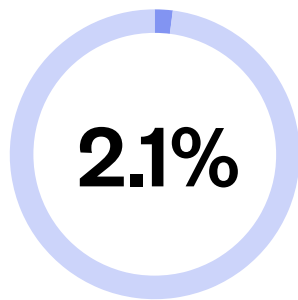


# Contributions of New Americans in Mid-Michigan

The Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants<sup>1</sup> in the Region<sup>2</sup>

## POPULATION

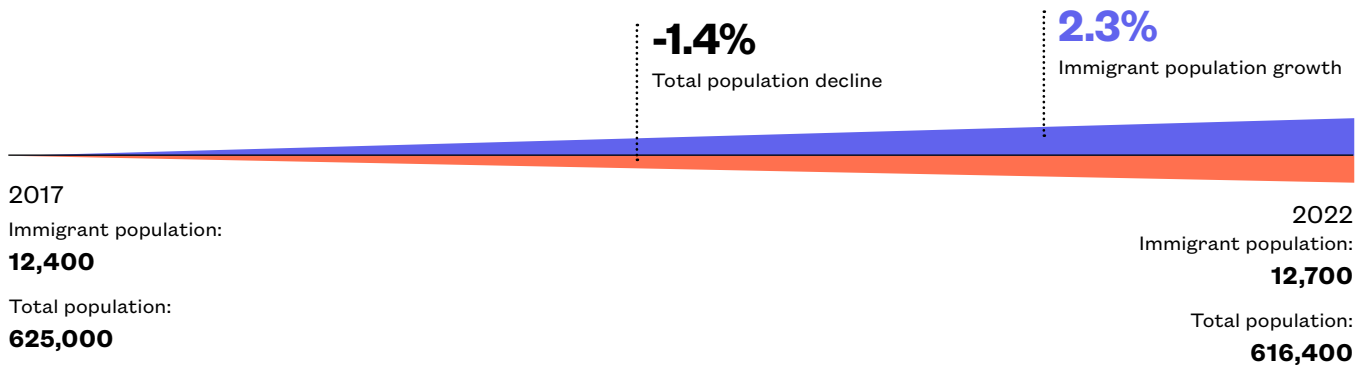


Immigrant share of the mid-Michigan population in 2022.

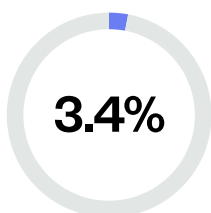
12,700

Number of immigrants living in mid-Michigan in 2022.<sup>3</sup>

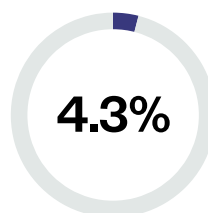
## POPULATION CHANGE



## DEMOGRAPHICS

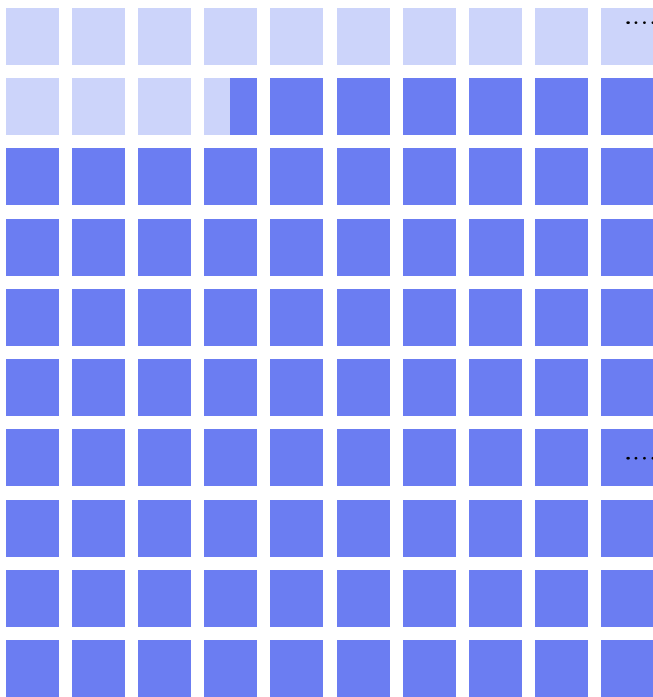


Share of households in mid-Michigan in 2022 that had at least one immigrant resident.



