

New Americans in Chicago

A Snapshot of the Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants in the City¹



State & Local



SPENDING POWER & TAX CONTRIBUTIONS

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

Amount earned by immigrant households in 2016: **\$16.9B**

\$4.4B
went to federal taxes.²

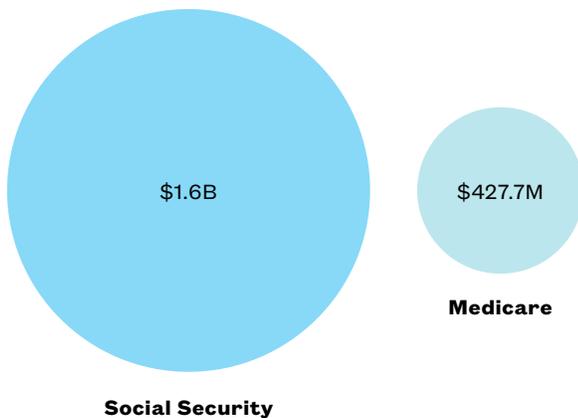
\$1.6B
went to state and local taxes.³



Leaving them with **\$10.9B** in spending power.

This means that foreign-born households held **22.4%** of all spending power in Chicago, more than their 20.7% share of the city's population.⁴

Immigrants in Chicago also support federal social programs. In 2016, they contributed **\$1.6B** to Social Security and **\$427.7M** to Medicare.



28.7% of immigrants in the city received Medicare or Medicaid, compared with **40.1%** of U.S.-born residents in 2016.



About **52.8%** of immigrants had private healthcare coverage, while **28.8%** had public healthcare coverage.



POPULATION GROWTH



Immigrant share of the population, 2016

Between 2011 and 2016, the population in the city slightly decreased by **0.2%**.

The immigrant population shrank by **2.8%**.

Total population
2,706,978 → 2,700,802



Immigrant population
573,830 → 557,904

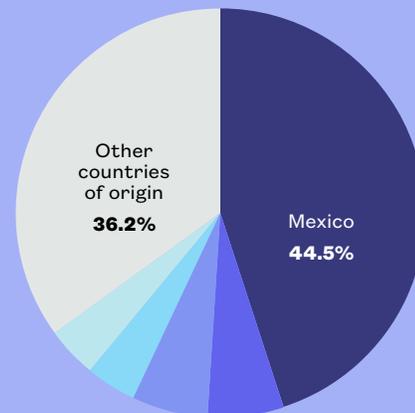


Number of immigrants living in Chicago in 2016:

557,904

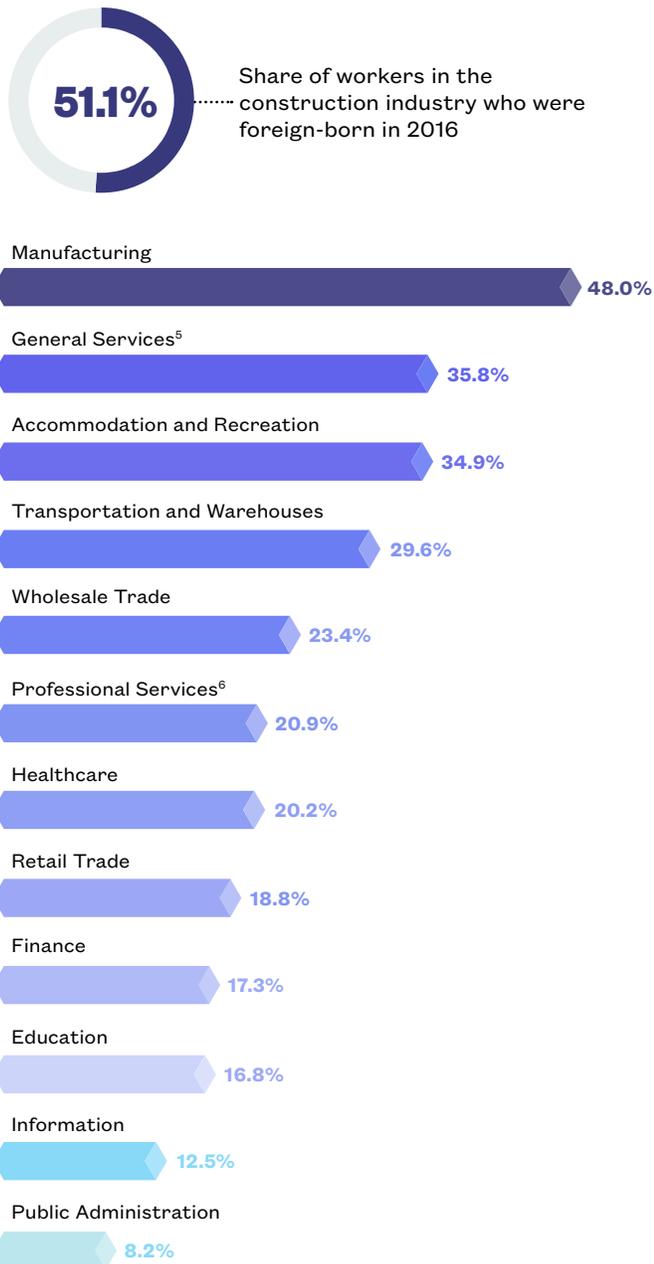
Top five countries of origin for immigrants living in the city:

