

New Americans in Northern Utah



The Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants in Box Elder, Cache, Davis, Morgan, Rich, Tooele, and Weber Counties¹

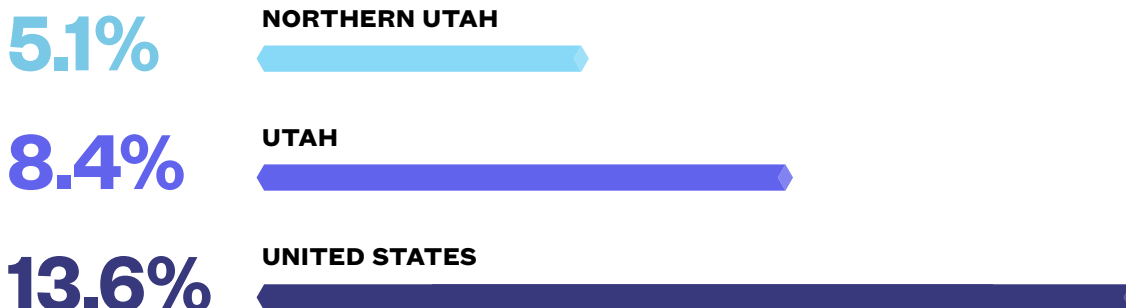
According to the 2020 Census, Utah was the fastest-growing state in the country over the previous decade, opening doors for economic opportunity, innovation, and workforce development.² As new Americans move to the Beehive State, they play a vital role in helping to fuel robust economic growth across the state's four regions—northern, eastern, south central, and southern—making contributions in the workforce, and as taxpayers, consumers, and entrepreneurs, boosting both the region and the entire state's economy.³ This is especially true in northern Utah, which represents 27.6 percent of the state's total population.⁴ This brief shows the changing demographic and economic contributions that new Americans are making in northern Utah, specifically in the region's rural communities. Unless otherwise specified, the data in this brief comes from the 2000 and 2019 American Community Surveys.⁵ We define an immigrant or new American as anyone born outside the country to non-U.S. citizen parents who is a resident of the United States.

Demographics

Northern Utah has welcomed more than 7,500 immigrants between 2000 and 2019, including many who migrated from another state. During this time period, 5.8 percent of northern Utah's population growth was attributable to immigrants.

In 2019, more than 36,200 immigrants lived in northern Utah. Immigrants made up a smaller share of the region's population (5.1 percent) than the state's (8.4 percent), and those demographics are changing rapidly.

FOREIGN-BORN SHARE OF THE POPULATION IN 2019

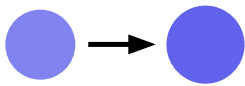


POPULATION GROWTH IN NORTHERN UTAH

Many immigrants have made northern Utah their home. Between 2000 and 2019, the number of immigrants in northern Utah increased by 24.5 percent, while the U.S.-born population grew by 20.5 percent. During this same period, the region's total population increased by 20.7 percent, or 129,200 people. As the region grows, U.S.-born and foreign-born talent are poised to help meet the state's pressing workforce needs, thereby increasing economic opportunity for all residents.

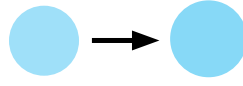
+24.5%

growth in the foreign-born population in northern Utah between 2000 and 2019.



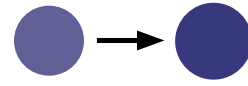
+20.5%

growth in the U.S.-born population in northern Utah between 2000 and 2019.



+20.7%

growth in northern Utah's total population between 2000 and 2019.

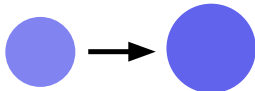


POPULATION GROWTH IN UTAH

In comparison, across the state, the number of immigrants increased by 63.7 percent between 2000 and 2019, while the U.S.-born population grew by 36.9 percent. During this same period, Utah's total population increased by 38.8 percent, or 866,000 people.

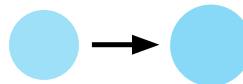
+63.7%

growth in the foreign-born population in Utah between 2000 and 2019.



+36.9%

growth in the U.S.-born population in Utah between 2000 and 2019.



+38.8%

growth in Utah's total population between 2000 and 2019.

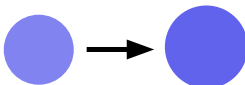


POPULATION GROWTH IN THE UNITED STATES

Meanwhile, nationally, the immigrant population increased by 41.4 percent between 2000 and 2019, while the U.S.-born population grew by 12.1 percent. During the same period, the overall U.S. population increased by 15.4 percent, or 43.3 million people.

