

New Americans in Elkhart, Marshall, and St. Joseph Counties

The Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants¹ in the Region²

DECEMBER 2023



SOUTH BEND | ELKHART
REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

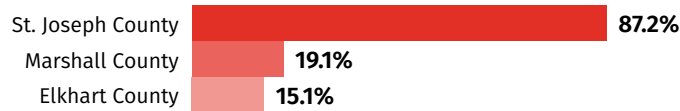


Population

36,000

the approximate number of immigrants living in the South Bend–Elkhart region in 2019.³

Population growth attributable to immigrants by county:



33,900

the approximate number of immigrants living in Elkhart, Marshall, and St. Joseph counties in Indiana in 2016.⁴

Immigrants made up



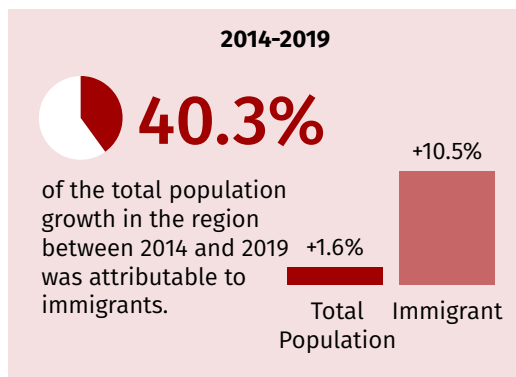
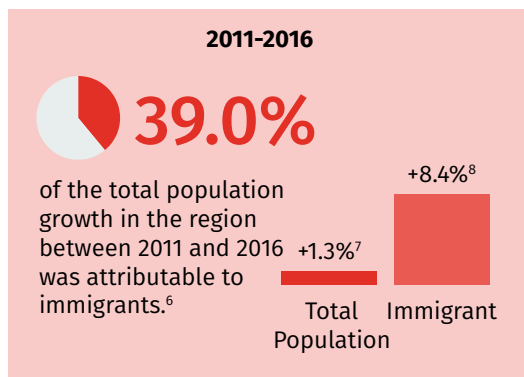
of the total population in the region in 2016.⁵

Immigrants made up



of the total population in the region in 2019.

Population Growth in the South Bend-Elkhart Region



Demographics



of households in the South Bend–Elkhart region had at least one immigrant.

In the region, immigrants were



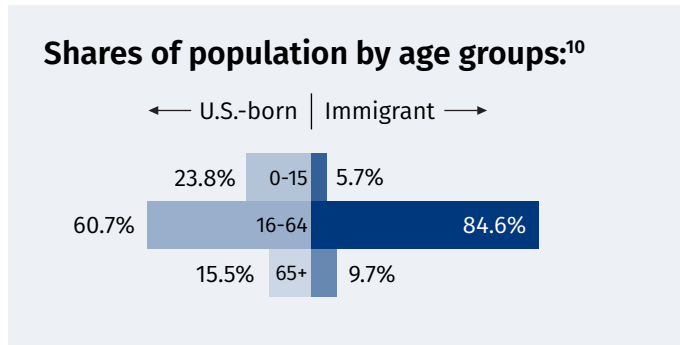
more likely to be of working age than their U.S.-born counterparts, allowing them to actively participate in the labor force and contribute to the economy as taxpayers and consumers.⁹

1. Estimates provided in this report may slightly undercount the immigrant population. The American Community Survey (ACS) historically undersamples the immigrant population, especially among lower income, more recently arrived, and less English-fluent immigrant populations.
2. Due to the significant undercount of some groups with certain demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, including income and education in the 2020 ACS, unless otherwise specified, data comes from 5-year samples of the American Community Survey from 2014 and 2019 and figures refer to St. Joseph, Elkhart, and Marshall counties, Indiana.

Demographics (continued)



of immigrants in the region had resided in the United States for more than five years.

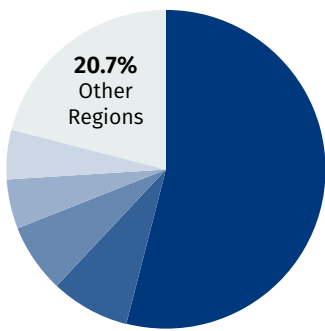


274,700

people worked in the South Bend–Elkhart region in 2019.