Share of children in mid-Michigan that lived with at least one immigrant parent in 2022.

**DEMOGRAPHICS (CONTINUED)**



**13.5%**

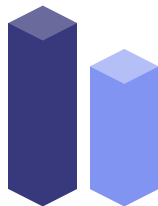
Share of immigrants in mid-Michigan who were recent arrivals, with five years of residency in the United States or less.

**86.5%**

Share of immigrants in mid-Michigan who resided in the United States for more than five years.

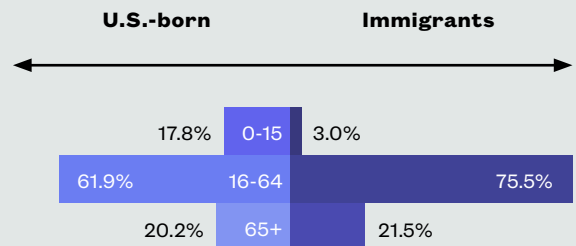
Immigrants were

**21.9%**



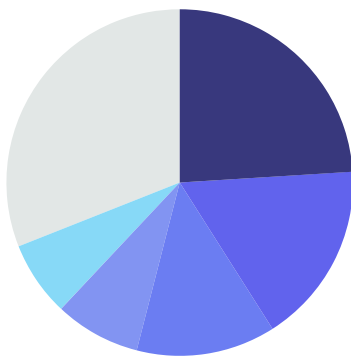
more likely to be of working age than their U.S.-born counterparts, allowing them to actively participate in the labor force and contribute to the economy as taxpayers and consumers.<sup>4</sup>

Share of population by age:<sup>5</sup>



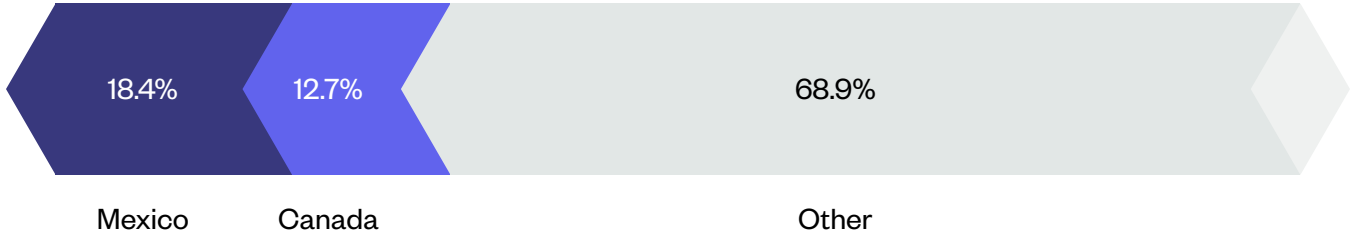
**DEMOGRAPHICS (CONTINUED)**

The top regions of origin for immigrants living in the region:

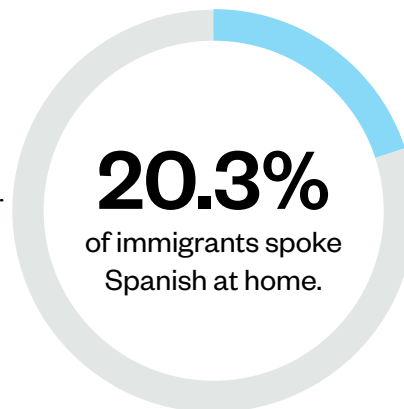


- 1 Mexico, Central America and Caribbean . . . . . 23.7%
- 2 India and Southwest Asia. . . . . 16.7%
- 3 Canada and Atlantic Islands . . . . . 12.7%
- 4 Central and Eastern Europe. . . . . 7.6%
- 5 East Asia . . . . . 6.9%
- 6 Other . . . . . 32.4%

The top countries of origin for immigrants living in the region:

