



Immigrants in Delaware

Delaware has a sizable immigrant community, much of which hails from Mexico. Roughly 9 percent of the state's population was born in another country, while 7 percent of residents are native-born U.S. citizens with at least one immigrant parent. Delaware benefits from the various ways immigrants participate in the economy and labor force, with foreign-born residents accounting for a fifth of the state's architecture and engineering employees and 18 percent of residents working in Delaware's insurance and finance industry. As workers, business owners, taxpayers, and neighbors, immigrants are an integral part of Delaware's diverse and thriving communities and make extensive contributions that benefit all.

Nearly 1 in 10 Delaware residents is an immigrant, while 7 percent are native-born U.S. citizens with at least one immigrant parent.

- In 2015, 87,509 immigrants (foreign-born individuals) comprised 9.3 percent of the state's population.¹
- Delaware was home to 42,510 women, 39,505 men, and 5,494 children who were immigrants.²
- The top countries of origin for immigrants were Mexico (18.2 percent of immigrants), India (14.9 percent), Guatemala (7.3 percent), China (4.5 percent), and the Philippines (4.3 percent).³
- In 2016, 62,739 people in Delaware (6.6 percent of the state's population) were native-born Americans who had at least [one immigrant parent](#).⁴

Nearly half of all immigrants in Delaware are naturalized U.S. citizens.

- 39,523 immigrants (45.2 percent) had naturalized as of 2015,⁵ and 16,777 immigrants were eligible to become [naturalized U.S. citizens](#) in 2015.⁶
- More than four in five immigrants (81.1 percent) reported speaking English "well" or "very well."⁷

The greatest shares of immigrants in Delaware possess a college degree or more.

- Nearly two in five adult immigrants had a college degree or more education in 2015, while more than one in five had less than a high school diploma.⁸

Education Level	Share (%) of All Immigrants	Share (%) of All Natives
College degree or more	38.0	30.0
Some college	18.3	29.4
High school diploma only	20.9	31.0
Less than a high-school diploma	22.9	9.5

Nearly 15,000 U.S. citizens in Delaware live with at least one family member who is undocumented.

- 25,000 [undocumented immigrants](#) comprised 31 percent of the immigrant population and 2.7 percent of the total state population in 2014.⁹
- 29,691 people in Delaware, including 12,939 born in the United States, lived with at least one [undocumented family member](#) between 2010 and 2014.¹⁰
- During the same period, 6 percent of children in the state were U.S. citizens living with at least one undocumented family member (11,875 children in total).¹¹

More than 1,000 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients live in Delaware.¹²

- In 2016, 64 percent of [DACA-eligible immigrants](#) in Delaware, or 1,603 people, had applied for DACA.¹³
- Up to 1,000 additional residents of the state satisfied all but the educational requirements for DACA, and up to 1,000 others would be additionally eligible as they grew older.¹⁴

Immigrants are vital to Delaware's labor force across industries, accounting for more than one in nine workers in the state.

- 56,773 immigrant workers comprised 11.9 percent of the labor force in 2015.¹⁵

- Immigrant workers were most numerous in the following industries:

Industry	Number of Immigrant Workers
Health Care and Social Assistance	8,429
Accommodation and Food Services	7,977
Finance and Insurance	7,419
Manufacturing	7,363
Educational Services	5,897

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	19.5
Manufacturing	18.3
Finance and Insurance	17.9
Accommodation and Food Services	16.4
Administrative & Support; Waste Management; and Remediation Services	13.3

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 Delaware 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
Management	6,099
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	5,578
Computer and Mathematical Sciences	5,254
Food Preparation and Serving Related	5,109
Office and Administrative Support	5,072

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	35.8
Computer and Mathematical Sciences	27.9
Life, Physical, and Social Sciences	25.8
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	21.6
Architecture and Engineering	21.1
Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2015 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.	

- Undocumented immigrants comprised 4 percent of the state's workforce in 2014.¹⁹

Immigrants in Delaware contribute over half a billion dollars in yearly taxes.

- [Immigrant-led households in the state paid](#) \$552.2 million in federal taxes and \$154.6 million in state and local taxes in 2014.²⁰
- Undocumented immigrants in Delaware paid an estimated \$13.5 million in [state and local taxes](#) in 2014. Their contribution would rise to \$19.7 million if they could receive legal status.²¹
- [DACA recipients](#) in Delaware paid an estimated \$2.4 million in state and local taxes in 2016.²²

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

- Delaware residents in immigrant-led households had \$2.3 billion in [spending power](#) (after-tax income) in 2014.²³

Immigrant entrepreneurs represent more than one in nine Delaware business owners.

- 4,442 immigrant business owners accounted for 11.1 percent of all self-employed Delaware residents in 2015 and generated \$161.5 million in business income.²⁴
- In 2015, immigrants accounted for 13.1 percent of business owners in the Philadelphia/Camden/Wilmington metropolitan area (which spans Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey).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, 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) 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 ACS 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

⁴ Analysis of data from the 2016 Current Population Survey (CPS) 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 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 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 Delaware* (New York, NY: August 2016), 5, <http://www.newamericaneconomy.org/research/the-contributions-of-new-americans-in-delaware/>.

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 Delaware*, 5.

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.

²⁵ American Immigration Council analysis of 2016 CPS data. Flood, King, Ruggles, and Warren, *IPUMS CPS* dataset.