- 1 Mexico 44.5%
- 2 China 6.4%
- 3 Poland 5.8%
- 4 Philippines..... 3.6%
- 5 India 3.5%



LABOR FORCE GROWTH

Immigrants play a critical role in several **key industries** in the city. This includes:



SPOTLIGHT ON

Arnav Dalmia

Co-Founder, *Cubii*

The idea Arnav Dalmia and two friends came up with at the University of Chicago didn't work out exactly as they had expected.

The three foreign-born undergraduates — two studying economics, one biology — designed an elliptical exercise machine small enough to fit under a desk. The goal was to give office workers an easy-to-use, yet effectual means for “active sitting.”

The company, called Cubii, certainly did tap into the U.S. market. Just four years after launching, the startup has 100,000 active users and enough ongoing interest to support a staff of 10 at its Chicago headquarters. But in an unexpected twist, about half of Cubii's sales go not to office workers, as intended, but to others who are confined to a chair — like those who for any multitude of health reasons are unable to get on a bicycle, move about a gym, or perhaps even walk around the block.

“We get calls from people saying Cubii has literally changed their lives,” Dalmia says. “That is the most heartwarming thing you can imagine.”

Dalmia moved to Chicago in 2009 from his home in India to attend college. There he met fellow students Shivani Jain, who is also from India, and Ryota Sekine, who is from Japan. They hold two patents on their work.

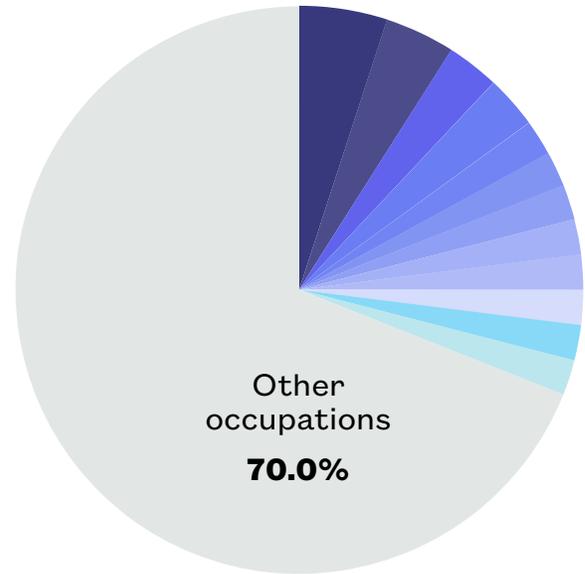
“Over time we realized that an increasing number of our users are going through some kind of medical condition, ranging from cancer rehab, physical therapy, arthritis, diabetes, or some kind of limited mobility,” says Dalmia.

The seven people he and his co-founders have hired were all born in the United States. Their median annual salary is about \$80,000. Cubii's retailers and contractors are all based stateside. Nonetheless, Dalmia sees his contribution to the U.S. in the calls and emails he receives from customers, particularly those without many options for exercise. “It brings tears to our eyes,” he says.

LABOR FORCE GROWTH CONT.