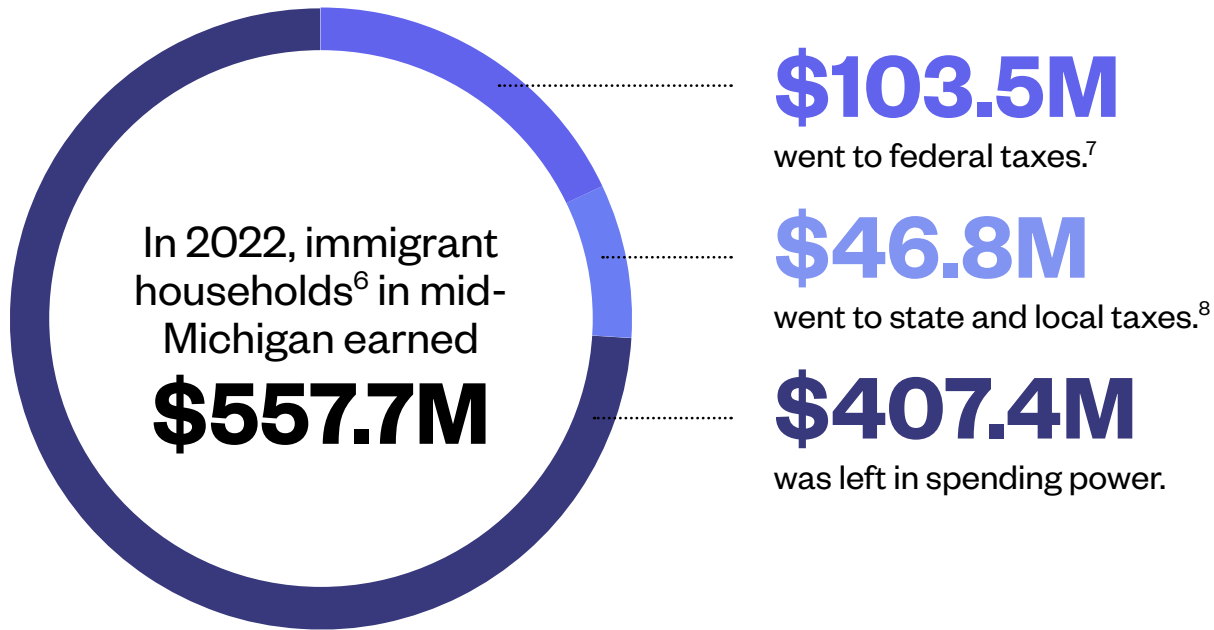


Spanish was the top language spoken at home for immigrants living in mid-Michigan other than English.



## SPENDING POWER & TAX CONTRIBUTIONS

Immigrants living in mid-Michigan paid a significant amount in federal, state, and local taxes, including property, sales, and excise taxes levied by state and local governments.



In 2022, immigrants in mid-Michigan contributed

**\$1.3B**

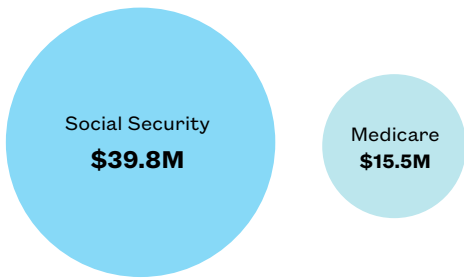
to the region's gross domestic product (GDP), or **4.0%** of the total GDP for the year.<sup>9</sup>

**2.8%**

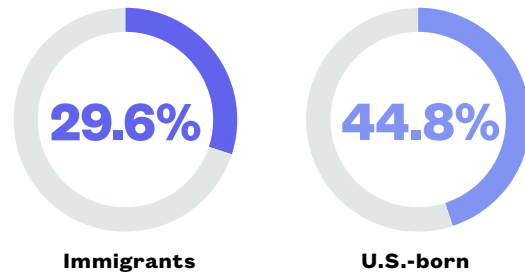
of all spending power in the region was attributable to immigrants in 2022.

**SPENDING POWER & TAX CONTRIBUTIONS (CONTINUED)**

Immigrants in mid-Michigan also supported federal social programs. In 2022, they contributed **\$39.8M** to Social Security and **\$15.5M** to Medicare.



**29.6%** of immigrants in the region received Medicare or Medicaid in 2022, compared with **44.8%** of U.S.-born residents.



**74.9%** of immigrants had private healthcare coverage, while **29.7%** had public healthcare coverage.<sup>10</sup>

**67.1%** of U.S.-born residents had private healthcare coverage, while **45.6%** had public healthcare coverage.

**Private healthcare coverage**



**Public healthcare coverage**



SPOTLIGHT

## Pavel Konecny

### *President and CEO of Tri-Star Trust*

Pavel Konecny, a native of the Czech Republic (Czechia), grew up playing tennis. He assumed he would study in his home country, but was presented with the opportunity to attend Northwood Institute (now Northwood University) in Midland, Michigan, because the school was recruiting tennis talent. In 1992, Konecny received a full scholarship and moved to Michigan.

