New Americans in Waco
The Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants in the Metro Area

In 2019, foreign-born residents in Waco contributed $1.2B to the metro area's GDP, or 8.9% of the total. The foreign-born population in Waco holds considerable economic power.

Amount earned by immigrant households in 2019:

- **$538.9M**
  - **$72.5M** went to federal taxes.
  - **$48.8M** went to state & local taxes.

Leaving them with **$417.7M** in spending power, or 8.8% of all spending power in Waco, more than their 8.7% share of the population.

Top countries of origin for immigrants living in Waco:

1. Mexico .................. 71.9%
2. Canada ................... 2.4%
3. China ..................... 1.9%
4. Germany .................. 1.7%
5. El Salvador ............... 1.6%

Of the **119,800** people working in the metro area, 14,000, or 12%, were foreign-born.

Between 2014 and 2019, the overall population in the metro area increased from 257,300 to 269,200, or 4.6%.

During the same period, the foreign-born population increased from 21,800 to 23,500, or 7.9%.

Growth in the foreign born population accounted for 14.5% of the overall population growth during that period.

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SPENDING POWER & TAX CONTRIBUTIONS (CONTINUED)

Immigrants in Waco also supported federal social programs. In 2019, they contributed $52.8M to Social Security and $13.1M to Medicare.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Share of immigrants receiving Medicare or Medicaid in 2019</th>
<th>Share of U.S.-born receiving Medicare or Medicaid in 2019</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
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<tr>
<th>Share of immigrants with private healthcare coverage</th>
<th>Share of immigrants with public healthcare coverage</th>
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<tr>
<td>48.6%</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
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Although the foreign-born population made up 8.7% of the metro area’s overall population, they represented 11.9% of its working-age population, 12.4% of its employed labor force, and 8% of its STEM workers in 2019.

**Immigrant shares of the...**

- Population: 8.7%
- Working-age Population: 11.9%
- Employed Labor Force: 12.4%
- STEM Workers: 8%

Immigrants played a critical role in these key industries in the metro area:

- Construction: 37%
- Manufacturing: 17.4%
- Hospitality: 14.9%
- General Services: 14.6%
- Professional Services: 12%

Immigrants tend to concentrate in these occupations in the metro area:

- Construction Laborers: 7.4%
- Carpenters: 4.8%
- Miscellaneous Production Workers, Including Equipment Operators and Tenders: 3.9%
- Postsecondary Teachers: 3.6%
- Janitors and Building Cleaners: 3.4%

Because of the role immigrants play in the workforce helping companies keep jobs on U.S. soil, we estimate that, by 2019, immigrants living in the metro area had helped create or preserve 1,100 local manufacturing jobs that would have otherwise vanished or moved elsewhere.8
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Despite making up 8.7% of the overall population, immigrants made up 14.4% of the entrepreneurs in the metro area in 2019.

1,400 foreign-born people worked for their own businesses, generating $23.7M in business income.

In the metro area, immigrants were 18.6% more likely to be entrepreneurs than their U.S.-born counterparts.

Share of the population who were entrepreneurs:
- Foreign-born: 14.4%
- U.S.-born: 7.7%

EDUCATION AND LONG-TERM ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Share of the metro area’s population aged 25 or older that held a bachelor’s degree or higher in 2019:
- Foreign-born: 14.1%
- U.S.-born: 24.9%

Share of the metro area’s population aged 25 or older that held an advanced degree in 2019:
- Foreign-born: 5.8%
- U.S.-born: 8.7%

950 students enrolled in colleges and universities in the metro area were temporary residents in fall 2019. These students supported 800 local jobs and contributed $56M in spending in the 2019 academic year.

In 2019, 66.7% of immigrant households in Waco owned their homes, compared to 59.1% of U.S.-born households.

33.3% of immigrant households were renters.

80.1% of immigrant households lived in houses, while 14% lived in apartments.

HOUSING WEALTH

The total property value of immigrant households $806.9M

The total annual rent paid by immigrant households $24M
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**Naturalization**

Share of immigrants who were naturalized U.S. citizens: **26.2%**

This represents a total of **6,200** immigrants.

Share among the 17,400 non-citizen immigrants who were likely eligible to naturalize: **10.8%**

This represents a total of **2,500** immigrants.

**Refugees**

600 people, or **2.4%** of the foreign-born population, were likely refugees in 2019.\(^{11}\)

**Undocumented Immigrants**

10,600 Estimated number of undocumented immigrants in 2019, or **45.1%** of the immigrant population.

88.2% of undocumented immigrants in the metro area were from Mexico.

Amount earned by undocumented immigrant households in 2019:

- **$182.7M** in spending power, or **39.4%** of all foreign-born spending power in Waco.
- **$9M** went to federal taxes.\(^{12}\)
- **$9M** went to state & local taxes.\(^{13}\)

Undocumented immigrants played a critical role in these key industries:

- Construction: **33.5%**
- Manufacturing: **16.8%**
- Hospitality: **14.5%**
- Professional Services: **8.7%**
- Retail Trade: **6.8%**
ENDNOTES

1 Unless otherwise specified, data comes from 5-year samples of the American Community Survey from 2014 and 2019 and figures refer to the Waco Metropolitan Area.

2 Due to the data limitations of the Public Use Microdata Area for locations of people's primary workplace, the data does not include people working in parts of the Waco Metropolitan Area that are likely to have a very small number of workers, resulting in a slight undercount of the overall number of workers.

3 These figures derive from our calculations based on immigrants' share of wage income and self-employment income in the 5-year ACS sample from 2019 and the statistics of GDP from the Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S.


6 General services include personal services (e.g. laundry services, barber shops, and repair and maintenance), religious organizations, social services, and labor unions.

7 Professional services: Most of these industries include professions that require a degree or a license, such as legal services, accounting, scientific research, consulting services, etc.


9 Data on total student enrollment in the metro area is derived from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System maintained by the National Center for Education Statistics. Temporary residents refer to people who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents.

10 Economic data is derived from the International Student Economic Value Tool maintained by NAFSA, the association of international educators.