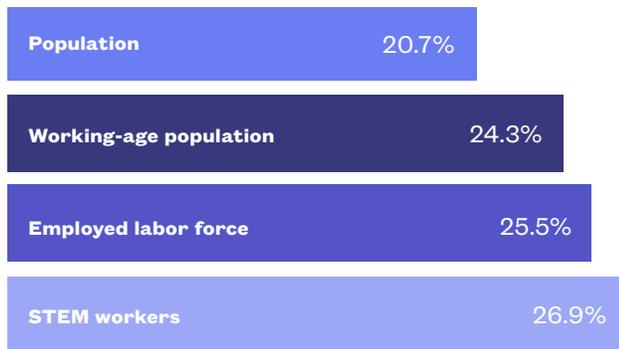
Immigrants tended to concentrate in these **occupations** in the city in 2016:

- 1 Cooks. 4.6%
- 2 Janitors and Building Cleaners . . . 4.0%
- 3 Maids and Housekeepers 3.1%
- 4 Truck Drivers 2.9%
- 5 Taxi Drivers and Chauffeurs 2.2%
- 6 Hand Movers 2.1%
- 7 Production Workers 2.0%
- 8 Miscellaneous Managers 2.0%
- 9 Waiters and Waitresses 2.0%
- 10 Registered Nurses 1.7%
- 11 Postsecondary Teachers 1.7%
- 12 Construction Laborers 1.7%



Although the foreign-born made up **20.7%** of the city's overall population, they represented **24.3%** of its working-age* population, **25.5%** of its employed labor force, and **26.9%** of its STEM** workers in 2016.

Immigrant shares of the...



* Working-age refers to people ages 16-64 years old.
 ** Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math

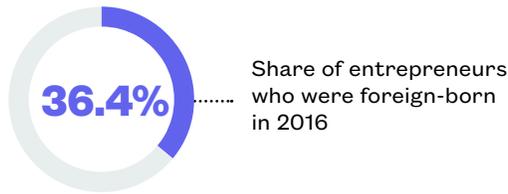
Because of the role immigrants play in the workforce helping companies keep jobs on U.S. soil, we estimate that, by 2016, immigrants living in the city had helped create or preserve

25,664

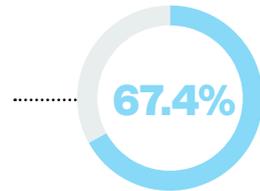
local manufacturing jobs that would have otherwise vanished or moved elsewhere.⁷

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Despite making up **20.7%** of the overall population, immigrants represented **36.4%** of the entrepreneurs in Chicago in 2016.



In Chicago, immigrants were **67.4%** more likely to be entrepreneurs than their U.S.-born counterparts.



While **6.8%** of the U.S.-born population were self-employed, **11.4%** of the foreign-born residents worked for their own businesses.



In 2012, Asian-owned businesses in the city generated...

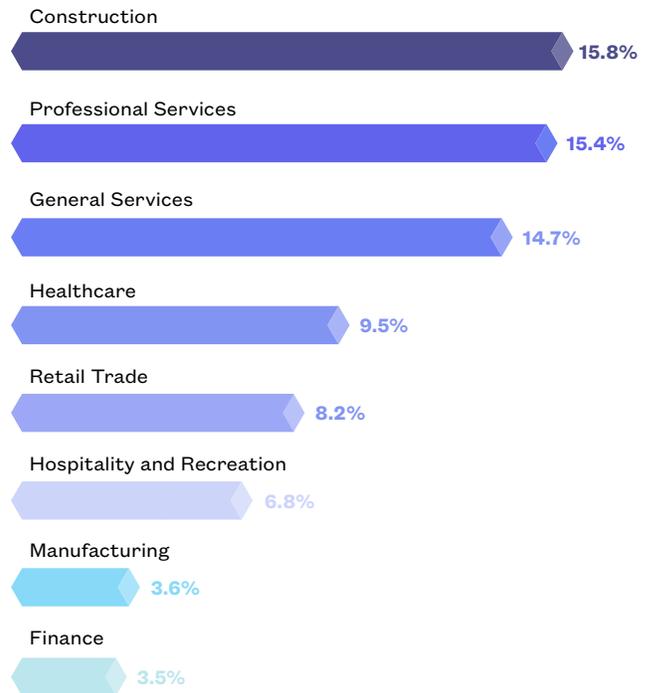
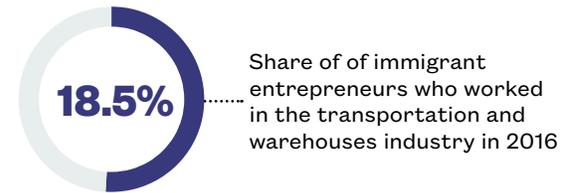
\$6.7B in sales and employed **37,844** individuals.

