

New Americans in Washtenaw County

The Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants in the County¹

SEPTEMBER 2021



Population

45,300

immigrants lived in Washtenaw County, Michigan, in 2019.

Immigrants made up



of the total population in the county in 2019.

Between 2014 and 2019, the total population in the county increased by



The immigrant population increased by

+10.8%

during the same time period.



of the total population growth in the county was attributable to immigrants.

Demographics



of immigrants in Washtenaw County are recent arrivals, with no more than five years of residency in the United States, meaning

In the county, immigrants are

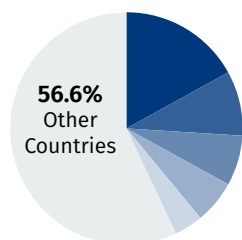
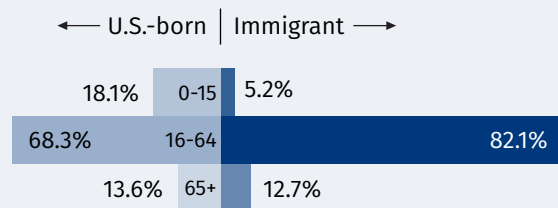


more likely to be of working-age than their U.S.-born counterparts, allowing them to actively participate in the labor force and contribute to the economy as taxpayers and consumers.²



of immigrants in the county have resided in the United States for longer than five years.

Shares of population by age groups:³



The top five countries of origin for immigrants living in the county:

- China (17.1%)
- Korea (7.4%)
- Japan (3.8%)
- India (9.2%)
- Canada (5.9%)

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

2 We define working age as 16-64 years of age.

3 Totals may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Demographics

4,500

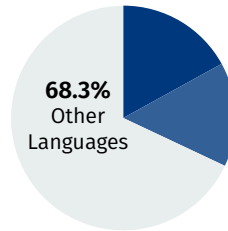
immigrants living in the county had limited English language proficiency, making up



of the immigrant population.

Among immigrants that had limited English language proficiency, the top languages spoken at home other than English were:

- Spanish (16.9%)
- Chinese (14.8%)



224,500

people worked in the county in 2019.



or **25,100** workers in the county were foreign-born.

Spending Power & Tax Contributions

Given their income, immigrants contributed significantly to taxes, including property, sales, and excise taxes levied by state and local governments.

In 2019, immigrant households in Washtenaw County earned **\$2.2 billion**



■ **\$467.5 million**

went to federal taxes⁴

■ **\$174.0 million** went to state & local taxes⁵

■ **\$1.5 billion** left in spending power

This means that foreign-born households held



of all spending power in the county.

In 2019, foreign-born residents in the county contributed

\$4.2 billion

to the county's GDP, or **16.5%** of the total.⁶

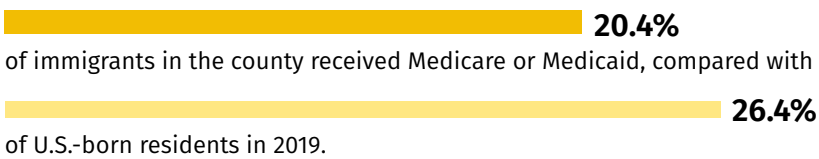
⁴ U.S. Congressional Budget Office. 2020. "The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2017."

⁵ Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. 2018. "Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States."

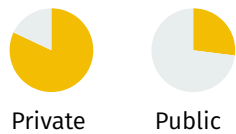
⁶ These figures derive from our calculations based on immigrants' share of wage income and self-employment income in the 5-year ACS sample from 2019 and the statistics of GDP from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Spending Power & Tax Contributions *(continued)*

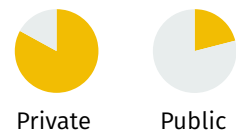
Immigrants in the county also supported federal social programs. In 2019, they contributed



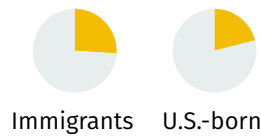
About **82.1%** of U.S.-born had private healthcare coverage, while **27.1%** had public healthcare coverage.⁷



About **82.9%** of immigrants had private healthcare coverage, while **20.5%** had public healthcare coverage.



