

# New Americans in Houston

A Snapshot of the Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants in the Metro Area<sup>1</sup>

## POPULATION

**6.8M**

Total population in 2016

**1.6M**

Immigrant population



Immigrant share of the population

## Population growth

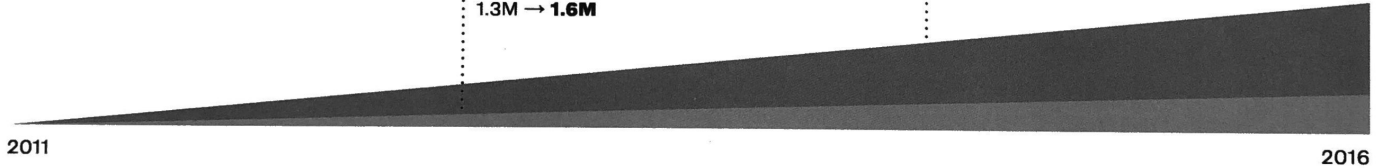
2011-2016

**16.9%**

Immigrant population growth:  
1.3M → **1.6M**

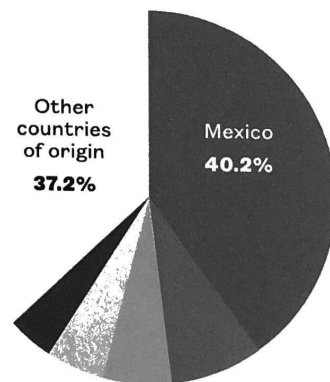
**11.7%**

Total population growth:  
6.1M → **6.8M**



Share of total population growth in Houston attributed to immigrants

## Top five countries of origin:



- ① Mexico ..... 40.2%
- ② El Salvador ..... 7.6%
- ③ Vietnam ..... 5.9%
- ④ India ..... 5.5%
- ⑤ Honduras ..... 3.6%

## TAX CONTRIBUTIONS & SPENDING POWER

Foreign-born residents in the metro area hold significant **economic power**. In 2016, immigrant households in Houston earned **\$50.9B**.

**\$9.2B** went to federal taxes.<sup>2</sup>

Immigrant households held **\$38.2B** in spending power in 2016.

**\$3.5B** went to state and local taxes.<sup>3</sup>

Total GDP in the Houston metro area was **\$478.6B** in 2016.

**\$124.7B** of that was contributed by foreign-born residents.

This means Houston immigrants contributed 26.1% of the metro area's GDP.<sup>4</sup>

**26.1%**

## Foreign-born residents also support federal social programs.

In 2016, immigrants in the Houston metro area contributed **\$5B** to Social Security and **\$1.4B** to Medicare.

**17.4%** of immigrants in the area received Medicare or Medicaid, compared with **29.4%** of U.S.-born residents in 2016.

Immigrants

17.4%

U.S.-born

29.4%

About **51%** of immigrants had private healthcare coverage, while **17.5%** had public healthcare coverage.<sup>5</sup>

Private

51.0%

Public

17.5%

## LABOR FORCE

Although the foreign-born made up **23.3%** of the metro area's overall population, they represented **30%** of its working-age\* population, **30.6%** of its employed labor force, and **33.9%** of its STEM\*\* workers in 2016.

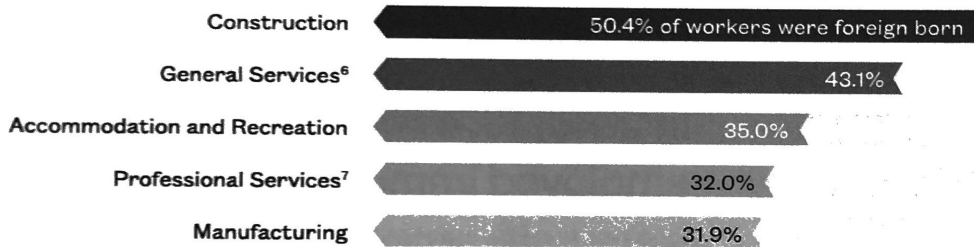
\* Working-age refers to people ages 16-64 years old.

\*\* Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.