Of these, or **23,900** workers, were immigrants.



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

- Mexico, Central America, and Caribbean (54.0%)
- India and Southwest Asia (7.5%)
- East Asia (7.3%)
- Southeast Asia (5.4%)
- South America (5.1%)

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



The top languages spoken at home other than English among immigrants:



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.
4. *New American Economy, New Americans in the Michiana Region*, (New York, NY: 2018), <https://research.newamericaneconomy.org/report/new-americans-in-michiana/>.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*
9. We define working age as 16–64 years of age.
10. Across the report, totals may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Immigrants with Limited English Language Proficiency

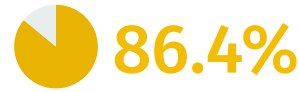
8,100

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



of the immigrant population.¹¹

Among those with limited English proficiency,



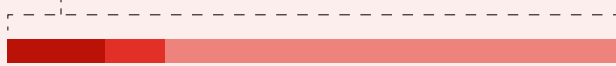
speak Spanish at home.

Spending Power and Tax Contributions

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

In 2019, immigrant households¹² in the South Bend–Elkhart region earned approximately

\$1.0 billion



■ **\$160.6 million**

went to federal taxes¹³

■ **\$98.1 million** went to state & local taxes¹⁴

■ **\$783.6 million** was left in spending power

This means that immigrant households held



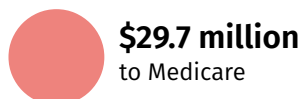
of all spending power in the region.

In 2019, immigrant residents in the region contributed

\$3.8 billion

to the region's gross domestic product (GDP), or **9.0%** of the total GDP for that year.¹⁵

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



18.4% of immigrants in the region received Medicare or Medicaid, compared with

33.8% of U.S.-born residents in 2019.

11. For the purpose of this report, we define people with limited English language proficiency as those who do not speak English at all or do not speak English well.
12. Immigrant households refer to those with an immigrant as head of the unit.
13. U.S. Congressional Budget Office, *The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2019* (Washington, DC: 2021), <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/58353>.
14. 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/>.
15. 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 and Tax Contributions *(continued)*

About **67.0%** of U.S.-born residents had private health care coverage, compared with **59.8%** of immigrants.¹⁶



U.S.-born Immigrants

About **34.4%** of U.S.-born residents had public health care coverage, compared with **18.4%** of immigrants.



U.S.-born Immigrants

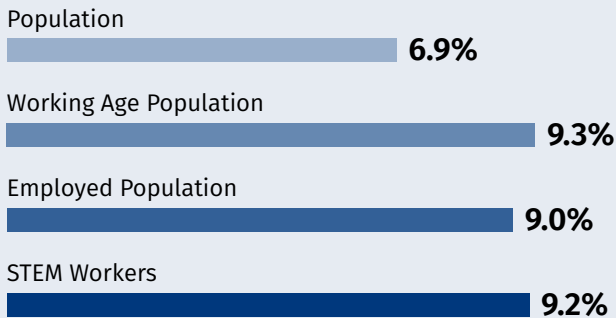


of immigrants in the region were uninsured in 2019.

Workforce

Although immigrants made up **6.9%** of the region's total population, they represented **9.3%** of its working age population, **9.0%** of its employed labor force, and **9.2%** of its workers in science, technology, engineering, math (STEM) fields in 2019.¹⁷

Immigrant shares of the...



The immigrant working age population was **47.6%** female and **52.4%** male.



The immigrant employed population was **40.4%** female and **59.6%** male.

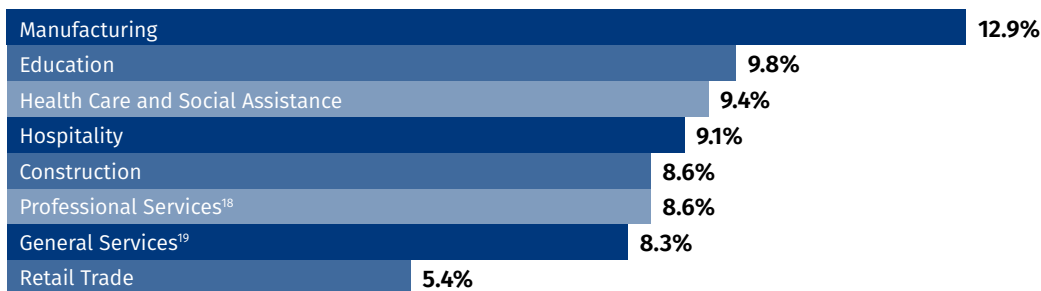


Immigrants in the region were



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

The industries with the largest number of immigrant workers in 2019 includes:



