

Immigrants are our Commonwealth



Immigrants bring diversity to Massachusetts ¹

Immigrants bring a diverse range of skills to the United States, contributing to the cultural, social, and economic fabric of the country. Immigrants in the United States bring **cultural diversity, multilingualism, entrepreneurship, educational drive, and a strong work ethic.**

Immigrants in Massachusetts total 1.2 million (over 18%) of the state's population, or about **1 in every 6 residents.** The top countries of origin of immigrants in Massachusetts are Brazil (9.7%), China (7.7%), Dominican Republic (7.7%), India (6.9%), and Haiti (4.7%).

Immigrants are vital to Massachusetts' economy and key industries

Foreign-born individuals make up a significant proportion of Massachusetts' workforce, with **1 in 5 workers** being foreign-born. Immigrants play a vital role in supporting key industries including healthcare, transportation, manufacturing, hospitality and food services, and science, with 29.3% of STEM workers in Massachusetts being immigrants.

Immigrant business owners make **a significant contribution to Massachusetts' economy.** With 91,400 immigrant entrepreneurs in the state, together they generate \$1.6 billion in business income. Nationally, 224 of Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants or children of immigrants. Massachusetts is home to 17 of the **Fortune 500 companies**, including **8 founded by immigrants or children of immigrants.**²

Immigrants support Massachusetts

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the state experienced a decrease in the number of available workers.³ Although immigrants made up 17% of all United State workers in 2018, **immigrants were over-represented in jobs critical to the COVID-19 response**, including 29% of physicians, 22% of nursing assistants, 39% of food processing workers, and 48% of general agricultural workers.^{4 5} **DACA-recipients in Massachusetts were on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic, providing essential services** with an estimated 2,000 DACA-recipients in Massachusetts working in healthcare, education, and the food industry.⁶

Immigrants strengthen our economy

International immigration in Massachusetts no longer offsets domestic out-migration. Massachusetts faced significant outmigration, ranking fourth in the nation from April 2020 to July 2022, with 57,000 residents leaving in 2022—the highest level of net outmigration in 30 years. The largest group of those who moved out were individuals aged 26 to 35. Between 2020 and 2021, 57,290 Massachusetts residents relocated to other New England states or to Florida. During this period, **the state lost approximately \$4.3 billion in adjusted gross income.**⁷

However, in 2022, international immigration rebounded after a four-year decline, with 43,880 new immigrants in Massachusetts. Notably, 54% of these newcomers held a bachelor's degree or an advanced degree.⁷ Massachusetts' foreign-born population tends to be college educated, with approximately **41.2% of foreign born individuals in Massachusetts having a bachelor's degree or higher.**¹



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Immigrants have significant spending power

In 2023, immigrants in Massachusetts had **\$51.8 billion in spending power** (an increase of **\$13 billion from 2019**), with refugees and temporary protected status holders having \$2.5 billion and \$463.5 million in spending power, respectively.

Additionally, immigrant-led households paid an estimated \$5.7 billion in rent. With 281,000 immigrant homeowners in Massachusetts, there is an approximate **\$200.6 billion in housing wealth** held by immigrant households.

Immigrants contribute to our tax revenue

In 2023, immigrants in Massachusetts paid a total of **\$20.4 billion in taxes** (an increase in **\$6 billion from 2019**), with \$6.6 billion spent on state and local taxes. This includes **\$1.4B in taxes paid by undocumented households**.

Immigrants have strong voting power

In 2023, approximately **607,821 immigrants in Massachusetts were eligible to vote** in federal and state elections. As of 2023, there are approximately 220,600 immigrants in Massachusetts who are eligible to become U.S. citizens.



Note: This fact sheet was last updated in March 2025.

1. Unless otherwise noted, data in this factsheet was gathered from American Immigration Council, <https://map.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/locations/massachusetts/#>
2. *New American Fortune 500 in 2023*. (2023, August 29). American Immigration Council. <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/new-american-fortune-500-2023>
3. Center for American Progress. (2018). DACA Recipients' Economic and Educational Gains Continue to Grow. Retrieved from <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/daca-recipients-economic-educational-gains-continue-grow/>
4. MPI tabulation of data from the 2018 ACS, discussed in Julia Gelatt, *Immigrant Workers: Vital to the U.S. COVID-19 Response, Disproportionately Vulnerable* (Washington, DC: MPI, 2020).
5. Migration Policy Institute (MPI). (2021). A Look Back at U.S. Immigration in the COVID-19 Year. Retrieved from https://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/mpi-covid-us-immigration-lookback_final.pdf
6. Center for American Progress. (2020, April 16). Demographic Profile of DACA Recipients on the Frontlines of the Coronavirus Response. Retrieved from <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/demographic-profile-daca-recipients-frontlines-coronavirus-response/>.
7. *Update: Massachusetts' Demographic Trends Threaten our Talent Pipeline and Economic Strength*. (2023, December). Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation. Retrieved from <https://www.masstaxpayers.org/sites/default/files/publications/2023-11/MTF%20Demographics%20Update.pdf>