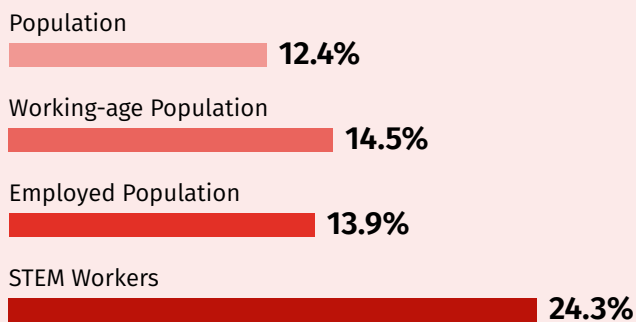
Given their household incomes, **25.7%** of immigrants live at or below 150% of the federal poverty threshold as compared to **21.3%** of U.S.-born residents.



Workforce

Although the foreign-born made up **12.4%** of the county's overall population, they represented **14.5%** of its working-age population, **13.9%** of its employed labor force, and **24.3%** of its STEM workers in 2019.⁸

Immigrant shares of the...



⁷ Including people who have both public and private healthcare coverage.

⁸ STEM refers to occupations that require background or expertise in Science, Technology, Engineering, and/or Math.

Workforce

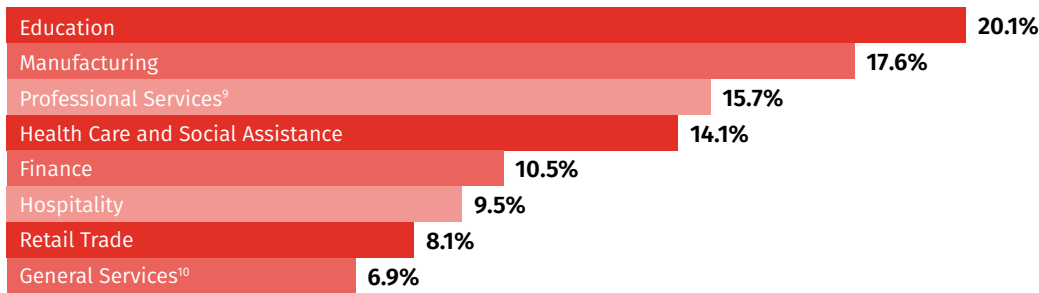
The immigrant working-age population was **47.4%** female and **52.6%** male.



The employed immigrant population was **41.5%** female and **58.5%** male.



Immigrants played a critical role in several key industries in the county. This included:



⁹ 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.

¹⁰ General services include personal services (e.g. laundry services, barber shops, and repair and maintenance), religious organizations, social services, and labor unions.

¹¹ These include services essential for daily living, such as building cleaning, waste management, auto repair, and veterinary services.

SPOTLIGHT ON Immigrant Essential Workers

Immigrants have also been playing vital roles in critical industries that have kept the country functioning throughout the COVID-19 crisis. Immigrants in the county continue working in these frontline and essential industries:

Healthcare

3,800

immigrants made up



Essential Services¹¹

Immigrants made up



Food Service

Immigrants made up



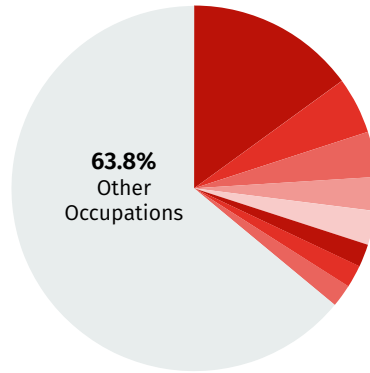
Essential Retail Trade

Immigrants made up



Immigrants tended to work in these occupations in the county in 2019:

- Postsecondary Teachers (15.3%)
- Physicians (4.8%)
- Mechanical Engineers (3.8%)
- Other Managers (3.4%)
- Physical Scientists (2.5%)
- Registered Nurses (2.4%)
- Software Developers (2.2%)
- Other Life Scientists (1.8%)