Hispanic-owned businesses generated...

\$6.0B in sales and employed **35,433** individuals.⁸

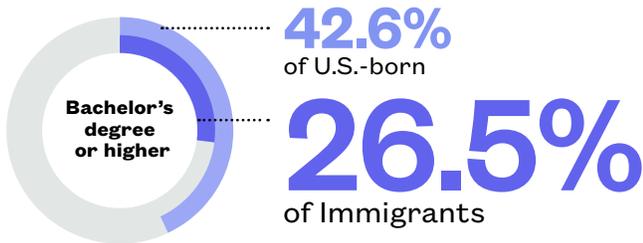
39,130 immigrant entrepreneurs generated **\$659.2M** in business income for the city.

Immigrant entrepreneurs tend to be concentrated in these **key industries**:

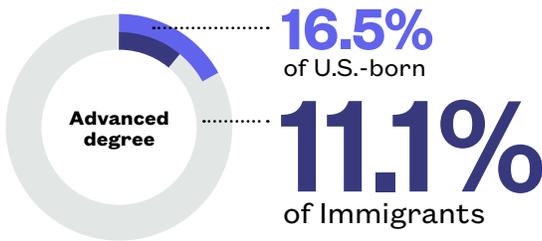


EDUCATION

Share of the Chicago population over age 25 with a **bachelor's degree or higher** in 2016:



Share of the Chicago population over age 25 with an **advanced degree** in 2016:



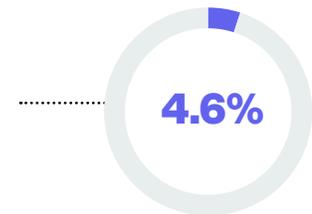
17,473

students who were enrolled in colleges and universities in the city during the fall of 2015 were temporary residents.⁹ International students supported...

11,202
local jobs and spent...

\$790.0M
in the 2016-2017 academic year.¹⁰

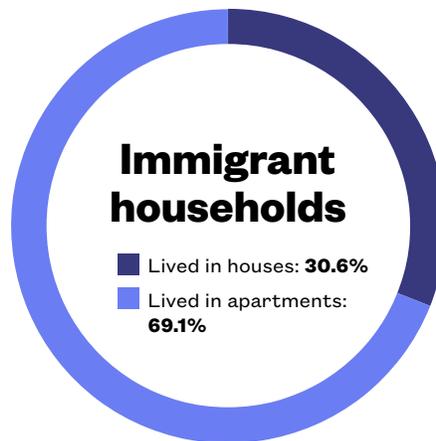
Share of Chicago public school students under age 18 and who were born outside the U.S.



HOUSING WEALTH

In 2016, **44.9%** of immigrant households in Chicago owned their own homes, compared to **40.0%** of the U.S.-born.

52.7% of immigrant households were renters.



The total property value of immigrant households was

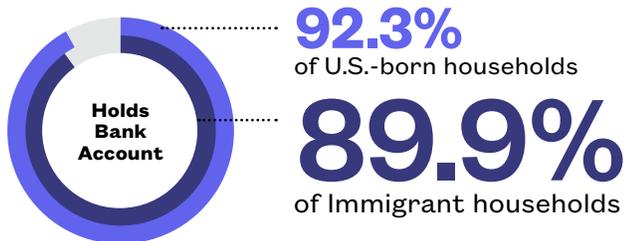
\$31.9B.

Their total annual rent was

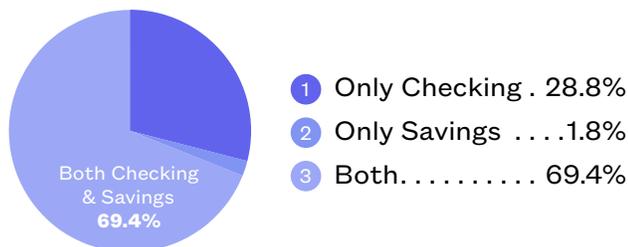
\$1.5B.