16. Including people who have both public and private health care coverage.

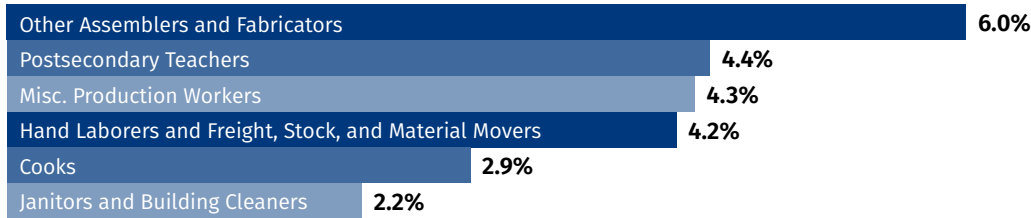
17. STEM refers to occupations that require background or expertise in science, technology, engineering, and/or math.

18. 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.

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

Workforce (continued)

The occupations with the largest number of immigrant workers in 2019:



Due to the role immigrants play in the workforce helping companies keep jobs on U.S. soil, our research says that immigrants living in the region helped create or preserve

1,700 manufacturing jobs

that would have otherwise been eliminated or moved elsewhere by 2019.²⁰

SPOTLIGHT

Job Demand In the South Bend–Elkhart Region In 2021

Not only were immigrants more likely to be of working age in the region, but they were also a crucial part of the region’s economy, helped it meet the needs of its fastest growing and most in-demand fields.²¹

The top five occupations with the highest demand for bilingual workers were:²²

1. Health Care and Social Assistance
2. Educational Services
3. Retail Trade
4. Manufacturing
5. Information

Entrepreneurship

1,600

immigrant entrepreneurs generated

\$43.3 million

in business income in the South Bend–Elkhart region.

Immigrant entrepreneurs self-identified as **33.6%** female and **66.4%** male.



Immigrants made up



of the business owners in the region in 2019 despite making up **6.9%** of the population.

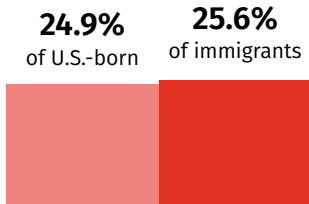
20. Jacob Vigdor, *Immigration and the Revival of American Cities: From Preserving Manufacturing Jobs to Strengthening the Housing Market* (New York, NY: Americas Society/Council of the Americas and New American Economy, 2013), <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/revival-of-american-cities.pdf>.

21. Data is obtained from Lightcast for the time period between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019.

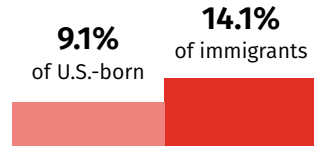
22. Data is obtained from Lightcast for the time period between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019.

Education

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



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



of K-12 students in the region were immigrants in 2019.



of K-12 students in the region were immigrants or the children of immigrants in 2019.²³

SPOTLIGHT

University Population

In fall 2021,

1,162

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

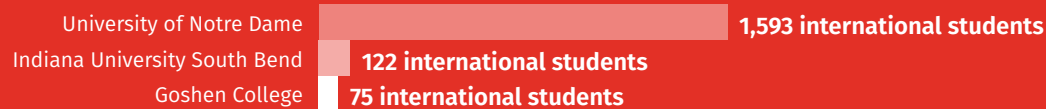
\$106.6M

was spent by international students in the 2021-2022 academic year in the region.²⁴

166

international students graduated with STEM degrees from colleges and universities in the region in the 2021-2022 academic year.

The universities with the largest international student populations were:



23. Children of immigrants includes both U.S.-born and immigrants who are under the age of 18 with at least one immigrant parent.