Top Occupations for Female Workers:

Postsecondary Teachers.....	14.3%
Physicians	5.5%
Registered Nurses	5.0%

Top Occupations for Male Workers:

Postsecondary Teachers.....	16.0%
Other Managers.....	5.1%
Mechanical Engineers.....	5.1%

Due to the role immigrants play in the workforce helping companies keep jobs on U.S. soil, we estimate that immigrants living in the county had helped create or preserve

2,100
manufacturing jobs

that would have otherwise vanished or moved elsewhere by 2019.¹²

SPOTLIGHT ON Job Demand In Washtenaw County In 2021

Not only are immigrants more likely to be of working age in the county, but they are also a crucial part of the county's economy, and could help meet the needs of its fastest growing and most in-demand fields, especially as the need for bilingual and culturally competent public services and healthcare increases.

The top 5 industries with the highest demand for bilingual workers:¹³

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Information | 2. Retail Trade | 3. Health Care and Social Assistance |
| 4. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services | 5. Finance and Insurance | |

¹² Vigdor, Jacob. 2013. "Immigration and the Revival of American Cities: From Preserving Manufacturing Jobs to Strengthening the Housing Market." *New American Economy*.

¹³ Data is obtained from Burning Glass Technologies for the time period between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021.

Entrepreneurship

2,000

immigrant entrepreneurs generated

\$72.7 million

in business income for Washtenaw County.

Despite making up **12.4%** of the population, immigrants made up



of the business owners in the county in 2019.

Immigrant entrepreneurs self-identified as **27.8%** female and **72.2%** male.



While **8.4%** of the U.S.-born population were entrepreneurs, **7.7%** of foreign-born residents worked for their own businesses.



U.S.-born



Immigrant

SPOTLIGHT ON

Small Business Recovery from the Pandemic

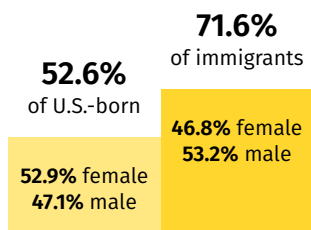
While all Americans are struggling to adapt to their new reality in a time of economic shutdown, entrepreneurs within particularly vulnerable industries in the county face severe challenges posed by the COVID-19 crisis.

16.4%

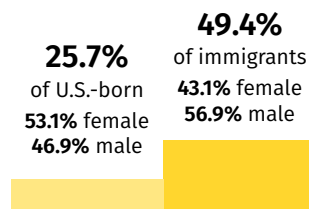
of entrepreneurs in Professional and Business Services were immigrants.

Education

Share of the county's population aged 25 or above that held a **bachelor's degree or higher** in 2019:



Share of the county's population aged 25 or above that held an **advanced degree** in 2019:



of K-12 students in the county were foreign-born in 2019.



of K-12 students in the county were children of immigrants in 2019.

Education *(continued)*

SPOTLIGHT ON University Population

8,033

students enrolled in colleges and universities in Washtenaw County in fall 2019 were temporary residents.¹⁴

1,636

international students graduated with STEM degrees from colleges and universities in the county in the 2018-19 academic year.

5,147

jobs in higher education and other areas including accommodations, food, and transportation were supported by international students.

\$402.3 million

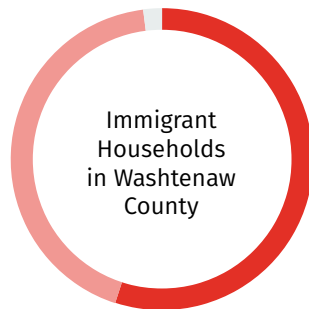
was spent by international students in the 2019-20 academic year.¹⁵

Housing

In 2019, **48.9%** of immigrant households in Washtenaw County owned their own homes, compared to **62.4%** of U.S.-born households.



Immigrant U.S.-born



- Lived in Houses **10,700, or 55.1%**
- Lived in Apartments **8,300, or 42.7%**
- Lived in Other Types of Housing **2.3%**

The total property value of immigrant households was

\$3.5 billion

51.1%

of immigrant households were renters. Their total annual rent paid was

\$134.5 million

92.8% of immigrant households in the county had access to broadband connection in their place of residence as compared to **87.1%** of U.S.-born households.