BANKING IN THE CHICAGO METRO AREA¹¹

Share of households in the Chicago metro area that **had bank accounts** in 2015¹²...



Of the immigrant households with bank accounts...

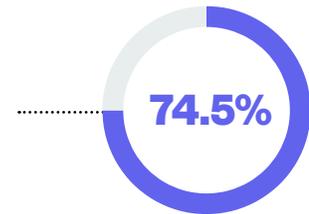


The top three ways for immigrant households in the metro area to pay bills:

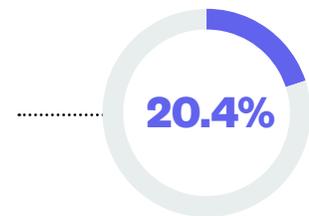


Income of immigrant households in the metro area remains relatively stable.

In 2015, **74.5%** of immigrant households reported their income remained roughly the same each month.



20.4% reported some small variation in their monthly income.



66.6% of immigrant households in the metro area had access to credit cards in 2015, compared with **78.0%** of U.S.-born households.

16.4% of immigrant households applied for a bank loan or line of credit in 2015, compared with **14.2%** of U.S.-born households in the metro area.

NATURALIZATION

44.6%
Naturalized

Share of immigrants who were naturalized citizens in 2016. This constitutes **248,678** immigrants.

26.4%
Potentially Eligible

Share among the 309,226 non-citizens who were potentially eligible for naturalization. This constitutes **81,614** immigrants.

SPOTLIGHT ON

Nasir Zakaria

Founder, *Rohingya Cultural Center*

The first time the military picked up Nasir Zakaria he was walking to the bazaar to get food for his father. Aged 14, he was one of two dozen Rohingya boys plucked for a day of slave labor in another routine act of persecution in Myanmar against the ethnic minority.

The third time Zakaria was taken, he was forced at gunpoint to carry military supplies into the jungle. This time, the soldiers gave him water. "It basically gets to a point where you are hoping so much that you can get away," he says, "even if you get away and you die at their hands."

Zakaria escaped soon after. Unable to return home, for fear of capture, he fled alone to Bangladesh, then to Malaysia, where he worked construction, but as an "illegal" still had to hide. For five years, until he received his refugee card, he slept under a plastic sheet in the jungle.

"Refugee life is like a soccer ball," he says. "Always moving." Twenty-three years after leaving his family, at age 38, Zakaria was admitted to the United States with his wife, daughter, and grandfather.

"I'm so happy," he says. "After one month I work but I didn't get chance to learn English, get education."

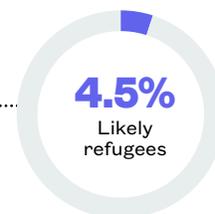
In Myanmar, the Rohingya have been stripped of citizenship and denied access to school, travel, certain jobs, or court. About 1,400 Rohingya refugees have resettled in Chicago since 2012, and Zakaria wants to ensure they have the opportunity to learn.

So in 2016, while washing dishes on the graveyard shift at an Illinois casino, a 2-hour commute each way, Zakaria secured space and funding from the Zakat Foundation to open the Rohingya Cultural Center, on Chicago's north side. Volunteers help provide English classes, job training, children's tutoring, and more. For many in this particularly vulnerable population, it marks their first such opportunity.

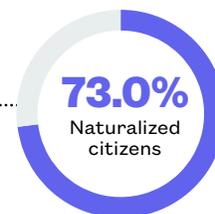
"I'm so happy the people of Chicago come to me, knock on the door, say 'How can we help you?'" Zakaria says. "I tell our people: This is so important to us. We are free. We are free in the United States."

REFUGEES

In 2016, **25,000** immigrants, or **4.5%** of the foreign-born population, were likely refugees.¹³



About **73.0%** of these refugees were naturalized citizens.



Median annual income of refugees in Chicago, 2016:

\$59,000



About **25.4%** of these refugees held a bachelor's degree or higher.



