizens who are eligible to vote. “New Americans” — immigrants and the children of immigrants — account for 15.5% of registered voters in the state. Immigrants are not only integral to the state’s economy as workers, but also account for billions of dollars in tax revenue and consumer purchasing power. Moreover, Latinos and Asians (both foreign-born and native-born) wield \$35.2 billion in consumer purchasing power, and the businesses they own had sales and receipts of \$9.2 billion and employed more than 65,000 people at last count. Immigrant, Latino, and Asian workers, consumers, and entrepreneurs are integral to Massachusetts’ economy and tax base — and they are an electoral force with which every politician must reckon.

### **Immigrants and their children are growing shares of Massachusetts’ population and electorate.**

- The foreign-born share of Massachusetts’ population rose from 9.5% in [1990](#),<sup>1</sup> to 12.2% in [2000](#),<sup>2</sup> to 15.6% in [2013](#),<sup>3</sup> according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Massachusetts was home to 1,046,155 immigrants in [2013](#),<sup>4</sup> which is more than the total population of [San Jose, California](#).<sup>5</sup>
- 52.5% of immigrants (or 549,009 people) in Massachusetts were naturalized U.S. citizens in [2013](#)<sup>6</sup>— meaning that they are eligible to vote.
- Unauthorized immigrants comprised 2.3% of the state’s population (or 150,000 people) in [2012](#), according to a report by the Pew Hispanic Center.<sup>7</sup>
- 15.5% (or 581,698) of registered voters in Massachusetts were “New Americans” — naturalized citizens or the U.S.-born children of immigrants who were raised during the current era of immigration from Latin America and Asia which began in 1965 — according to an analysis of 2012 Census Bureau data by the [American Immigration Council](#).<sup>8</sup>

### **Roughly 1 in 6 Bay Staters are Latino or Asian— and they vote.**

- The Latino share of Massachusetts’ population grew from 4.8% in [1990](#),<sup>9</sup> to 6.8% in [2000](#),<sup>10</sup> to 10.5% (or 703,679 people) in [2013](#).<sup>11</sup> The Asian share of the population grew from 2.4% in [1990](#),<sup>12</sup> to 3.8% in [2000](#),<sup>13</sup> to 5.8% (or 388,317 people) in [2013](#),<sup>14</sup> according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

- Latinos accounted for 6% (or 202,000) of Massachusetts voters in the 2012 elections, and Asians 2.9% (98,000), according to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#).<sup>15</sup>
- In Massachusetts, 87.9% of children of immigrants were U.S. citizens in [2009](#), according to data from the Urban Institute.<sup>16</sup>
- In [2009](#), 89.1% of children in Asian families in Massachusetts were U.S. citizens, as were 93.1% of children in Latino families.<sup>17</sup>

### **Immigrant, Latino, and Asian entrepreneurs and consumers add tens of billions of dollars and tens of thousands of jobs to the Massachusetts economy.**

- The 2014 purchasing power of Asians in Massachusetts totaled \$19.2 billion—an increase of 810% since 1990. Latino buying power totaled \$16 billion—an increase of 532% since 1990, according to the [Selig Center for Economic Growth](#) at the University of Georgia.<sup>18</sup>
- Immigration boosts housing values in communities. From 2000 to 2010, according to the [Americas Society/Council of the Americas](#), the value added by immigration to the price of the average home was \$5,664 in Middlesex County; \$2,995 in Worcester County; \$2,886 in Essex County; \$2,181 in Suffolk County; and \$2,647 in Norfolk County.<sup>19</sup>
- Massachusetts' 26,578 [Asian-owned](#) businesses had sales and receipts of \$6.8 billion and employed 48,982 people in 2007, the last year for which data is available.<sup>20</sup> The state's 19,410 [Latino-owned](#) businesses had sales and receipts of \$2.4 billion and employed 16,628 people in 2007, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Survey of Business Owners.<sup>21</sup>
- From 2006 to 2010, there were [50,778](#) new immigrant business owners in Massachusetts, and they had total net business income of \$2.8 billion, which makes up 14% of all net business income in the state, according to Robert Fairlie of the University of California, Santa Cruz.<sup>22</sup>
- In 2010, [17.9% of all business owners](#) in Massachusetts were foreign-born, according to the Fiscal Policy Institute.<sup>23</sup> In 2013, [18.8% of business owners](#) in the Boston metropolitan area were foreign-born, according to the Fiscal Policy Institute and Americas Society/Council of the Americas.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, 29.1% of "Main Street" business owners—owners of businesses in the retail, accommodation and food services, and neighborhood services sectors—in the Boston metro area were foreign-born in 2013.<sup>25</sup>