Immigrant U.S.-born

¹⁴ Data on total student enrollment in the county 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.

¹⁵ Economic data is derived from the International Student Economic Value Tool maintained by NAFSA, the association of international educators.

Naturalization



- **45.5%** Naturalized Citizens (20,600)
- **15.8%** Likely Eligible to Naturalize (7,200)
- **38.7%** Not Eligible to Naturalize (17,600)



Nationally, **48.7%** of immigrants are naturalized citizens, **15.9%** are likely eligible to naturalize, and **35.4%** are not yet eligible.



of households in Washtenaw County had at least one foreign-born resident in 2019.

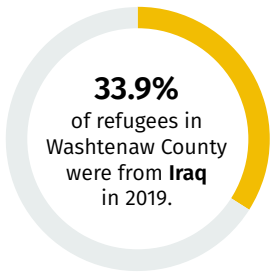
If all immigrants who are eligible to naturalize became U.S. citizens, their earning potential would increase by

+8.9%¹⁶

Refugees

1,600

residents, or **3.5%** of the foreign-born population in Washtenaw County, were likely refugees.¹⁷



In 2019, refugee households in the county earned **\$64.3 million**

■ **\$13.1 million**

went to federal taxes¹⁸

■ **\$5.3 million** went to state & local taxes¹⁹

■ **\$46.0 million** left in spending power

DACA-Eligible Population

In 2019, DACA-eligible people made up



of the immigrant population.

¹⁶ Enchautegui, Maria E. and Linda Giannarelli. 2015. "The Economic Impact of Naturalization on Immigrants and Cities." Urban Institute.

¹⁷ New American Economy. 2017. "From Struggle to Resilience: The Economic Impact of Refugees in America."

¹⁸ U.S. Congressional Budget Office. 2020. "The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2017."

¹⁹ Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. 2018. "Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States."

SPOTLIGHT ON

Esperance Malonga

In 2011, at 34, Esperance Malonga was granted an American diversity visa. It was the fifth time she'd entered the lottery. "When I won, it felt like a dream come true," said the Congolese native. "I've always wanted to raise a family and maybe even open my own business in America."

She left her job as a seamstress and relocated to Washtenaw County where she already had friends. She married her fiance, who was living in Canada at the time. Their relationship remained long distance for a few years until he relocated to Michigan. Initially, the couple focused on learning English and saving money. Esperance worked in housekeeping and manufacturing before she became a tailor at Macy's.

Esperance studied design at a French fashion school in Tunisia and always dreamed of opening her own custom clothing store. By 2019, she felt established enough in America to take the plunge. "It was hard work, but I got help," she says. Esperance leaned on Washtenaw Community College's Small Business Development Center, which helped her establish an LLC, obtain an employer identification number and get her business up and running.

Today, Esperance runs U4hope, a clothing and alterations store at the Briarwood Mall. She sells African-print modern clothing for adults and children, all of which she designs and sews. "Many of my customers are African Americans looking for African-inspired clothing," she says. "They are eager to learn about Africa. I share my clothing and my story with them. Many of my customers become like family to me."

Esperance has watched the local community welcome her family. She and her husband are raising three happy children. She credits the community's support for helping her achieve her creative and entrepreneurial dreams. To show her gratitude, she gives back by teaching sewing classes to children and adults. "I recently taught a woman who has never sewn before," Esperance says. "She just made two skirts. I'm so proud of her."

Esperance, her husband and her children love their lives in Michigan. "We feel embraced here," she says. "We feel at home."

SPOTLIGHT ON

Deborah Ngandu

In 2011 Deborah Ngandu accompanied her husband, Alain, from the Democratic Republic of Congo to the U.S., where he was pursuing his master's degree in clinical research at Mayo Clinic Graduate School. They had planned to return home, but in 2012 everything changed.

