



## Immigrants in Montana

Montana has a small but growing community of immigrants, many of whom emigrated from Canada and Mexico. While only 2 percent of Montana's population was born in another country, foreign-born residents help support Montana's economy across sectors. Immigrants make up a vital, educated share of the state's labor force, with a third holding a college or higher degree.

Many of Montana's immigrants lend their expertise as architects and engineers, accounting for 5 percent of residents working in the field. Nearly a third of all Montanans working in management of companies and enterprises are immigrants. As neighbors, business owners, taxpayers, and workers, immigrants are an integral part of Montana's diverse and thriving communities and make extensive contributions that benefit all.

### **Two percent of Montana residents are immigrants, while about 4 percent of residents are native-born U.S. citizens with at least one immigrant parent.**

- In 2018, 23,366 immigrants (foreign-born individuals) comprised 2 percent of the population.<sup>1</sup>
- Montana was home to 13,538 women, 7,889 men, and 1,939 children who were immigrants.<sup>2</sup>
- The top countries of origin for immigrants were Canada (15 percent of immigrants), Mexico (15 percent), Germany (7 percent), China (5 percent), and Vietnam (5 percent).<sup>3</sup>
- In 2018, 43,066 people in Montana (4 percent of the state's population) were native-born Americans who had at least one immigrant parent.<sup>4</sup>

### **Almost three out of five immigrants in Montana are naturalized U.S. citizens.**

- 13,568 immigrants (58 percent) had naturalized as of 2018,<sup>5</sup> and 4,621 immigrants were eligible to become [naturalized U.S. citizens](#) in 2017.<sup>6</sup>
- Nearly all (96 percent) immigrants reported speaking English "well" or "very well."<sup>7</sup>

### **Most immigrants in Montana have pursued education at or above the college level.**

- One-third (33 percent) of adult immigrants had a college degree or more education in 2018, while 15 percent had less than a high school diploma.<sup>8</sup>

Education Level	Share (%) of All Immigrants	Share (%) of All Natives
College degree or more	33	32
Some college	28	34
High school diploma only	23	28
Less than a high school diploma	15	6
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.		

**Hundreds of U.S. citizens in Montana live with at least one family member who is undocumented.**

- Fewer than 5,000 [undocumented immigrants](#) comprised 12 percent of the immigrant population and less than half a percent of the total state population in 2016.<sup>9</sup>
- 1,715 people in Montana, including 921 U.S. citizens, lived with at least one [undocumented family member](#) between 2010 and 2014.<sup>10</sup>
- During the same period, 531 children in the state were U.S. citizens living with at least one undocumented family member.<sup>11</sup>

**Montana is home to dozens of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients.**

- 70 [active DACA recipients](#) lived in Montana as of March 2020, while DACA has been granted to 64 people in total since 2012.<sup>12</sup>

**Immigrants are important members of Montana’s labor force across a range of industries.**

- 12,183 immigrant workers comprised 2 percent of the labor force in 2018.<sup>13</sup>

- Immigrant workers were most numerous in the following industries:

Industry	Number of Immigrant Workers
Health Care and Social Assistance	3,380
Accommodation and Food Services	2,917
Educational Services	1,900
Retail Trade	1,295
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	1,172

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:<sup>14</sup>

Industry	Immigrant Share (%) (of all industry workers)
Management of Companies and Enterprises	31
Accommodation and Food Services	4
Health Care and Social Assistance	4
Educational Services	3
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	3

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 Montana workforce in a range of occupations.**

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

Occupation Category	Number of Immigrant Workers
Food Preparation and Serving Related	2,012
Sales and Related	1,780
Educational Instruction and Library	1,460
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	1,407
Office and Administrative Support	1,407

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:<sup>16</sup>

Occupation Category	Immigrant Share (%) (of all workers in occupation)
Architecture and Engineering	5
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	5
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	5
Educational Instruction and Library	5
Healthcare Support	4

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 1 percent of Montana's workforce in 2016.<sup>17</sup>

**Immigrants in Montana have contributed tens of millions of dollars in taxes.**

- [Immigrant-led households in the state paid](#) \$78 million in federal taxes and \$34.5 million in state and local taxes in 2018.<sup>18</sup>
- Montana [DACA recipients](#) and DACA-eligible individuals paid an estimated \$140,000 in state and local taxes in 2018.<sup>19</sup>

**As consumers, immigrants add hundreds of millions of dollars to Montana's economy.**

- Montana residents in immigrant-led households had \$401.4 million in [spending power](#) (after-tax income) in 2018.<sup>20</sup>

**Immigrant entrepreneurs in Montana generate tens of millions of dollars in business revenue.**

- 1,181 immigrant business owners accounted for 1 percent of all self-employed Montana residents in 2018 and generated \$28.2 million in business income.<sup>21</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, 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](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 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/](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 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%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](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](http://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](http://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.