### **Immigrants are integral to Massachusetts' economy as workers and taxpayers.**

- Immigrants comprised 18.7% of the state's workforce in [2013](#) (or 689,413 workers), according to the U.S. Census Bureau.<sup>26</sup>
- Immigrants accounted for 16% of total economic output in the Boston metropolitan area as of 2007,

according to a study by the [Fiscal Policy Institute](#).<sup>27</sup>

- Immigrant-headed households in Massachusetts paid \$1.2 billion in state income taxes in [2005](#), according to a report by the Institute for Asian American Studies at the University of Massachusetts-Boston.<sup>28</sup>
- Immigrant-headed households in Massachusetts paid \$346 million in sales and excise taxes in [2006](#) and nearly \$1.1 billion in local property taxes in [2007](#), according to the same study.<sup>29</sup>
- Latinos in Massachusetts paid \$1.7 billion in federal taxes and \$960 million in state/local taxes in 2013, according to the [Partnership for a New American Economy](#). In particular, foreign-born Latinos paid \$756 million in federal taxes and \$438 million in state/local taxes.<sup>30</sup>
  - The federal tax contribution of Massachusetts' Latino population included \$1.4 billion to Social Security and \$319 million to Medicare in 2013. Foreign-born Latinos contributed \$622 million to Social Security and \$145 million to Medicare that year.<sup>31</sup>
- Unauthorized immigrants comprised 3.4% of the state's workforce (or 120,000 workers) in [2012](#), according to a report by the Pew Hispanic Center.<sup>32</sup>
- If all unauthorized immigrants were removed from Massachusetts, the state would lose \$12.0 billion in economic activity, \$5.3 billion in gross state product, and approximately 55,467 jobs, even accounting for adequate market adjustment time, according to a report by the [Perryman Group](#).<sup>33</sup>

### **Unauthorized immigrants pay taxes.**

- Unauthorized immigrants in Massachusetts paid \$196.9 million in state and local taxes in [2012](#), which includes \$85.6 million in sales taxes, \$44.5 million in personal income taxes, and \$66.9 million in property taxes, according to data from the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy.<sup>34</sup>
- Were unauthorized immigrants in Massachusetts to have lawful permanent residence, they would pay \$259.4 million in state and local taxes, including \$94.1 million in sales taxes, \$91.7 million in personal income taxes, and \$73.5 million in property taxes.<sup>35</sup>

### **Immigrants are integral to Massachusetts's economy as students.**

- Massachusetts's 51,240 foreign students contributed \$1.9 billion to the state's economy in tuition, fees, and living expenses for the 2013-2014 academic year, according to the [NAFSA: Association of International Educators](#).<sup>36</sup>
- Foreign students contribute to Massachusetts' metropolitan areas. From 2008 to 2012, according to the [Brookings Institution](#), 53,486 foreign students paid \$1.8 billion in tuition and \$933 million in living costs in the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy metropolitan area. In the Worcester metro area, 3,763 foreign students paid \$94 million in tuition and \$43 million in living costs.<sup>37</sup>

- Foreign students also contribute to innovation in Massachusetts. In 2009, “non-resident aliens” comprised 37.8% of master’s degrees and 41.9% of doctorate degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, according to the [Partnership for a New American Economy](#).<sup>38</sup>

### Immigrants excel educationally.

- The number of immigrants in Massachusetts with a college degree increased by 57.5% between 2000 and 2011, according to [data](#) from the Migration Policy Institute.<sup>39</sup>
- In Massachusetts, 87.2% of children with immigrant parents were considered “English proficient” as of [2009](#), according to data from the Urban Institute.<sup>40</sup>
- The English proficiency rate among Asian children in Massachusetts was 85.7%, while for Latino children it was 85.6%, as of [2009](#).<sup>41</sup>

### Endnotes

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