



Immigrants in Maine

Maine has a small but growing community of immigrants, many of whom emigrated from Canada. While only 4 percent of Maine residents are immigrants, 7 percent are native-born Americans with at least one immigrant parent. Foreign-born Mainers make up a vital, educated share of the labor force: over a third of immigrants in the state possess a college or higher degree and nine out of ten report speaking English well.

Across sectors, immigrants help support Maine's economy—from working as artists, entertainers, and athletes, to accounting for 7 percent of the state's transportation and warehousing employees. As neighbors, business owners, taxpayers, and workers, immigrants are an integral part of Maine's diverse and thriving communities and make extensive contributions that benefit all.

Four percent of Maine residents are immigrants, while 7 percent of residents are native-born U.S. citizens with at least one immigrant parent.

- In 2018, 47,418 immigrants (foreign-born individuals) comprised 4 percent of the population.¹
- Maine was home to 23,378 women, 18,641 men, and 5,399 children who were immigrants.²
- The top countries of origin for immigrants were Canada (18 percent of immigrants), the Philippines (9 percent), Germany (7 percent), India (6 percent), and Korea (5 percent).³
- In 2018, 90,635 people in Maine (7 percent of the state's population) were native-born Americans who had at least one immigrant parent.⁴

More than half of all immigrants in Maine are naturalized U.S. citizens.

- 24,885 immigrants (52 percent) had naturalized as of 2018,⁵ and 12,413 immigrants were eligible to become [naturalized U.S. citizens](#) in 2017.⁶
- Nine in ten (90 percent) immigrants reported speaking English "well" or "very well."⁷

Most immigrants in Maine have pursued education at the college level or above.

- More than one-third (35 percent) of adult immigrants had a college degree or more education in 2018, while under one-fifth (18 percent) had less than a high school diploma.⁸

Education Level	Share (%) of All Immigrants	Share (%) of All Natives
College degree or more	35	31
Some college	25	30
High school diploma only	22	32
Less than a high school diploma	18	7

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

Thousands of U.S. citizens in Maine live with at least one family member who is undocumented.

- Fewer than 5,000 [undocumented immigrants](#) comprised 9 percent of the immigrant population and less than half a percent of the total state population in 2016.⁹
- 5,334 people in Maine, including 2,206 U.S. citizens, lived with at least one [undocumented family member](#) between 2010 and 2014.¹⁰
- During the same period, 1,206 children in the state were U.S. citizens living with at least one undocumented family member.¹¹

Maine is home to a small number of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients.

- 50 [active DACA recipients](#) lived in Maine as of March 2020, while DACA has been granted to about 44 people in total since 2012.¹²

Immigrants are vital members of the Maine labor force in a range of industries.

- 28,129 immigrant workers comprised 4 percent of the labor force in 2018.¹³

- Immigrant workers were most numerous in the following industries:

Industry	Number of Immigrant Workers
Health Care and Social Assistance	5,871
Retail Trade	4,416
Educational Services	3,889
Manufacturing	3,755
Other Services (except Public Administration)	2,349

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:¹⁴

Industry	Immigrant Share (%) (of all industry workers)
Transportation and Warehousing	7
Other Services (except Public Administration)	6
Administrative & Support; Waste Management; and Remediation Services	6
Manufacturing	5
Educational Services	5

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 Maine workforce in a range of occupations.

- In 2018, immigrant workers were most numerous in the following occupation groups:¹⁵

Occupation Category	Number of Immigrant Workers
Management	3,899
Office and Administrative Support	3,477
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	3,240
Transportation and Material Moving	3,171
Production	2,994

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:¹⁶

Occupation Category	Immigrant Share (%) (of all workers in occupation)
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	8
Computer and Mathematical	6
Production	6
Healthcare Support	5
Transportation and Material Moving	5

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 less than half a percent of Maine's workforce in 2016.¹⁷

Immigrants in Maine have contributed hundreds of millions of dollars in taxes.

- [Immigrant-led households in the state paid](#) \$437.7 million in federal taxes and \$193.9 million in state and local taxes in 2018.¹⁸
- Maine [DACA recipients](#) and DACA-eligible individuals paid an estimated \$109,000 in state and local taxes in 2018.¹⁹

As consumers, immigrants add over a billion dollars to Maine's economy.

- Maine residents in immigrant-led households had \$1.4 billion in [spending power](#) (after-tax income) in 2018.²⁰

Immigrant entrepreneurs in Maine generate millions of dollars in business revenue.

- 2,368 immigrant business owners accounted for 2 percent of all self-employed Maine residents in 2018 and generated \$15.3 million in business income.²¹

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. 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.
14. Ibid.
15. 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.
16. Ibid.
17. Pew Research Center, “U.S. unauthorized immigration population estimates, 2016,” 2019.
18. 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/>.
19. 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>.
20. New American Economy, “Map the Impact,” section Taxes and Spending Power.
21. “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.