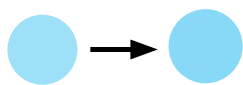
+41.4%

growth in the national foreign-born population between 2000 and 2019.



+12.1%

growth in the national U.S.-born population between 2000 and 2019.



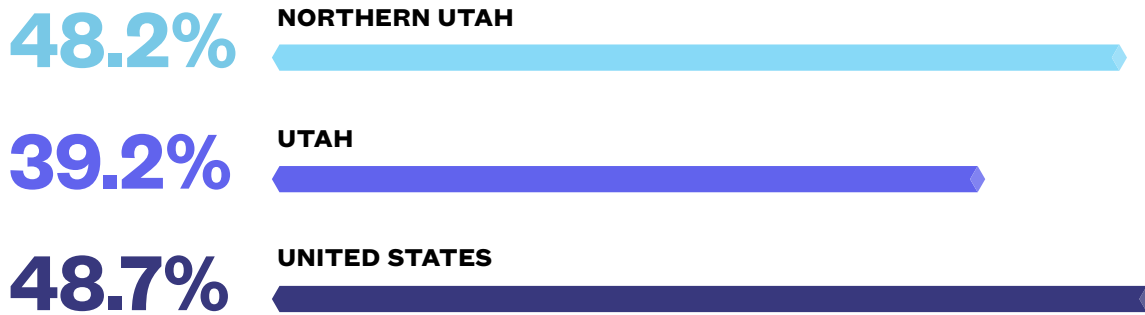
+15.4%

growth in the overall U.S. population between 2000 and 2019.



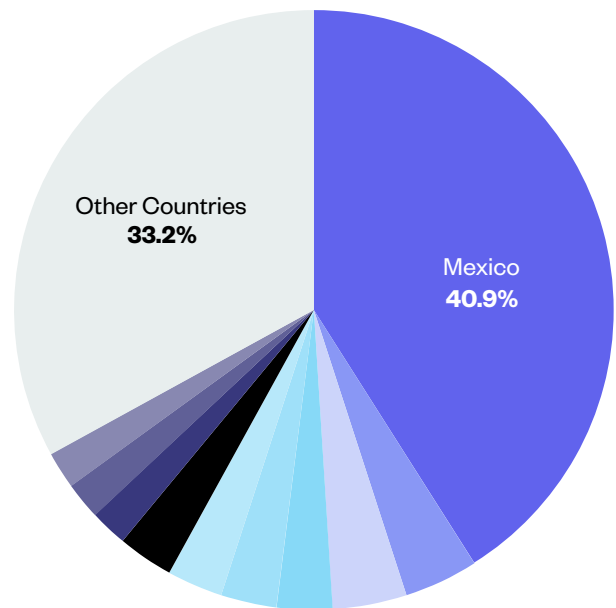
SHARE OF IMMIGRANTS WHO ARE NATURALIZED CITIZENS

In 2019, nearly half, or 48.2 percent, of northern Utah’s immigrants were naturalized U.S. citizens. This represents a total of 18,400 immigrants. In the same period, 39.2 percent and 48.7 percent of immigrants were naturalized citizens in Utah and across the U.S., respectively.



TOP TEN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN FOR IMMIGRANTS LIVING IN NORTHERN UTAH

1. MEXICO	40.9%
2. PHILIPPINES	4.0%
3. CANADA	3.8%
4. EL SALVADOR	2.9%
5. GERMANY	2.7%
6. GUATEMALA	2.7%
7. KOREA	2.6%
8. VENEZUELA	2.5%
9. THAILAND	2.4%
10. PERU	2.3%



Workforce and Entrepreneurship

The growth in the immigrant population has strengthened northern Utah’s labor force. Immigrants play vital roles in some of the region’s fastest-growing and most in-demand fields, even as some immigrants face barriers to finding jobs that match their skill levels.

SHARE OF POPULATION ACTIVE IN NORTHERN UTAH'S WORKFORCE IN 2019

Northern Utah’s immigrants have a slightly higher labor force participation rate than their U.S.-born counterparts. In 2019, 72.2 percent of immigrants were in the labor force, compared with 69.2 percent of U.S.-born residents. Individuals eligible for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program in northern Utah are even more active—84.3 percent of them were in northern Utah’s labor force in 2019.