### Immigrant shares of the...

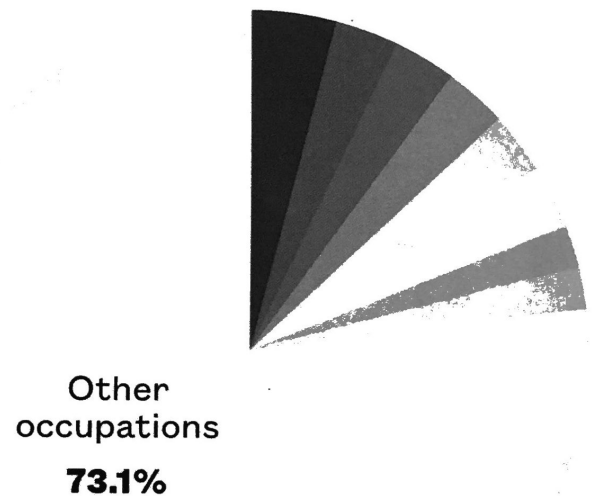
Population	23.3%
Working-age population	30.0%
Employed labor force	30.6%
STEM workers	33.9%

**Immigrants played a critical role in several key industries in the metro area. This includes:**



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

- 1 Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners . . . 3.7%
- 2 Construction Laborers . . . . . 3.4%
- 3 Cooks . . . . . 3.0%
- 4 Janitors & Building Cleaners . . . . . 2.8%
- 5 Truck Drivers . . . . . 2.7%
- 6 Carpenters . . . . . 2.6%
- 7 Ground Maintenance Workers . . . 2.4%
- 8 Registered Nurses . . . . . 2.2%
- 9 Cashiers . . . . . 2.2%
- 10 Miscellaneous Managers<sup>8</sup> . . . . . 1.9%



## LABOR FORCE CONT.

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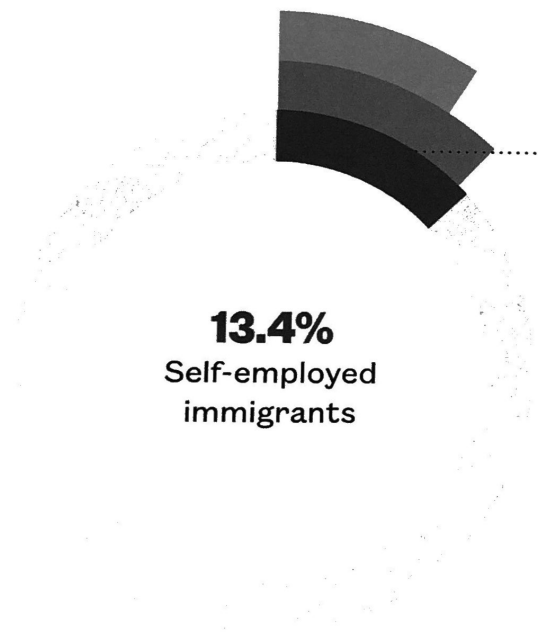
Immigrants fill critical gaps in the workforce, allowing companies to keep jobs on U.S. soil. By 2016, immigrants had helped **create or preserve**

# 72,576 local manufacturing jobs

that would have otherwise vanished or moved elsewhere.<sup>9</sup>

## ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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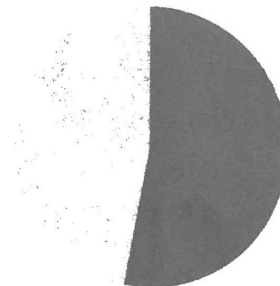
In 2016, **13.4%**, or **131,535**, of employed immigrants in Houston were **self-employed**.

Compared to...

- **11.9%** Immigrant national average
- **8.8%** U.S.-born average

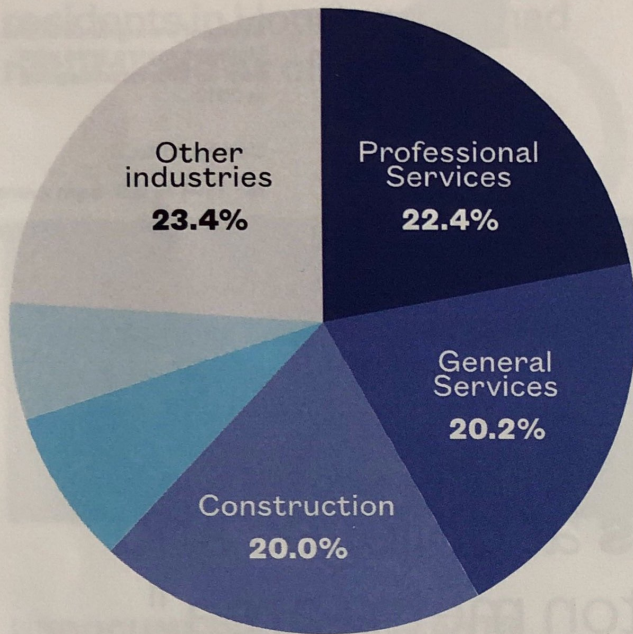
That year, they generated **\$3.2B** in business income.