Konecny was surprised by the lack of public transportation and the fact that people drove most places instead of walking. He was equally struck by its racial diversity. “It was so different than where I grew up,” he said. Also a shock to him: how freely Americans expressed themselves, including their feelings about the government. “There were no consequences for having an opinion,” Konecny marveled.

Konecny earned a degree in business management and marketing management, but his immigration status hindered his ability to be hired for employment. Struggling to find an employer in his field who could sponsor his visa, he became Resident Director at Northwood. With the help of scholarships, he also enrolled in Northwood’s MBA program.

That advanced degree was the key to his future career path. In 1998, Konecny became an investment analyst at Chemical Bank and was later appointed 1st Senior Vice President and Corporate Treasurer. Two decades in, he oversaw the team responsible for managing interest rate, market and liquidity risks of the bank’s \$19 billion balance sheet. Today, he’s the President and CEO of Tri-Star Trust, a wealth management trust company.

Konecny now lives in Midland and has become a civic leader in the Great Lakes Bay Region. He sits on the board of the Midland Center for the Arts and the Great Lakes Bay Regional Alliance and serves as vice-chair of the Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce. In addition, he is a board member of the Michigan Chamber of Commerce. His wife, [Jana Chotivkova](#), was Konecny’s high school sweetheart. They reunited after college and she’s now Vice President and Chief Financial Officer for the Great Lakes Loons, the region’s minor league baseball team. The couple has a 12 year-old-son, Benjamin.

Yet despite the family’s hard work and professional success while on H1-B visa—not to mention their support for the Great Lakes Bay Region—they faced roadblocks to citizenship. To qualify for a Green Card with employer sponsorship,



Konecny had to advertise his job in the Detroit Free Press to ensure that no qualified U.S. citizen or permanent resident would apply, thereby justifying the need for labor certification issued by the Department of Labor (first step towards permanent residency). “I opened up the classifieds and I kid you not, there were four job postings that were clearly ads for green card applicants,” Konecny said. After this, a clerical error put Konecny in danger of having to leave the country, despite being a top executive at a prestigious bank and having followed all the appropriate steps in the process. “While I understood the logic behind the process, it just felt so dysfunctional,” he said.

Konecny has now been a U.S. citizen for eight years. He’s eternally grateful to Chemical Bank for the support through the immigration process and the citizens of the City of Midland for their warm embrace. Now he tries to pay this spirit forward by providing assistance where necessary.

“I came here because I had a dream. The systems in the United States, despite some of the challenges, are fantastic,” Konecny said. “Nothing can stop you from being successful if you set your mind to it.”

SPOTLIGHT

## Manuela Powidayko Alberici Souza

*Director, Department of Planning and  
Community Development, Mount Pleasant*

Growing up in Londrina, Brazil, a city roughly the size of Boston, Manuela Powidayko often shadowed her mom, a civil engineer, through construction sites. “I didn’t mind the noise at all,” she said. After receiving her bachelor’s degree in architecture and urban planning at her hometown state university, she married in 2012 and joined her husband in Connecticut, where he was an international student at Yale.

From there, the couple enrolled in separate programs in New York City, Powidayko in a Master of Science in Architecture and Urban Design at Columbia University and her husband in a Doctor of Musical Arts at SUNY Stony Brook University. “I fell in love with this iconic city,” Powidayko said.

Initially, she interned at the Department of City Planning’s Urban Design Office, working on a research project to identify the impacts of skyscrapers on Central Park. Then in 2015, she was hired full time to work on flood resiliency and recovery after Hurricane Sandy. “I always wanted to work in the public sector, and I fell even more in love with being a city planner,” she said. But in 2022, her husband was offered a job as the Director of Music Events at Central Michigan University, so the couple moved to Mount Pleasant, Michigan. Her husband is now their Assistant Professor of Violin.

The town was much smaller than the cities Powidayko had loved previously, and there were few immigrants. Still, “it was a very welcoming community,” she said. “I found friends so quickly, people born and raised in Mount Pleasant.” When the existing city planner left, these friends told Powidayko about the open position. In 2022, she was hired.