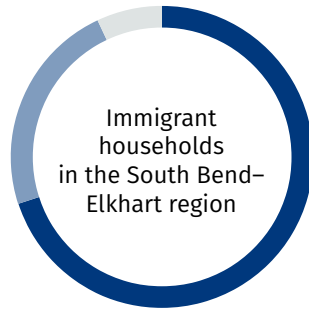
24. Economic data is derived from the International Student Economic Value Tool maintained by NAFFSA: An Association of International Educators.

Housing

In 2019, **59.1%** of immigrant households in the South Bend–Elkhart region owned their own homes, compared with **70.0%** of U.S.-born households.



Immigrant U.S.-born



- Lived in houses **10,300 households, or 69.6%**
- Lived in apartments **3,400, or 23.0%**
- Other **1,100, or 7.4%**

Total property value of immigrant households:

\$1.4B



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

\$50.8M

74.2% of immigrant households in the region had access to broadband connection in their place of residence as compared with **80.6%** of U.S.-born households in 2019.²⁵



Immigrant U.S.-born

The average household size for immigrants in the region was **3.2** compared to **2.4** for U.S.-born residents.

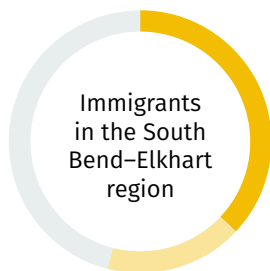


Immigrant households

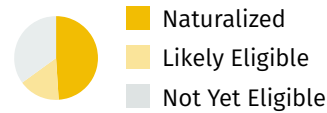


U.S.-born households

Naturalization²⁶

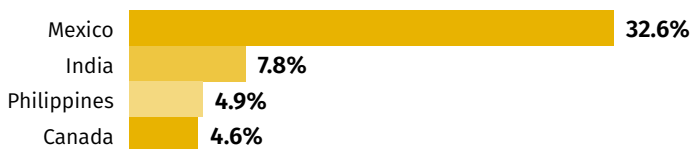


- 36.8%** Naturalized Citizens (13,200)
- 17.2%** Likely Eligible to Naturalize²⁷ (6,200)
- 46.0%** Not Yet Eligible to Naturalize (16,600)



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

The top countries of origin for naturalized citizens in the region were:



25. 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.

26. Naturalization is the process through which one can become a U.S. citizen, dependent on certain eligibility requirements. Learn more here: <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/how-united-states-immigration-system-works>.

27. 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.

SPOTLIGHT ON

Juan Cervera

Mexican Immigrant Builds Business in Indiana

Juan Cervera spent his childhood farming corn, beans, and tomatillos with his father, but he wanted more. So at 15, he and his brothers migrated from Guanajuato, Mexico, to Chicago, Illinois. “I came for the American dream,” he recalls. “And to have economic opportunities.”

Over the next 10 years, Juan worked in candy factories, in construction and as a mechanic. After marrying a fellow Mexican immigrant named Rosalina, he moved with her to South Bend. They realized their money could go further in a smaller city—and that South Bend had few businesses catering to the city’s growing Hispanic community. In 2002, they opened an ice cream shop called [Paletería y Nevería La Rosita](#). “There wasn’t much competition,” Juan reflects. “There just weren’t any places like this in South Bend.”

The business was a labor and a love. “Everything about starting a business is difficult,” Juan recalled. “The hours we invested, the time it took.” The couple was still struggling to learn English and didn’t know if the city offered resources to help immigrant entrepreneurs. So they drew from the practical business acumen they’d acquired over years of working in different industries, from construction to candy making to car repair.

La Rosita’s menu boasts 32 flavors, including traditional offerings from Mexico and Latin America, like rompopo, which is similar to eggnog, and mamey, a popular Latin American fruit. The shop also offers Mexican frozen drinks like diablitos as well as shaved ice, Mexican corn, sandwiches, and fruit bowls. Their paletas, or popsicles, are sold locally by a variety of gas stations and grocery stores. They also have a catering business.

Juan says his clientele has grown far beyond the Spanish-speaking population. “I love South Bend,” he says. “It’s tranquil, calm, and welcoming. Over the last 20 years, the city infrastructure has grown and many more businesses are opening. It’s a welcoming place for immigrants since there’s work here.”