That year, Alain's father, the world-renowned gynecologist, human rights activist and Nobel Peace laureate, Dr. Denis Mukwege, openly condemned the sexual violence spreading across his country. Soon thereafter, five assassins broke into his home in East Congo, fired multiple shots at Mukwege and killed the family cook. Mukwege survived, but it was clear that Alain and Deborah could not return home.

The couple was granted refugee status in 2013 and resettled in Washtenaw County. Alain was a gynecologist like his father and began researching women's health and public health at the University of Michigan. Deborah turned to Jewish Family Services (JFS) for English classes and job assistance. The organization helped her get hired as a relationship banker at Old National Bank. "I help customers plan for their financial future by offering financial advice or directing them to our services that will help them reach their goals," she says.

She was so grateful for the support she received from JFS that she began volunteering as an interpreter for the organization. She spends up to eight hours a week, helping connect new refugees with housing, transportation, healthcare and job opportunities. "When I see refugees I've helped leading successful lives, I feel so proud of them," she says. "It helps that our city is already so welcoming. When you look around, you see people from all around the world together."

Between her job, her volunteer work and raising three children with Alain, Deborah feels fulfilled in her new home. They've discovered a welcoming, diverse environment at the University of Michigan and have built an international circle of friends. "It was sad to give up our old lives in the Congo, but we've managed to gain a community and a higher purpose," she says. "Here we can raise awareness about the injustices Congolese people—especially women—face back home. We hope some international goodwill will be mobilized to help address these atrocities."

Undocumented Immigrants

8,100

undocumented immigrants in Washtenaw County in 2019. They made up



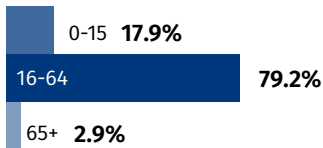
of the immigrant population.

Undocumented immigrants are highly active in the labor force. About



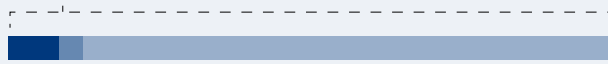
are of working-age in the county.

Undocumented immigrants by age groups:



In 2019, undocumented immigrant households earned

\$187.3 million



■ **\$16.9 million**

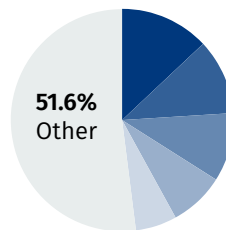
went to federal taxes²⁰

■ **\$8.1 million** went to state & local taxes²¹

■ **\$162.3 million** was left in spending power

Top countries of origin for the undocumented in the county:

- China (12.7%)
- Japan (11.0%)
- India (9.6%)
- Korea (8.4%)
- Mexico (6.7%)



Undocumented immigrants tended to work in these key industries in the county.



²⁰ U.S. Congressional Budget Office. 2020. "The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2017."

²¹ Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. 2018. "Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States."

New Americans in the City of Ann Arbor

The Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants in the City

Population

22,600

immigrants lived in Ann Arbor, Michigan, in 2019.

Immigrants made up



of the total population in the city in 2019.

Between 2014 and 2019, the total population in the city increased by



The immigrant population increased by

+8.5%

during the same time period.

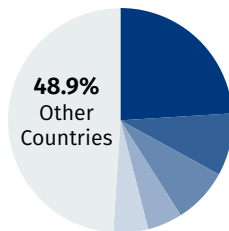


of the total population growth in the city was attributable to immigrants.

Demographics

The top five countries of origin for immigrants living in the city:

- China (23.9%)
- Korea (9.3%)
- India (8.4%)
- Japan (4.8%)
- Canada (4.7%)



Spending Power & Tax Contributions

Given their income, immigrants contributed significantly to taxes, including property, sales, and excise taxes levied by state and local governments.

In 2019, immigrant households in Ann Arbor earned **\$875.0 million**

■ **\$182.3 million**

went to federal taxes²²

■ **\$71.4 million** went to state & local taxes²³

■ **\$621.3 million** left in spending power

This means that foreign-born households held



of all spending power in the city.

²² U.S. Congressional Budget Office. 2020. "The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2017."

²³ Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. 2018. "Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States."