At first, Powidayko missed collaborating with a large staff and industry experts; in Michigan, she works with a single support staffer. Now, though, the whole city is a partner in her work. Her day-to-day includes research



and project review, overseeing zoning code compliance and permit procedures, and managing the Planning Commission. She regularly coordinates with offices, stakeholders, developers and investors across Mount Pleasant to develop new plans and programs that assist with housing and economic development and help improve city residents’ quality of life.

“I grew up in one country and culture, moved to another and have now worked in both big cities and small towns,” she said. “I’ve learned how to bring people together to complete a project. It’s an important skill to have.”

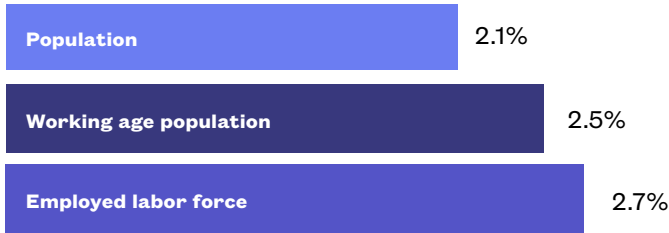
Today, Powidayko is a proud Mount Pleasant resident. “Our downtown is very active, and as a new mom to a toddler, Mount Pleasant is the best place I could imagine to bring up a family,” she said. “Our jobs, the daycare, everything is close, and you can be anywhere in three to five minutes.”

Powidayko has fully embraced her new state: she now loves hiking, camping, and traversing the area’s extensively networked park systems. “I even brought my newborn on camping trips,” she said.

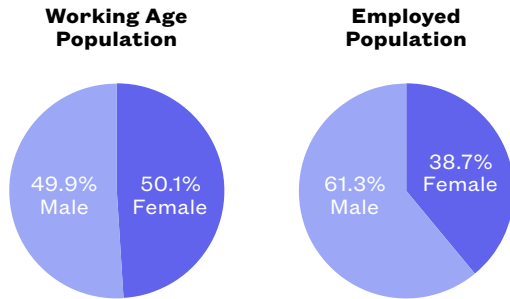
**WORKFORCE**

Although immigrants made up **2.1%** of the region's total population in 2022, they represented **2.5%** of its working age population, and **2.7%** of its employed labor force.

**Immigrant shares of the...**



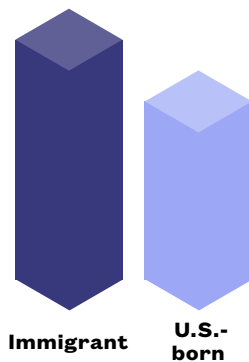
**Immigrants by sex:**



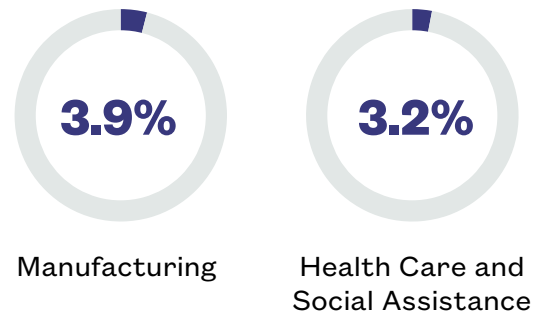
In mid-Michigan, immigrants were

**21.9%**

more likely to be of working age than their U.S.-born counterparts.



Immigrants played a critical role in several key industries in the region. The immigrant share of workers was highest in the following **industries**:



Immigrants play a critical role in our workforce by helping companies keep jobs on U.S. soil. Our research shows that immigrants living in the region helped create or preserve

**583** manufacturing jobs

that would have otherwise been eliminated or moved elsewhere by 2022.<sup>11</sup>



SPOTLIGHT

# Job Demand in Mid-Michigan in 2023

Not only were immigrants more likely to be of working age than the U.S.-born, but they were also a crucial part of the region’s economy, and helped meet the needs of its fastest growing and most in-demand fields.<sup>12</sup>

The top in-demand jobs in mid-Michigan, by number of job postings in the region, were:



The top skills and certifications listed for these in-demand jobs were: **Customer Service, Registered Nurse (RN), Sales, Communication, and Merchandising.**

