



## Immigrants in Nebraska

Nebraska has a small but growing immigrant population. About 7 percent of the state's population was born in another country, and foreign-born residents help support Nebraska's economy across sectors. Immigrants are a critical component of the Nebraskan labor force: 17 percent of the state's computer and math science professionals are immigrants, as are 18 percent of Nebraskans working in the production industry. As workers, business owners, taxpayers, and neighbors, immigrants are an integral part of Nebraska's diverse and thriving communities and make extensive contributions that benefit all.

### **Nearly 7 percent of Nebraska residents are immigrants, while nearly 6 percent are native-born U.S. citizens with at least one immigrant parent.**

- In 2015, 128,390 immigrants (foreign-born individuals) comprised 6.8 percent of the state's population in 2015.<sup>1</sup>
- Nebraska was home to 56,293 women, 60,756 men, and 11,341 children who were immigrants.<sup>2</sup>
- The top countries of origin for immigrants were Mexico (35.5 percent of immigrants), India (6.2 percent), China (4.5 percent), Guatemala (4.4 percent), and El Salvador (3 percent).<sup>3</sup>
- In 2016, 107,599 people in Nebraska (5.8 percent of the state's population) were native-born Americans who had at least [one immigrant parent](#).<sup>4</sup>

### **More than a third of all immigrants in Nebraska are naturalized U.S. citizens.**

- 48,394 immigrants (37.7 percent) had naturalized as of 2015,<sup>5</sup> and 23,269 immigrants were eligible to become [naturalized U.S. citizens](#) in 2015.<sup>6</sup>
- More than two-thirds of immigrants (68.1 percent) reported speaking English "well" or "very well."<sup>7</sup>

### **Immigrants in Nebraska are distributed across the educational spectrum.**

- More than one-fifth of adult immigrants had a college degree or more education in 2015, while two-fifths had less than a high school diploma.<sup>8</sup>

Education Level	Share (%) of All Immigrants	Share (%) of All Natives
College degree or more	22.4	30.9
Some college	15.2	35.6
High school diploma only	22.4	27.3
Less than a high-school diploma	40.0	6.2

**More than 30,000 U.S. citizens in Nebraska live with at least one family member who is undocumented.**

- 45,000 [undocumented immigrants](#) comprised 38 percent of the immigrant population and 2.5 percent of the total state population in 2014.<sup>9</sup>
- 64,815 people in Nebraska, including 27,931 born in the United States, lived with at least one [undocumented family member](#) between 2010 and 2014.<sup>10</sup>
- During the same period, 1 in 20 children in the state was a U.S.-citizen child living with at least one undocumented family member (25,154 children in total).<sup>11</sup>

**More than 3,000 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients live in Nebraska.<sup>12</sup>**

- As of 2016, 91 percent of [DACA-eligible immigrants](#) in Nebraska, or 3,759 people, had applied for DACA.<sup>13</sup>
- Up to 2,000 additional residents of the state satisfied all but the educational requirements for DACA, and up to 2,000 others would be additionally eligible as they grew older.<sup>14</sup>

**Nearly one in eight Nebraska workers is an immigrant, together making up a vital part of the state’s labor force.**

- 80,474 immigrant workers comprised 7.9 percent of the labor force in 2015.<sup>15</sup>

- Immigrant workers were most numerous in the following industries:

Industry	Number of Immigrant Workers
Manufacturing	17,898
Construction	9,930
Health Care and Social Assistance	7,953
Accommodation and Food Services	7,749
Educational Services	7,579

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:<sup>16</sup>

Industry	Immigrant Share (%)(of all industry workers)
Administrative & Support; Waste Management; and Remediation Services	15.1
Manufacturing	14.9
Construction	11.7
Accommodation and Food Services	10.3
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	9.5

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 Nebraska workforce in a range of occupations.**

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

Occupation Category	Number of Immigrant Workers
Production	13,223
Construction and Extraction	9,153
Food Preparation and Serving Related	7,819
Office and Administrative Support	7,724
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	6,514

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:<sup>18</sup>

Occupation Category	Immigrant Share (%) (of all workers in occupation)
Production	18.0
Computer and Mathematical Sciences	17.1
Construction and Extraction	14.3
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	13.6
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	12.0

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

- Undocumented immigrants comprised 3.2 percent of the state's workforce in 2014.<sup>19</sup>

**Immigrants in Nebraska have contributed hundreds of millions of dollars in taxes.**

- [Immigrant-led households in the state](#) paid \$389.1 million in federal taxes and \$227.5 million in state and local taxes in 2014.<sup>20</sup>
- Undocumented immigrants in Nebraska paid an estimated \$39.8 million in [state and local taxes](#) in 2014. Their contribution would rise to \$48.2 million if they could receive legal status.<sup>21</sup>
- [DACA recipients in Nebraska](#) paid an estimated \$7.7 million in state and local taxes in 2016.<sup>22</sup>

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

- Nebraskans in immigrant-led households had \$1.9 billion in [spending power](#) (after-tax income) in 2014.<sup>23</sup>

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

- 3,657 immigrant business owners accounted for 3.5 percent of all self-employed Nebraska residents in 2015 and generated \$65.5 million in business income.<sup>24</sup>

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> “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).

<sup>2</sup> Children are defined as people age 17 or younger. Men and women do not include children. Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2015 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

<sup>4</sup> 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).

<sup>5</sup> 2015 ACS 1-Year Estimates.

<sup>6</sup> 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](http://data.cmsny.org/state.html).

<sup>7</sup> 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.

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

<sup>9</sup> Pew Research Center, “U.S. unauthorized immigration population estimates,” November 3, 2016,

[www.pewhispanic.org/interactives/unauthorized-immigrants/](http://www.pewhispanic.org/interactives/unauthorized-immigrants/).

<sup>10</sup> 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/>.

<sup>11</sup> 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).

<sup>12</sup> 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](http://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>.

<sup>13</sup> “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](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/deferred-action-childhood-arrivals-daca-profiles).

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> 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](http://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/index.html).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> 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](http://www.bls.gov/soc/major_groups.htm).

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Pew Research Center, “U.S. unauthorized immigration population estimates,” 2016.

<sup>20</sup> New American Economy, *The Contributions of New Americans in Nebraska* (New York, NY: August 2016), 5,

<http://www.newamericaneconomy.org/research/the-contributions-of-new-americans-in-nebraska/>.

<sup>21</sup> 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/>.

<sup>22</sup> 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/>.

<sup>23</sup> New American Economy, *The Contributions of New Americans in Nebraska*, 5.

<sup>24</sup> “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.