Juan has very much achieved his American Dream. Both his kids are college graduates; one works in marketing and one is a medical engineer. His business now employs 10 people, and has hundreds of positive reviews online. “Best thing I’ve ever had in this town,” one happy customer noted on Instagram.

SPOTLIGHT ON

Dr. Rose Alyousif

Iraqi Immigrant Finds Refuge in South Bend

In 2003, Dr. Rose Alyousif fled her home in Iraq with her husband and one-year old-daughter and moved to another country in the Middle East. The couple’s mixed Sunni-Shiite marriage made the family targeted, and they feared for their lives.

Ten years later, they were resettled in South Bend with their three daughters - ages 5, 8, and 12. Life was way harder than they imagined. In the Middle East, Dr. Alyousif was a physician. But she was not licensed to practice in the United States and could not afford to complete the medical residency needed. The family had to move around. She worked in retail and her husband worked in a factory. “I felt so confused. I didn’t know how to live in America,” she recalls. When someone broke into their home, they even considered returning to Iraq.

Several religious charities stepped in to assist, providing furniture and connecting the family to other resources in South Bend. “I told them, ‘I will show you that I am deserving of your help’” Dr. Alyousif says. In fact, she was able to make an important contribution by filling a need for an Arabic medical interpreter at St Joseph Regional Medical Center- Mishawaka and Memorial Hospital of South Bend. The role also helped her meet medical colleagues, which cultivated a deeper sense of belonging. The key, she learned, was not to “isolate ourselves from the American culture.”

By 2018, Dr. Alyousif’s new friends recommended her for a job teaching Anatomy and Physiology and Medical Terminology at Ivy Tech Community College, a statewide network of community college campuses. Within a couple of years, Dr. Alyousif was able to further advance and become a professor at Indiana University South Bend, one of the regional campuses of the nationally-known Indiana University (IU) system.

“Every Ramadan, I try to put up a lot of decorations related to the holy month,” she says. “We try to keep our traditional Arabic food, but also engage with the American culture. I try to tell immigrants here, ‘If you decide to stay, you should blend with the culture of the community. When I did it, I achieved success.’”

Refugees

1,200

immigrants, or 3.4% of the immigrant population in the South Bend–Elkhart region, were likely refugees²⁸ in 2019.²⁹

65.5%

of refugees in the area were naturalized U.S. citizens.

In 2019, refugee households³⁰ in the region earned:

\$30.9 million

■ **\$3.9 million**

went to federal taxes.³¹

■ **\$3.1 million** went to state & local taxes.³²

■ **\$23.9 million** was left in spending power.

DACA-Eligible Population

1,800

immigrants in the South Bend–Elkhart region, or

5.1%

of the immigrant population, were eligible for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA).³³

In 2019, DACA-eligible households in the region earned:

\$46.1 million

■ **\$5.8 million**

went to federal taxes.³⁴

■ **\$5.0 million** went to state & local taxes.³⁵

■ **\$35.3 million** was left in spending power.

Undocumented Immigrants

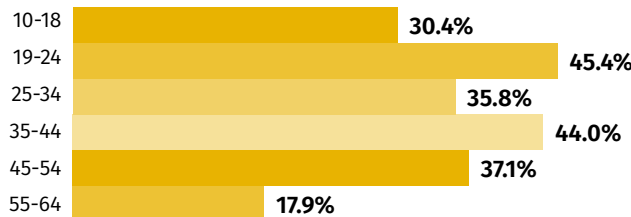
12,300

undocumented immigrants³⁶ lived in the South Bend–Elkhart region in 2019. They made up

34.2%

of the immigrant population.

Share of immigrants that are undocumented by age group:³⁷



28. Refugees are admitted to the United States based upon an inability to return to their home countries because of a “well-founded fear of persecution” due to their race, membership in a particular social group, political opinion, religion, or national origin. Learn more here: <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/how-united-states-immigration-system-works>.

29. New American Economy, From Struggle to Resilience: The Economic Impact of Refugees in America, (New York, NY: 2017), https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/NAE-Refugees_V5.pdf.

30. Refugee households refer to those with a refugee as head of the unit.

31. U.S. Congressional Budget Office, The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2019 (Washington, DC: 2021), <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/58353>.

32. 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/>.

33. Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) is a program established in 2012 which permits certain individuals who were brought to the United States while under the age of 16 and who have resided continuously in the United States since June 15, 2007, to remain in the U.S. and work lawfully for at least two years, so long as they meet certain eligibility requirements. Learn more here: <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/how-united-states-immigration-system-works>.

34. U.S. Congressional Budget Office, The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2019 (Washington, DC: 2021), <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/58353>.

35. 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/>.

36. Undocumented immigrants are identified by applying the methodological approach outlined by Harvard University economist George Borjas in his work: George Borjas, The Labor Supply of Undocumented Immigrants (Harvard University, Labour Economics, volume 46, pages 1-3, 2017), <https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/gborjas/files/le2017.pdf>. Immigrants who do not meet a set of criteria for legal status are identified as being undocumented. More on our methodology here: <https://map.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/methodology/>.

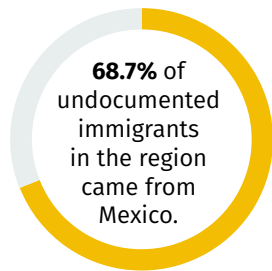
37. Based on the total number of immigrants in each age group, this is the share of those who are undocumented within each age group.

Undocumented Immigrants (continued)

Undocumented immigrants were highly active in the labor force. About



were of working age in the South Bend-Elkhart region.³⁸



In 2019, undocumented immigrant households³⁹ earned: **\$237.0 million**

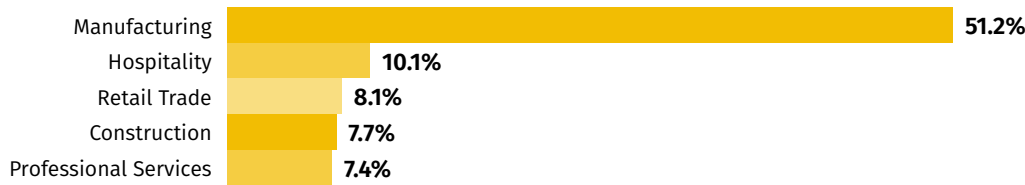
\$13.1 million

went to federal taxes.⁴⁰

\$12.2 million went to state & local taxes.⁴¹

\$211.6 million was left in spending power.

The largest number of immigrant workers tended to work in the following industries:

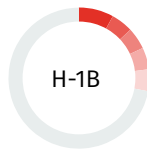


H-1B and H-2B Visas

213

H-1B visas were certified⁴² in the South Bend-Elkhart region during Fiscal Year 2022.

The top occupations among certified H-1B visa applications in the region were:

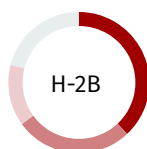


- Mechanical Engineers (**17 certifications**)
- Industrial Engineers (**11 certifications**)
- Computer and Information Research Scientists (**10 certifications**)
- Economists (**10 certifications**)
- Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers (**10 certifications**)

361

H-2B visas were certified⁴³ in the South Bend-Elkhart region during Fiscal Year 2022.

The top occupations among certified H-2B visa applications in the region were:



- Team Assemblers (**139 certifications**)
- Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers (**98 certifications**)
- Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers (**50 certifications**)

38. We define working age as 16-64 years of age.
39. Undocumented immigrant households refer to people living in a housing unit with an undocumented immigrant being the head of their unit.
40. U.S. Congressional Budget Office, *The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2019* (Washington, DC: 2021), <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/58353>.
41. 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/>.
42. 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 immigrant 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>.
43. Similar to the H-1B process, in order for an employer to obtain an H-2B certification, the DOL 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>.

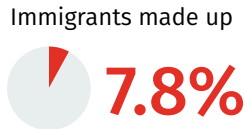
New Americans in South Bend

The Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants⁴⁴ in the City⁴⁵

Population

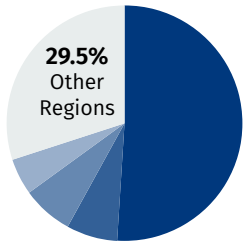
8,000

the approximate number of immigrants living in South Bend, Indiana in 2019.



of the total population in the city in 2019.