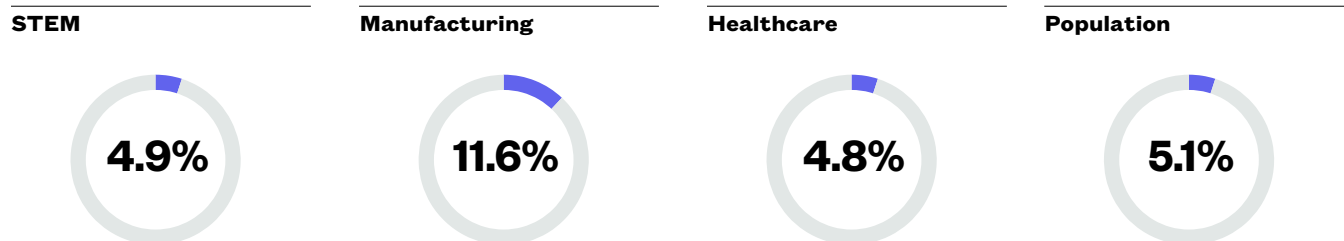
AGE BREAKDOWN OF NORTHERN UTAH'S LABOR FORCE

In northern Utah’s workforce, immigrants are also more likely to be of prime working age (25-54) than U.S.-born workers, allowing them to participate more actively in the labor force and contribute to the economy as taxpayers and consumers. In 2019, 74.2 percent of immigrants in northern Utah’s labor force were in their prime working years, compared to 62.9 percent of U.S.-born workers.

Age Group	Immigrants	U.S.-born
16-24	8.4%	20.1%
25-34	20.6%	22.7%
35-44	31.1%	22.9%
45-54	22.5%	17.3%
55-64	14.1%	13.3%
65+	3.3%	3.7%

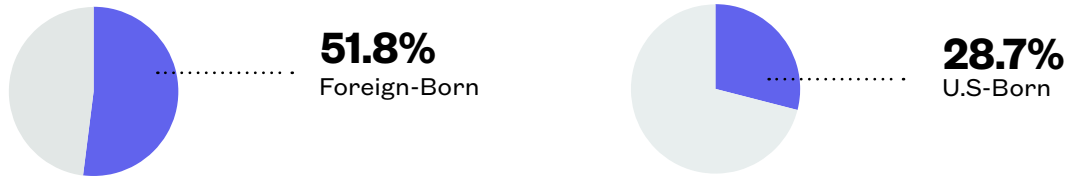
FOREIGN-BORN SHARE OF WORKERS IN NORTHERN UTAH IN 2019

While immigrants made up 5.1 percent of northern Utah’s overall population, they represented 4.9 percent of its Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) workers, 11.6 percent of its manufacturing workers, and 4.8 percent of its healthcare workers in 2019.⁶



NORTHERN UTAH COLLEGE-EDUCATED WORKERS WHO WORKED IN JOBS THAT DIDN'T REQUIRE A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN 2019

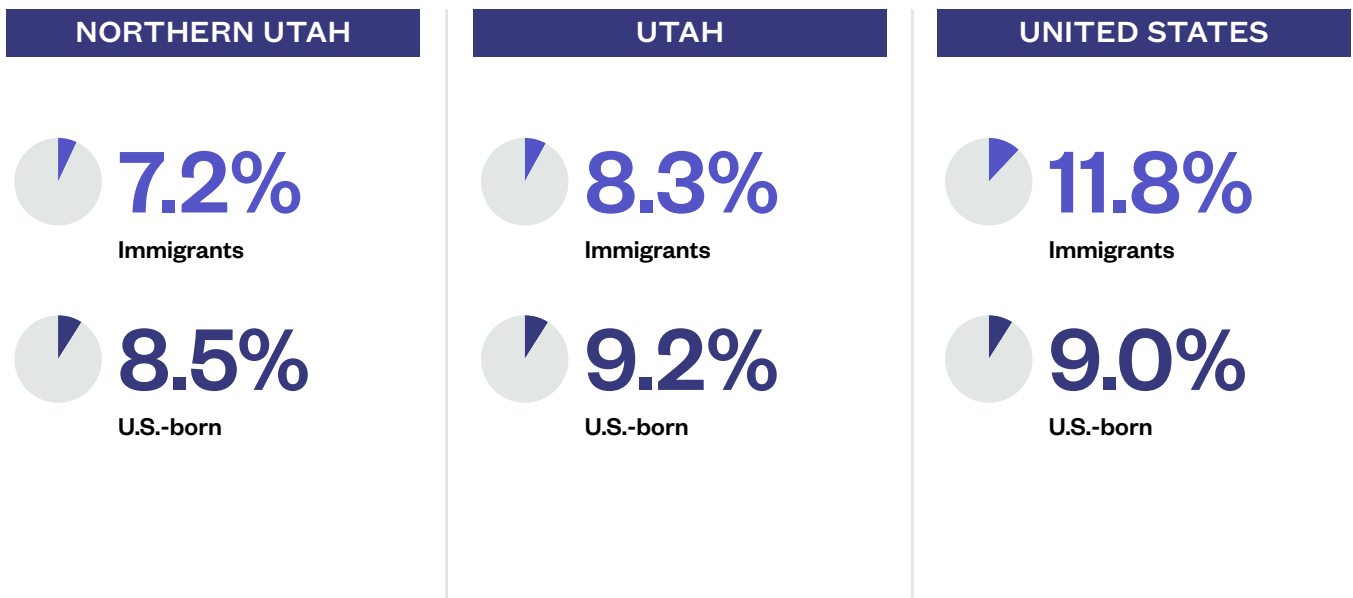
Although many new Americans have brought their professional skills and experience to northern Utah, a significant number may struggle to find employment that matches those skills.⁷ In 2019, 51.8 percent of college-educated immigrants, or nearly 3,200 people, worked in jobs that didn't require a bachelor's degree, while 28.7 percent of U.S.-born residents with a college degree worked in those jobs.⁸