While **8.8%** held an advanced degree.

Refugees tended to concentrate in these occupations in the city in 2016:

Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction	8.9%
General Services	2.6%
Transportation and Warehouses	2.1%
Manufacturing	2.1%
Utilities	1.5%

UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS

Number of undocumented immigrants in Chicago in 2016:

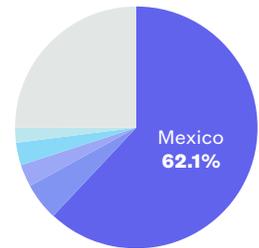
169,915

Share of immigrants who were undocumented:

30.5%

Top countries of origin for the undocumented immigrants in the city:

- 1 Mexico 62.1%
- 2 China 4.8%
- 3 Poland 3.1%
- 4 India 2.8%
- 5 Guatemala 2.4%



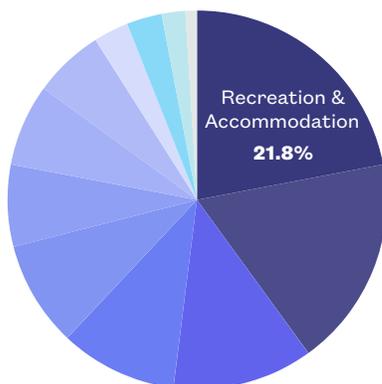
Amount earned by undocumented immigrant households in 2016: **\$3.7B**

\$476.8M
went to federal taxes.¹⁴

\$189.1M
went to state and local taxes.¹⁵

Leaving them with **\$3.1B** in spending power.

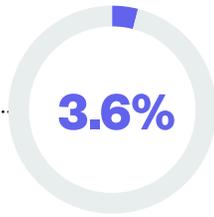
Undocumented immigrants tended to concentrate in these **key industries** in 2016:



- 1 Recreation and Accommodation. .21.8%
- 2 Manufacturing 18.4%
- 3 Professional Services 11.7%
- 4 Construction 10.6%
- 5 General Services 9.1%
- 6 Transportation and Warehouses . . 7.5%
- 7 Retail Trade 7.0%
- 8 Healthcare 6.2%
- 9 Wholesale Trade 2.9%
- 10 Finance 2.7%
- 11 Education Services. 1.7%

DACA-ELIGIBLE POPULATION¹⁶

In 2015, **19,378** DACA-eligible individuals lived in the city of Chicago, making up **3.6%** of the immigrant population.

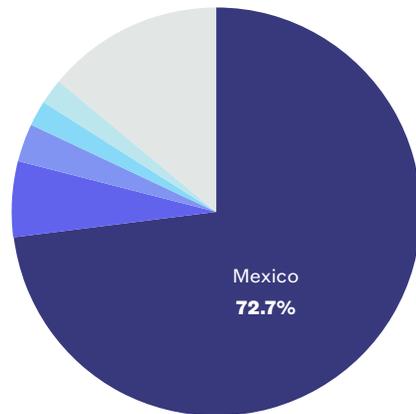


Number of DACA-eligible individuals that lived in the city of Chicago, in 2015:

19,378

Top five countries of origin for DACA-eligible immigrants were:

- 1 Mexico 72.7%
- 2 Guatemala..... 5.6%
- 3 Poland 3.1%
- 4 Ecuador 2.4%
- 5 China 1.7%



Amount earned by DACA-eligible population in 2016: **\$302.7M**

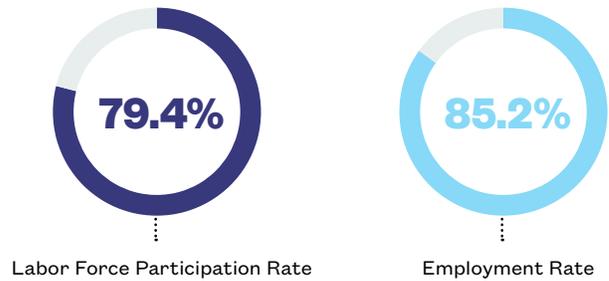
\$25.1M
went to federal taxes.¹⁷

\$35.9M
went to state and local taxes.¹⁸

Leaving them with **\$241.6M** in spending power.

DACA-ELIGIBLE POPULATION CONT.