Immigrants in the area were **53.2%** more likely to be entrepreneurs than their U.S.-born counterparts.





**Immigrant entrepreneurs tend to own businesses in these key industries in the metro area:**



- 1 Professional Services ..... 22.4%
- 2 General Services ..... 20.2%
- 3 Construction ..... 20.0%
- 4 Healthcare ..... 7.6%
- 5 Retail Trade ..... 6.4%

**In 2012...**

African American-owned businesses in the metro area generated

**\$4.4B**  
in sales and paid  
**38,862**  
employees.



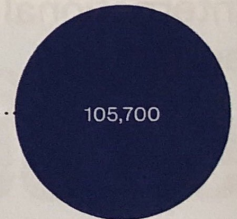
Asian-owned businesses generated

**\$26.9B**  
in sales and paid  
**122,315**  
employees.

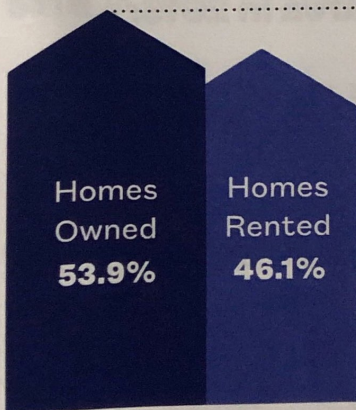


Hispanic-owned businesses generated

**\$22.7B**  
in sales and paid  
**105,700**  
employees.<sup>10</sup>



**HOUSING**



In 2016, **53.9%** of immigrant households owned their homes in the metro area. That's **359,440** homes.

**46.1%** of immigrant households were renters.

**59.2%** of immigrant households lived in **houses**, while **33.6%** lived in **apartments**.

**\$78.4B**

Total property value

**\$3.1B**

Total Annual Rent

## EDUCATION

### BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER

Among immigrants 25 years and older

27.8%

Share of immigrants in the Houston metro area who held a bachelor's degree or higher in 2016

Compared to...

■ 34% U.S.-born average

■ 30% National average

### ADVANCED DEGREE

Among immigrants 25 years and older

12.5%

Share of immigrants in the Houston metro area who held an advanced degree in 2016

Compared to...

■ 11.4% U.S.-born average

■ 12.8% National average

In fall 2015, there were **20,063 international students** at colleges and universities in the Houston metro area.<sup>11</sup>

International students supported

**5,255**

local jobs...

And spent

**\$509.9M**

in the 2016-17 academic year.<sup>12</sup>

### Students under 18 who attended public schools in the area in 2016:

6.8% were immigrants

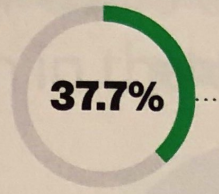
43.4% were either immigrants or children of immigrants



## NATURALIZATION

# 594,921

Number of foreign-born residents in Houston who had naturalized as of 2016

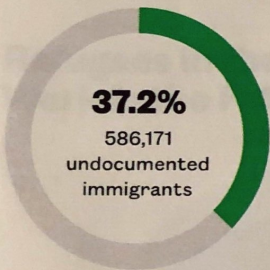


Share of foreign-born residents who had naturalized as of 2016

Among the **982,813** immigrants who were not citizens...

**22.2%**, or **217,815**, were likely eligible to naturalize.

## UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS



Share of immigrant population in Houston metro area that was undocumented in 2016

**6.1%**, or **96,669**, undocumented immigrants were likely to be **DACA-eligible**.

Undocumented immigrant households in Houston earned **\$11B** in total income in 2016.

**\$742.0M** went to federal taxes.<sup>13</sup>

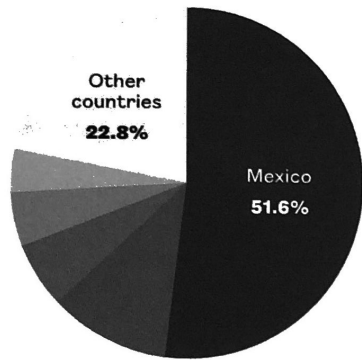
This left them with **\$9.8B** in spending power.<sup>14</sup>