SHARE OF ENTREPRENEURS IN NORTHERN UTAH IN 2019

In 2019, there were more than 1,800 immigrants who owned their own business in northern Utah, creating job opportunities across the region and the state. However, immigrants in the northern region and throughout Utah are starting businesses at lower rates than their U.S.-born counterparts, which indicates supporting immigrant entrepreneurs is an area of opportunity for both the region and the state. In 2019, 7.2 percent of immigrants in northern Utah were entrepreneurs, while 8.5 percent of U.S.-born residents worked for their own business. Across the state, 8.3 percent of immigrants in northern Utah were entrepreneurs, while 9.2 percent of U.S.-born residents worked for their own business.

Nationally, immigrants are more likely to be business owners than U.S.-born residents. In 2019, 11.8 percent of immigrants were entrepreneurs, while 9.0 percent of U.S.-born residents worked for their own business.



Spending Power and Tax Contributions

Immigrant households contribute billions of dollars in federal, state, and local taxes and hold a significant amount of spending power. This gives them economic clout, and the ability to support local communities as consumers and taxpayers.

In 2019, immigrant households in northern Utah earned \$1.2 billion, contributing \$183.0 million in federal taxes⁹ and \$98.0 million in state and local taxes.¹⁰ This left them with \$947 million in spending power.



International Students

International students in northern Utah contribute millions of dollars to the regional, state, and national economy every year and support a significant number of U.S. jobs through their tuition payments and day-to-day consumer spending.

769

International students enrolled at northern Utah colleges and universities during the 2021-22 school year.¹¹