**Immigrants help fill many high-demand roles, especially as the need for bilingual and culturally competent workers increases.**

### The top industries with the highest demand for bilingual workers:<sup>13</sup>

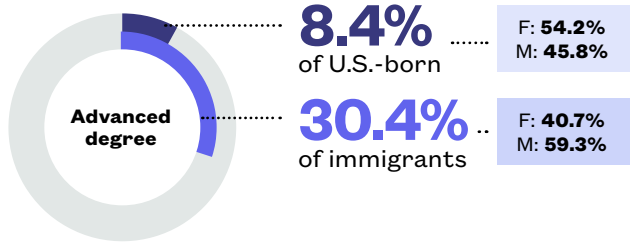
1. Health Care and Social Assistance
2. Public Administration
3. Manufacturing
4. Retail Trade
5. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services

### The top occupations with the highest demand for bilingual workers were:

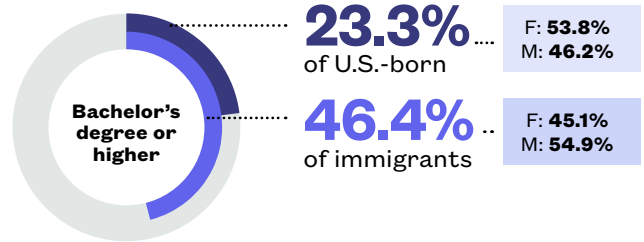
1. Police and Sheriff’s Patrol Officers
2. Retail Salespersons

**EDUCATION**

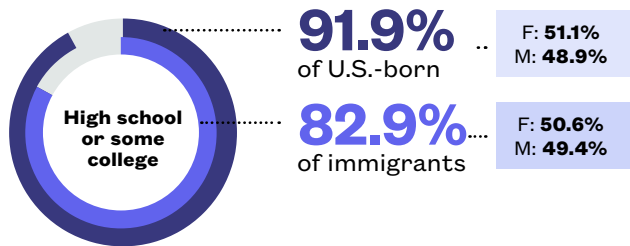
Share of the mid-Michigan population aged 25 or above that held an **advanced degree** in 2022:



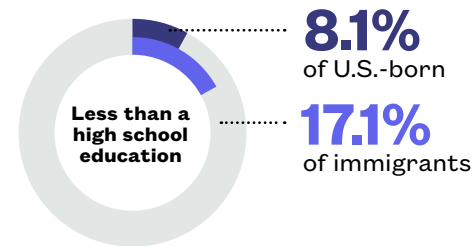
Share of the region’s population aged 25 or above that held a **bachelor’s degree or higher** in 2022:



Share of the region’s population aged 25 or above that had **at least a high school education or some college** in 2022:



Share of the region’s population aged 25 or above that had **less than a high school education** in 2022:



**3.9%** Share of K-12 students in mid-Michigan who lived with at least one immigrant parent in 2022.<sup>14</sup>

SPOTLIGHT

# University Population in Mid-Michigan

# 1,718

international students lived in mid-Michigan during the 2022-2023 school year.<sup>15</sup>



- Central Michigan University - **1,208**
- Saginaw Valley State University - **231**
- Ferris State University - **135**

International students supported

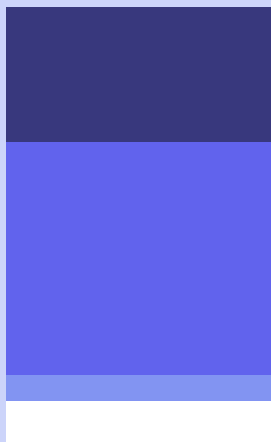
# 368 jobs

in the region and these students contributed

# \$50.6M

in spending to the mid-Michigan economy through tuition, housing, goods and services, and entertainment purchases.<sup>16</sup>

The breakdown of international students is as follows:



- **526**  
full-time undergraduate students
- **922**  
full-time graduate students
- **104**  
part-time undergraduate students
- **166**  
part-time graduate students

# 304 degrees

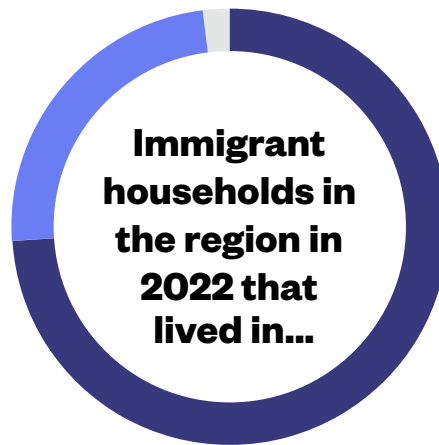
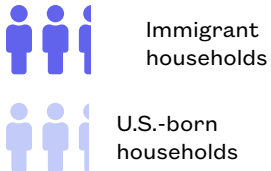
were awarded to international students with a **primary major** in a science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) field in the 2022-2023 academic year.

