



Immigrants in Missouri

Missouri has a small but growing immigrant population, much of which hails from Mexico. Four percent of the state's residents were born in another country, while another four percent of residents are native-born U.S. citizens with at least one immigrant parent. The state benefits from immigrants' active participation in the economy—from working in Missouri's service industries to accounting for 25 percent of residents working in the life, physical, and social sciences. As neighbors, business owners, taxpayers, and workers, immigrants are an integral part of Missouri's diverse and thriving communities and make extensive contributions that benefit all.

Four percent of Missouri residents are immigrants, while another 4 percent of residents are native-born U.S. citizens with at least one immigrant parent.

- In 2018, 258,390 immigrants (foreign-born individuals) comprised 4 percent of the population.¹
- Missouri was home to 122,742 women, 111,553 men, and 24,095 children who were immigrants.²
- The top countries of origin for immigrants were Mexico (15 percent of immigrants), China (8 percent), India (7 percent), Vietnam (5 percent), and Bosnia and Herzegovina (4 percent).³
- In 2018, 223,079 people in Missouri (4 percent of the state's population) were native-born Americans who had at least one immigrant parent.⁴

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

- 127,336 immigrants (49 percent) had naturalized as of 2018,⁵ and 40,787 immigrants were eligible to become [naturalized U.S. citizens](#) in 2017.⁶
- More than four in five (84 percent) immigrants reported speaking English "well" or "very well."⁷

Immigrants in Missouri tend to be college educated.

- Three in seven (44 percent) adult immigrants had a college degree or more education in 2018, while about one in six (17 percent) had less than a high school diploma.⁸

Education Level	Share (%) of All Immigrants	Share (%) of All Natives
College degree or more	44	29
Some college	21	31
High school diploma only	18	31
Less than a high school diploma	17	9

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

Nearly 35,000 U.S. citizens in Missouri live with at least one family member who is undocumented.

- 60,000 [undocumented immigrants](#) comprised 23 percent of the immigrant population and 1 percent of the total state population in 2016.⁹
- 74,551 people in Missouri, including 34,546 U.S. citizens, lived with at least one [undocumented family member](#) between 2010 and 2014.¹⁰
- During the same period, about 2 percent of children in the state were U.S. citizens living with at least one undocumented family member (26,614 children in total).¹¹

Missouri is home to over 3,000 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients.

- 3,010 [active DACA recipients](#) lived in Missouri as of March 2020, while DACA has been granted to 3,748 people in total since 2012.¹²
- As of 2019, 49 percent of [DACA-eligible immigrants](#) in Missouri had applied for DACA.¹³
- An additional 2,000 residents of the state would satisfy all but the educational requirements for DACA, and fewer than one thousand would become eligible as they grew older.¹⁴

Immigrants make up 5 percent of the labor force in Missouri and are important in a range of industries.

- 164,394 immigrant workers comprised 5 percent of the labor force in 2018.¹⁵
- Immigrant workers were most numerous in the following industries:

Industry	Number of Immigrant Workers
Manufacturing	31,399
Health Care and Social Assistance	24,605
Accommodation and Food Services	19,363
Educational Services	18,873
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	15,545

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)
Manufacturing	8
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	7
Accommodation and Food Services	7
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	6
Management of Companies and Enterprises	6

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 Missouri 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
Production	21,862
Management	15,697
Food Preparation and Serving Related	15,550
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	14,157
Educational Instruction and Library	12,521

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)
Life, Physical, and Social Science	25
Computer and Mathematical	11
Production	9
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	8
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	7

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 2 percent of Missouri's workforce in 2016.¹⁹

Immigrants in Missouri have contributed billions of dollars in taxes.

- [Immigrant-led households in the state paid](#) \$1.9 billion in federal taxes and \$790.8 million in state and local taxes in 2018.²⁰
- Undocumented immigrants in Missouri paid an estimated \$107.1 million in federal taxes and \$62.3 million in [state and local taxes](#) in 2018.²¹
- Missouri [DACA recipients](#) and DACA-eligible individuals paid an estimated \$7.4 million in state and local taxes in 2018.²²

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

- Missouri residents in immigrant-led households had \$6.8 billion in [spending power](#) (after-tax income) in 2018.²³

Immigrant entrepreneurs in Missouri generate hundreds of millions of dollars in business revenue.

- 14,795 immigrant business owners accounted for 5 percent of all self-employed Missouri residents in 2018 and generated \$397.7 million in business income.²⁴
- In 2018, immigrants accounted for 14 percent of business owners in Kansas City (which spans Kansas and Missouri) and 3 percent of business owners in the St. Louis metropolitan area (which extends from Missouri into Illinois).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.