



Immigrants in New Mexico

New Mexico has a sizable immigrant community, 70 percent of which hails from Mexico. Roughly 10 percent of the state's population was born in another country, while 1 in 9 residents is a native-born U.S. citizen with at least one immigrant parent. Foreign-born residents are vital members of New Mexico's labor force, with immigrants accounting for over 37 percent of the state's fishers, farmers, and foresters, and 18 percent of employees in the construction industry. As workers, business owners, taxpayers, and neighbors, immigrants are an integral part of New Mexico's diverse and thriving communities and make extensive contributions that benefit all.

Nearly 1 in 10 New Mexico residents is an immigrant, while one in nine residents is a native-born U.S. citizen with at least one immigrant parent.

- In 2015, 196,955 immigrants (foreign-born individuals) comprised 9.4 percent of the state's population.¹
- New Mexico was home to 92,227 women, 92,273 men, and 12,455 children who were immigrants.²
- The top countries of origin for immigrants were Mexico (70 percent of immigrants), Germany (2 percent), China (2 percent), Vietnam (1.9 percent), and Canada (1.7 percent).³
- In 2016, 225,959 people in New Mexico (11.1 percent of the state's population) were native-born Americans who had at least [one immigrant parent](#).⁴

More than a third of all immigrants in New Mexico are naturalized U.S. citizens.

- 71,581 immigrants (36.3 percent) had naturalized as of 2015,⁵ and 47,620 immigrants were eligible to become [naturalized U.S. citizens](#) in 2015.⁶
- More than three in five immigrants (63 percent) reported speaking English "well" or "very well."⁷

The greatest shares of immigrants in New Mexico have less than a high school diploma.

- Almost one in six adult immigrants had a college degree or more education in 2015, while nearly half had less than a high school diploma.⁸

Education Level	Share (%) of All Immigrants	Share (%) of All Natives
College degree or more	16.2	27.9
Some college	15.3	33.6
High school diploma only	21.3	27.6
Less than a high-school diploma	47.2	10.8

More than 50,000 U.S. citizens in New Mexico live with at least one family member who is undocumented.

- 85,000 [undocumented immigrants](#) comprised 37 percent of the immigrant population and 4 percent of the total state population in 2014.⁹
- 115,331 people in New Mexico, including 54,068 born in the United States, lived with at least one [undocumented family member](#) between 2010 and 2014.¹⁰
- During the same period, 1 in 11 children in the state was a U.S. citizen living with at least one undocumented family member (44,653 children in total).¹¹

Approximately 6,000 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients live in New Mexico.¹²

- As of 2016, 73 percent of [DACA-eligible immigrants](#) in New Mexico, or 7,410 people, had applied for DACA.¹³
- An additional 2,000 residents of the state satisfied all but the educational requirements for DACA, and another 3,000 would be eligible as they grew older.¹⁴

One in eight workers in New Mexico is an immigrant, together making up a vital part of the state's labor force across industries.

- 119,556 immigrant workers comprised 12.7 percent of the labor force in 2015.¹⁵

- Immigrant workers were most numerous in the following industries:

Industry	Number of Immigrant Workers
Accommodation and Food Services	20,000
Health Care and Social Assistance	16,038
Construction	15,515
Retail Trade	12,148
Educational Services	11,485

Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2015 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)
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	25.5
Accommodation and Food Services	18.9
Construction	18.0
Administrative & Support; Waste Management; and Remediation Services	17.6
Manufacturing	16.5

Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2015 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

Immigrants are an integral part of the New Mexico workforce in a range of occupations.

- In 2015, immigrant workers were most numerous in the following occupation groups:¹⁷

Occupation Category	Number of Immigrant Workers
Food Preparation and Serving Related	18,046
Construction and Extraction	17,095
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	14,766
Sales and Related	9,983
Transportation and Material Moving	9,554

Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2015 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)
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	37.4
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	28.7
Food Preparation and Serving Related	23.2
Construction and Extraction	21.4
Life, Physical, and Social Sciences	16.9

Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2015 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

- Undocumented immigrants comprised 5.6 percent of the state's workforce in 2014.¹⁹

Immigrants in New Mexico contribute over a billion dollars in yearly taxes.

- [Immigrant-led households in the state paid](#) \$756.9 million in federal taxes and \$394.3 million in state and local taxes in 2014.²⁰
- Undocumented immigrants in New Mexico paid an estimated \$67.7 million in [state and local taxes](#) in 2014. Their contribution would rise to \$75.8 million if they could receive legal status.²¹
- [DACA recipients](#) in New Mexico paid an estimated \$18.8 million in state and local taxes in 2016.²²

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

- New Mexico residents in immigrant-led households had \$3.4 billion in [spending power](#) (after-tax income) in 2014.²³

Immigrant entrepreneurs represent more than one in seven business owners in New Mexico.

- 15,224 immigrant business owners accounted for 15 percent of all self-employed New Mexico residents in 2015 and generated \$375.1 million in business income.²⁴

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, 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates. The American Immigration Council elected to use data from the 2015 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 2015 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

⁴ Analysis of data from the 2016 Current Population Survey by the American Immigration Council, using IPUMS-CPS. Sarah Flood, Miriam King, Steven Ruggles, and J. Robert Warren, *Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Current Population Survey: Version 5.0* [dataset] (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, 2017).

⁵ 2015 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 August 2017, data.cmsny.org/state.html.

⁷ Figure includes immigrants who speak only English. Data based on survey respondents age 5 and over. Analysis of 2015 ACS 1-Year Estimates by the American Immigration Council.

⁸ Data based on survey respondents age 25 and older. 2015 ACS 1-Year Estimates.

⁹ Pew Research Center, “U.S. unauthorized immigration population estimates,” November 3, 2016, 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, <https://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 “Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals” (DACA) initiative began in 2012 and provides certain immigrants (those who were brought to the United States as children and meet specific requirements) with temporary relief from deportation, or deferred action. American Immigration Council, “Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals: A Q&A Guide,” August 17, 2012, www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/deferred-action-childhood-arrivals-qa-guide. The number of DACA recipients reflects USCIS’ estimate of those with active DACA grants as of September 4, 2017. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services CLAIMS3 and ELIS Systems, *Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals: Population Data* (Washington, DC: Dept. of Homeland Security, September 20, 2017), Approximate Active DACA Recipients: State of Residence as of September 4, 2017 [dataset], <https://www.uscis.gov/daca2017>.

¹³ “DACA-eligible” refers to immigrants who were immediately eligible to apply for DACA as of 2016. Migration Policy Institute analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data from the 2014 American Community Survey (ACS), 2010-14 ACS pooled, and the 2008 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), as cited in “Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Data Tools,” accessed June 2017, www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/deferred-action-childhood-arrivals-daca-profiles.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Analysis of the 2015 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 the 2015 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.

²⁰ New American Economy, *The Contributions of New Americans in New Mexico* (New York, NY: August 2016), 7, www.newamericaneconomy.org/research/the-contributions-of-new-americans-in-new-mexico/.

²¹ Institute on Taxation & Economic Policy (ITEP), *Undocumented Immigrants’ State & Local Tax Contributions* (Washington, DC: March 2017), 3, <https://itep.org/undocumented-immigrants-state-local-tax-contributions-2/>.

²² ITEP, *State & Local Tax Contributions of Young Undocumented Immigrants* (Washington, DC: April 2017), Appendix 1, <https://itep.org/state-local-tax-contributions-of-young-undocumented-immigrants/>.

²³ New American Economy, *The Contributions of New Americans in New Mexico*, 7.

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 2015 ACS 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.