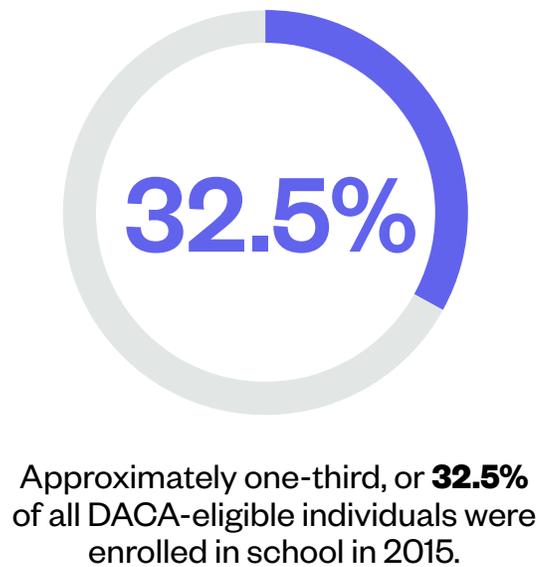
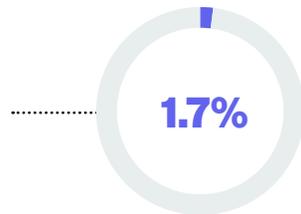
DACA-eligible immigrants have a high labor force participation rate, with more than **79.4%** active in the city’s labor force. They also have an employment rate of **85.2%**. Approximately **3.4%** of all DACA-eligible workers are self-employed.



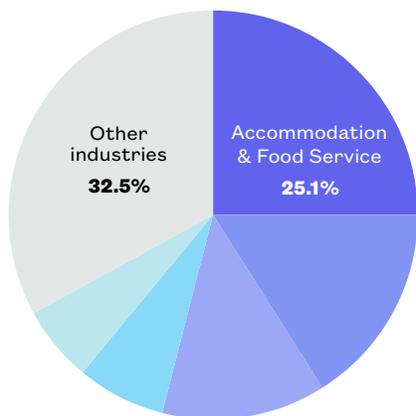
Share of DACA-eligible immigrants in Chicago over age 25 with a **bachelor’s degree or higher** in 2015:



Share of DACA-eligible immigrants in Chicago over age 25 with an **advanced degree** in 2015:



DACA-eligible immigrants play a critical role in **key industries** in the region:



- 1 Accommodation and Food Service25.1%
- 2 Manufacturing15.8%
- 3 Retail Trade13.4%
- 4 Construction 6.9%
- 5 Healthcare and Social Services 6.3%

For more city, district, and state-level data, visit **MapTheImpact.org** and explore our interactive map.



- 1 Unless otherwise specified, data comes from 1-year samples of the American Community Survey from 2011 and 2016 and figures refer to the City of Chicago.
- 2 U.S. Congressional Budget Office. 2016. "The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2013."
- 3 Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. 2015. "Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States."
- 4 Estimates are based on federal tax rates from the U.S. Congressional Budget Office, and state and local tax rates from the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy.
- 5 General services include personal services (e.g. laundry services, barber shops, and repair and maintenance), religious organizations, social services, and labor unions.
- 6 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.
- 7 Vigdor, Jacob. 2013. "Immigration and the Revival of American Cities: From Preserving Manufacturing Jobs to Strengthening the Housing Market." New American Economy.
- 8 2012 Survey of Business Owners, U.S. Census Bureau
- 9 Data on total student enrollment in the city 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.
- 11 2015 Current Population Survey, U.S. Census Bureau
- 12 We define the Chicago metro area using the Office of Management and Budget definition of the Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL-IN-WI Metropolitan Statistical Area.
- 13 New American Economy. 2017. "From Struggle to Resilience: The Economic Impact of Refugees in America,"
- 14 U.S. Congressional Budget Office. 2016.
- 15 Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. 2015.
- 16 All data for this section comes from NAE analysis of a pooled microdata sample from the 2013-2015 1-year American Community Surveys. A full methodology of our DACA-eligible estimates can be found here: <http://research.newamericaneconomy.org/report/examining-the-contributions-of-the-daca-eligible-population-in-key-states/>
- 17 U.S. Congressional Budget Office. 2016.
- 18 Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. 2015.