# 51 degrees

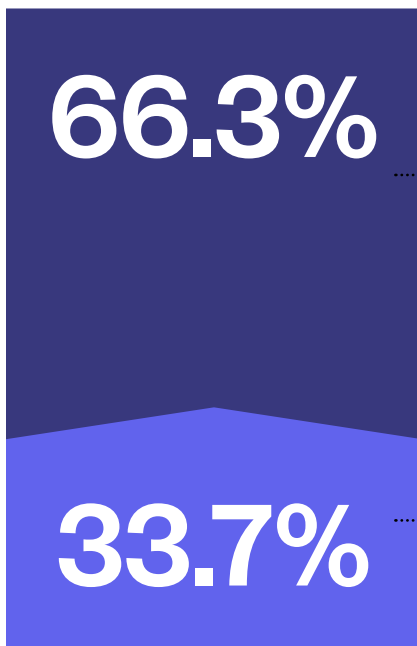
were awarded to international students with a **secondary major** in a STEM field during the same period.

**HOUSING**

The average household size for immigrants in mid-Michigan was **2.5** compared with **2.2** for U.S.-born households.



- Houses (4,370 or **80.5%**)
- Apartments (**17.5%**)
- Other Types of Housing<sup>17</sup> (**2.0%**)



Share of immigrant households in mid-Michigan who owned their homes in 2022, compared to **75.5%** of U.S.-born households.

The total property value of immigrant households was

**\$839.2M**

Share of immigrant households in mid-Michigan that were renters.

Immigrants' total annual rent paid was

**\$20.5M**

**85.8%** of immigrant households in the region had access to broadband connection in their place of residence as compared with **76.8%** of U.S.-born households in 2022.<sup>18</sup>



**Immigrant**



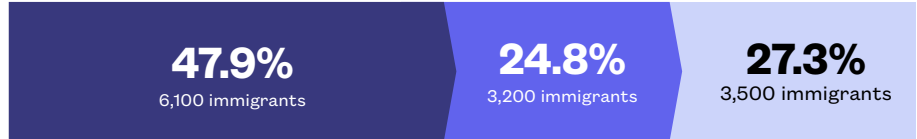
**U.S.-born**

## NATURALIZATION

Share of immigrants who have naturalized as of 2022<sup>19</sup>

- Naturalized
- Likely Eligible to Naturalize
- Not Yet Eligible to Naturalize

### MID-MICHIGAN



### UNITED STATES<sup>20</sup>



When eligible immigrants naturalize, their income increases by **8.9%** on average.<sup>21</sup>

## H-1B AND H-2B VISAS

The H-1B visa is a temporary visa that allows foreign professionals to work in “specialty occupations” that require at least a bachelor’s degree or the equivalent.

**192**

H-1B visas were certified<sup>22</sup> in mid-Michigan during Fiscal Year 2023.

The top occupations among certified H-1B visa applications, by number of certifications were Software Developers (35 certifications), Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technologists (13 certifications), and Computer Systems Analysts (12 certifications).

The H-2B program allows U.S. employers to temporarily hire nonimmigrant<sup>23</sup> employees to perform nonagricultural labor for a one-time occurrence, seasonal, temporary, or intermittent need.

**260**

H-2B visas were certified<sup>24</sup> in mid-Michigan during Fiscal Year 2023.

The top occupations among certified H-2B visa applications, by number of certifications were Fast Food and Counter Workers (112 certifications), Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers (101 certifications), and Amusement and Recreation Attendants (35 certifications).