Demographics



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

- Mexico, Central America, and Caribbean (**51.4%**)
- South America (**7.1%**)
- East Asia (**6.7%**)
- Southeast Asia (**5.3%**)

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



Spending Power and Tax Contributions

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

In 2019, immigrant households⁴⁶ in South Bend earned:

\$198.1 million

■ **\$29.0 million**

went to federal taxes.⁴⁷

■ **\$19.0 million** went to state & local taxes.⁴⁸

■ **\$150.1 million** left in spending power.

This means that immigrant households held



of all spending power in the city.

In 2019, immigrant residents in the city contributed

\$686.4 million

to the city's gross domestic product (GDP), or **10.1%** of the total for the year.⁴⁹

44. 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. Additionally, due to the significant undercount of some groups with certain demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, including income and education, in the 2020 ACS, this report uses data from the American Immigration Council analysis of data from 5-year samples of the ACS from 2014 and 2019.

45. Unless otherwise specified, data comes from 5-year samples of the American Community Survey from 2014 and 2019 and figures refer to the city of South Bend, Indiana.

46. Immigrant households refer to people living in a housing unit with an immigrant being the head of their unit.

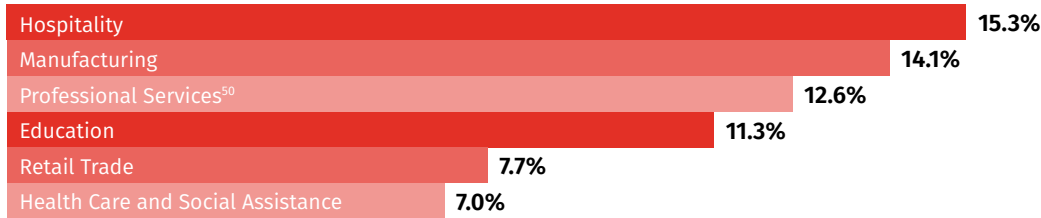
47. U.S. Congressional Budget Office, *The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2019* (Washington, DC: 2021), <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/58353>.

48. 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/>.

49. 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.

Workforce

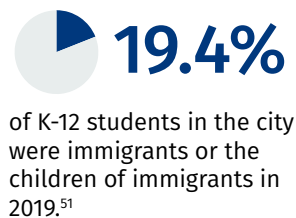
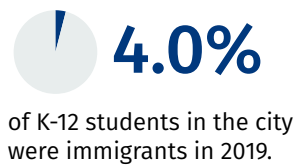
Immigrants played a critical role in several key industries in the city. The industries with the highest share of workers that are immigrants were:



The top most in-demand jobs in the city in 2019 were:

1. Registered Nurses
2. Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
3. Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products
4. Retail Salespersons
5. Hand Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers

Education



Housing

Total property value of immigrant households in South Bend in 2019:

\$231.0M

The total annual rent paid by immigrant households in South Bend in 2019 was:

\$8.7M

81.3% of immigrant households in the city had access to broadband connection in their place of residence as compared with **82.4%** of U.S.-born households in 2019.⁵²



Immigrant



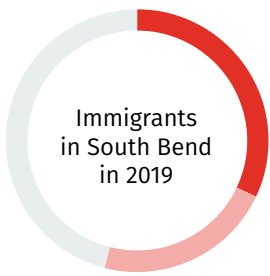
U.S.-born

50. 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.

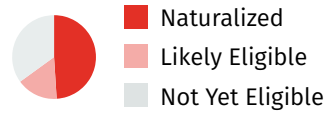
51. Children of immigrants includes both U.S.-born and immigrants who are under the age of eighteen with at least one immigrant parent.

52. 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.

Naturalization



- **32.0%** Naturalized Citizens (2,600)
- **21.8%** Likely Eligible to Naturalize⁵³ (1,700)
- **46.2%** Not Yet Eligible to Naturalize (3,700)



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 South Bend in 2019 had at least one immigrant resident.



of naturalized citizens in South Bend in 2019 came from Mexico.

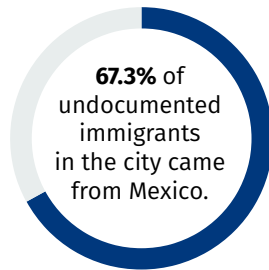
Undocumented Immigrants

2,400

undocumented immigrants lived in South Bend. They made up



of the city's immigrant population.



H-1B Visas

32

H-1B applications were filed and approved for employers in South Bend during Fiscal Year 2022.



53. 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.