



Immigrants in New Jersey

New Jersey has a large community of immigrants, many of whom hail from India. Nearly one-quarter of the state's population was born in another country, while one in six residents is a native-born U.S. citizen with at least one immigrant parent. Foreign-born residents are vital to New Jersey's workforce across sectors. For example, immigrants account for over two-fifths of all healthcare support workers, nearly half of all workers in computer and math sciences, and half of production employees. As neighbors, business owners, taxpayers, and workers, immigrants are an integral part of New Jersey's diverse and thriving communities and make extensive contributions that benefit all.

Nearly one in four New Jersey residents is an immigrant, while one in six residents is a native-born U.S. citizen with at least one immigrant parent.

- In 2018, 2 million immigrants (foreign-born individuals) comprised 23 percent of the population.¹
- New Jersey was home to 991,196 women, 926,641 men, and 115,455 children who were immigrants.²
- The top countries of origin for immigrants were India (13 percent of immigrants), Dominican Republic (10 percent), Mexico (5 percent), Ecuador (4 percent), and the Philippines (4 percent).³
- In 2018, 1.7 million people in New Jersey (18 percent of the state's population) were native-born Americans who had at least one immigrant parent.⁴

Nearly three in five immigrants in New Jersey are naturalized U.S. citizens.

- 1.2 million immigrants (59 percent) had naturalized as of 2018,⁵ and 321,266 immigrants were eligible to become [naturalized U.S. citizens](#) in 2017.⁶
- Over three-quarters (78 percent) of immigrants reported speaking English "well" or "very well."⁷

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

- Two in five (40 percent) adult immigrants had a college degree or more education in 2018, while just under one in five (18 percent) had less than a high school diploma.⁸

Education Level	Share (%) of All Immigrants	Share (%) of All Natives
College degree or more	40	41
Some college	18	25
High school diploma only	24	27
Less than a high school diploma	18	6

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

Over a quarter-million U.S. citizens in New Jersey live with at least one family member who is undocumented.

- 475,000 [undocumented immigrants](#) comprised 22 percent of the immigrant population and 5 percent of the total state population in 2016.⁹
- 604,615 people in New Jersey, including 262,527 U.S. citizens, lived with at least one [undocumented family member](#) between 2010 and 2014.¹⁰
- During the same period, about 1 in 11 children in the state was a U.S. citizen living with at least one undocumented family member (180,580 children in total).¹¹

New Jersey is home to thousands of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients.

- 16,350 [active DACA recipients](#) lived in New Jersey as of March 2020, while DACA has been granted to 22,171 people in total since 2012.¹²
- As of 2019, 32 percent of [DACA-eligible immigrants](#) in New Jersey had applied for DACA.¹³
- An additional 11,000 residents of the state would satisfy all but the educational requirements for DACA, and fewer than 2,000 would become eligible as they grew older.¹⁴

More than one in four workers in New Jersey is an immigrant, together making up a vital part of the state's labor force in a range of industries.

- 1.4 million immigrant workers comprised 29 percent of the labor force in 2018.¹⁵

- Immigrant workers were most numerous in the following industries:

Industry	Number of Immigrant Workers
Health Care and Social Assistance	212,892
Manufacturing	154,555
Retail Trade	148,613
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	141,012
Construction	108,195

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:¹⁶

Industry	Immigrant Share (%) (of all industry workers)
Administrative & Support; Waste Management; and Remediation Services	38
Manufacturing	37
Construction	34
Transportation and Warehousing	34
Other Services (except Public Administration)	33

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 New Jersey workforce in a range of occupations.

- In 2018, immigrant workers were most numerous in the following occupation groups:¹⁷

Occupation Category	Number of Immigrant Workers
Management	143,043
Transportation and Material Moving	139,878
Sales and Related	130,431
Office and Administrative Support	124,765
Production	105,201

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:¹⁸

Occupation Category	Immigrant Share (%) (of all workers in occupation)
Production	49
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	48
Computer and Mathematical	45
Healthcare Support	43
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	41

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 8 percent of New Jersey's workforce in 2016.¹⁹

Immigrants in New Jersey have contributed tens of billions of dollars in taxes.

- [Immigrant-led households in the state paid](#) \$19.7 billion in federal taxes and \$9.5 billion in state and local taxes in 2018.²⁰
- Undocumented immigrants in New Jersey paid an estimated \$1.1 billion in federal taxes and \$604.3 million in [state and local taxes](#) in 2018.²¹
- New Jersey [DACA recipients](#) and DACA-eligible individuals paid an estimated \$57.2 million in state and local taxes in 2018.²²

As consumers, immigrants add tens of billions of dollars to New Jersey's economy.

- New Jersey residents in immigrant-led households had \$65.8 billion in [spending power](#) (after-tax income) in 2018.²³

Immigrant entrepreneurs in New Jersey generate billions of dollars in business revenue.

- 136,186 immigrant business owners accounted for 33 percent of all self-employed New Jersey residents in 2018 and generated \$3.8 billion in business income.²⁴
- In 2018, immigrants accounted for 31 percent of business owners in the New York/Northern New Jersey/Long Island metropolitan area (which spans New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania) and 14 percent in the Philadelphia/Camden/Wilmington metro area (which extends from Pennsylvania into New Jersey and Delaware).²⁵

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%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. Estimates of the DACA-eligible population as of 2019 include unauthorized immigrant youth who had been in the United States since 2007, were under the age of 16 at the time of arrival, were under the age of 31 as of 2012, and who met DACA eligibility requirements as of 2016. Migration Policy Institute (MPI) analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data from the 2012-16 American Community Survey (ACS) pooled, and the 2008 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), with legal status assignments by James Bachmeier and Colin Hammar of Temple University and Jennifer Van Hook of The Pennsylvania State University, Population Research Institute, as cited in “Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Data Tools,” accessed April 2020, www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/deferred-action-childhood-arrivals-daca-profiles.
14. Ibid.
15. 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.
16. Ibid.
17. 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.
18. Ibid.
19. Pew Research Center, “U.S. unauthorized immigration population estimates, 2016,” 2019.
20. 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/>.
21. Ibid. at sec. Undocumented Immigrants.
22. 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>.
23. New American Economy, “Map the Impact,” section Taxes and Spending Power.
24. “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.
25. American Immigration Council analysis of 2018 CPS data. Flood, King, Rodgers, Ruggles, and Warren, *IPUMS CPS* dataset.