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Estimates provided in this report may slightly undercount the immigrant population. The American Community Survey historically undersamples the immigrant population, especially among lower income, more recently arrived, and less English-fluent immigrant populations.
- 2 Unless otherwise specified, data comes from the 1-year sample of the American Community Survey (ACS) from 2017 and a combined 2021 and 2022 2-year sample from the ACS. Figures refer to Arenac, Bay, Clare, Gladwin, Gratiot, Isabella, Mecosta, Midland, Osceola, and Saginaw counties, Michigan.
- 3 We define “immigrant” as any non-citizen or any naturalized U.S. citizen. They include naturalized citizens, green card holders, temporary visa holders, refugees, asylees, and undocumented immigrants, among others. Due to sample size constraints, characteristics of specific subgroups of the immigrant population - such as refugees, DACA-eligible individuals, and undocumented immigrants - could not be included in this report.
- 4 We define working age as 16-64 years of age.
- 5 Totals may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.
- 6 Immigrant households refer to those with an immigrant as head of the unit.
- 7 U.S. Congressional Budget Office, The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2019 (Washington, DC: 2022), <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/58353>.
- 8 Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States (Washington, DC: 2018), <https://itep.org/whopays>.
- 9 These figures derive from our calculations based on immigrants’ share of wage income and self-employment income in the 2-year ACS sample from 2021-2022 and the statistics of GDP from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.
- 10 Including people who have both public and private healthcare coverage.
- 11 Jacob Vigdor, Immigration and the Revival of American Cities: From Preserving Manufacturing Jobs to Strengthening the Housing Market (New York, NY: AmericasSociety/ Council of the Americas and New American Economy, 2013), <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/revival-of-american-cities.pdf>.
- 12 Data is obtained from Lightcast Technologies for the time period between January 1, 2023, and December 31, 2023. Accessed on September 13, 2024.
- 13 Data is obtained from Lightcast Technologies for the time period between January 1, 2023, and December 31, 2023. Accessed September 13, 2024.
- 14 Children of immigrants includes both U.S.-born and foreign-born people who are under the age of 18 living with at least one foreign-born parent.
- 15 Data on student enrollment in the region 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. Data accessed on September 13, 2024.
- 16 Economic data is derived from the International Student Economic Value Tool maintained by NAFSA: Association of International Educators. Accessed September 13, 2024.
- 17 “Other” housing includes mobile homes, trailers, boats, tents, vans, and housing that is not considered a single-family home or multi-family building.
- 18 This data point reports whether the respondent or any member of their household subscribed to the internet using broadband (high speed) internet service such as cable, fiber optic, or DSL.
- 19 Naturalization is the process through which one can become a U.S. citizen, dependent on certain eligibility requirements. We identify immigrants who are potentially eligible for naturalization based on a set of criteria of eligibility identified by the USCIS, such as immigration status, age, English language proficiency, and length of stay in the United States. Learn more here: <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/how-united-states-immigration-system-works>.
- 20 Data comes from the 1-year sample of the American Community Survey (ACS) from 2022.
- 21 Maria E. Enchautegui and Linda Giannarelli, The Economic Impact of Naturalization on Immigrants and Cities, Urban Institute, 2015, <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/economic-impact-naturalization-immigrants-and-cities>.
- 22 Before an employer can file a petition with United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to hire an employee using an H-1B visa, the employer must take steps to ensure that hiring the foreign worker will not adversely affect U.S. workers. To do this, employers file a labor condition application (LCA) to be certified by the Department of Labor (DOL), which ensures that employment of the H-1B worker will not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of similarly employed U.S. workers. The number of certified H-1B visas is therefore a good indication of the demand for foreign-born workers of a given occupation in a given region. More information on the H-1B process can be found here: <https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/h-1b-specialty-occupations>.
- 23 Nonimmigrants are foreign nationals admitted temporarily to the United States. Examples of nonimmigrant classes of admission include foreign government officials, temporary visitors for business and pleasure, academic and vocational students, and temporary workers. More information can be found here: <https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/nonimmigrant-admissions-temporary-visitors/nonimmigrant-classes-admission>.
- 24 For an employer to obtain an H-2B certification, the Department of Labor must determine that there are not enough U.S. workers available to do the temporary job being petitioned for, and that employing H-2B workers will not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of similar workers. Additionally, the need for the worker must be temporary. Certified jobs are not necessarily the jobs filled, though they do indicate a level of demand for temporary immigrant workers in a particular occupation. More information on the H-2B process can be found here: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/foreign-labor/programs/h-2b>.