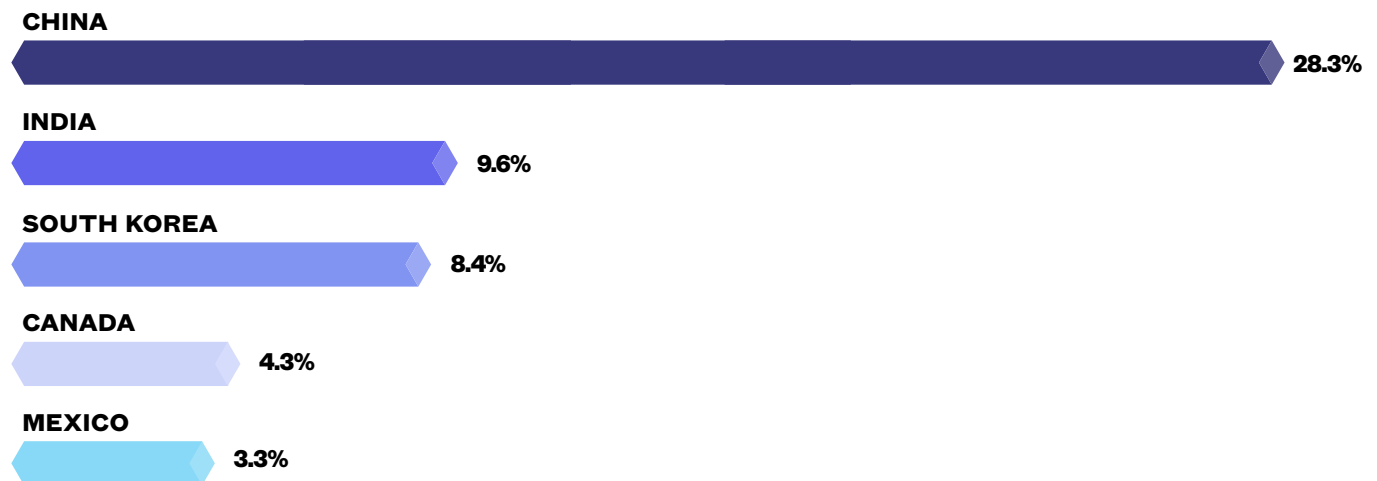
\$42.5M

was contributed to the U.S. economy by international students enrolled at northern Utah colleges and universities during the 2021-22 school year.

457

jobs were supported by international students enrolled at northern Utah colleges and universities during the 2021-22 school year.¹²

TOP COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN UTAH OVERALL¹³



K-12 Education

Northern Utah's growing immigrant population is also reflected in an increasingly diverse student population in K-12 schools. In 2019, approximately 1,700 immigrants or children of immigrants under the age of 18 were enrolled in local schools, making up 8.3 percent of the student body in this age group.

1,700

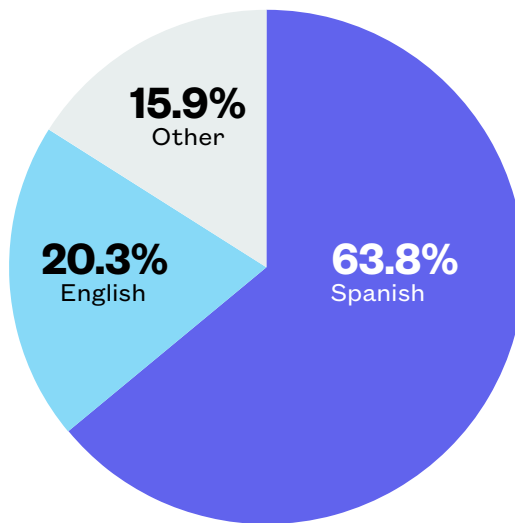
immigrants or children of immigrants under the age of 18 were enrolled in local schools in 2019.

These students made up



of the student body in this age group.

TOP LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN IMMIGRANT HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN



ENDNOTES

- 1** Unless otherwise specified, figures refer to the northern Utah region, including Box Elder, Cache, Davis, Morgan, Rich, Tooele, and Weber counties.
- 2** U.S. Census Bureau, “2020 Census: Percent Change in Resident Population for the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico: 2010 to 2020,” April 27, 2021, <https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/2021/dec/2020-percent-change-map.html>.
- 3** Except where otherwise noted (e.g., “DACA-eligible”), we define an immigrant or new American as anyone born outside the country to non-U.S. citizen parents who is a resident of the United States. This includes naturalized citizens, green card holders, temporary visa holders, refugees, asylees, and undocumented immigrants, among others.
- 4** Emily Harris, Eric Albers, and Mallory Bateman, “First Insights—2020 Census Utah Counties and Communities,” Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute and David Eccles School of Business at the University of Utah, August 2021, <https://gardner.utah.edu/wp-content/uploads/C2020-Counties-FS-Aug2021.pdf?x71849>.
- 5** Unless otherwise noted, data comes from the 5-year sample of the 2019 American Community Survey and the 5-percent sample of the 2000 American Community Survey.
- 6** STEM refers to occupations that require background or expertise in Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math.
- 7** Jeanne Batalova, Michael Fix, and James D. Bachmeier, Untapped Talent: The Costs of Brain Waste Among Highly Skilled Immigrants in the United States, Migration Policy Institute, New American Economy, and World Education Services, December 2016, http://research.newamericaneconomy.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/NAE_BrainWaste_V4_Digital.pdf.
- 8** The occupations that do not require a college degree are identified using the Occupation Finder developed by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- 9** U.S. Congressional Budget Office, The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2018 (Washington, DC: 2021), <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/57404>.
- 10** Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States (Washington, DC: 2018), <https://itep.org/whopays/>.
- 11** Institute of International Education, “Open Doors 2022,” November 13, 2022, https://opendoorsdata.org/fact_sheets/utah/.
- 12** Economic data is derived from the International Student Economic Value Tool maintained by NAFSA, the association of international educators.
- 13** Institute of International Education, “Open Doors 2022,” November 13, 2022, https://opendoorsdata.org/fact_sheets/utah/.