**\$448.4M** went to state and local taxes.<sup>15 16</sup>

**UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS CONT.**

**UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS**

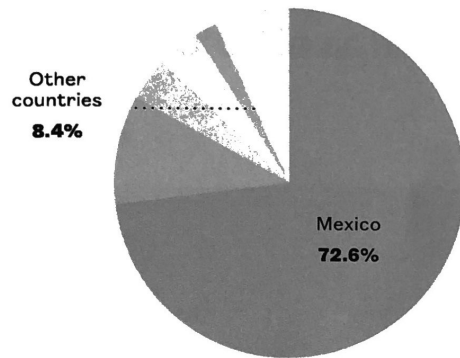
**Top Countries of Origin:**



- 1 Mexico .....51.6%
- 2 El Salvador ..... 11.1%
- 3 Honduras ..... 5.9%
- 4 Guatemala ..... 4.9%
- 5 India .....3.7%

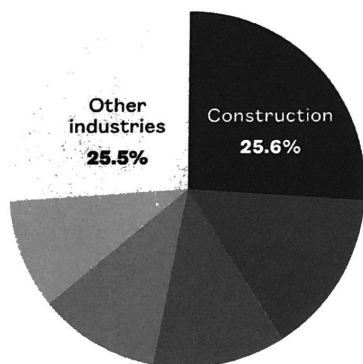
**DACA-ELIGIBLE IMMIGRANTS**

**Top Countries of Origin:**



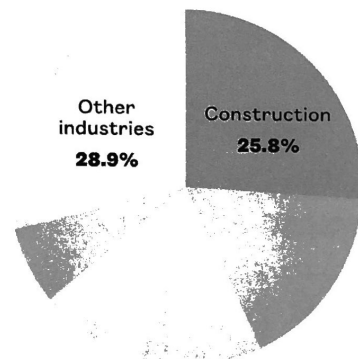
- 1 Mexico ..... 72.6%
- 2 El Salvador .....9.5%
- 3 Honduras ..... 4.1%
- 4 Guatemala ..... 3.9%
- 5 India .....1.5%

**Concentrated in the Following Industries:**



- 1 Construction ..... 25.6%
- 2 Accommodation & Recreation...15.4%
- 3 Professional Services .....12.2%
- 4 General Services .....10.9%
- 5 Retail Trade .....10.4%

**Concentrated in the Following Industries:**



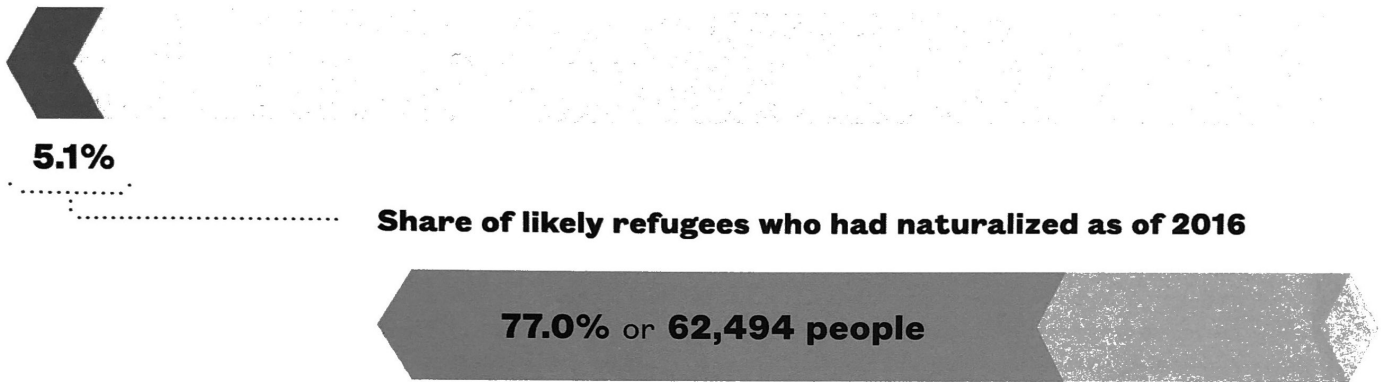
- 1 Construction ..... 25.8%
- 2 Accommodation & Recreation...17.3%
- 3 Professional Services .....11.0%
- 4 Retail Trade ..... 10.0%
- 5 General Services .....7.0%



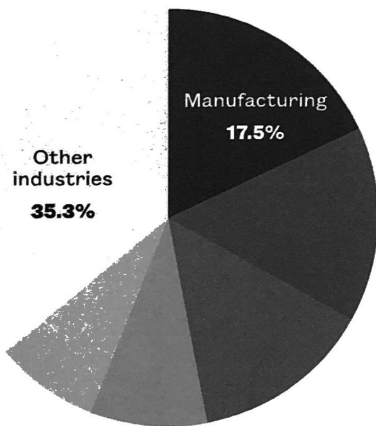
**REFUGEES**

In 2016, **81,131 people**, or **5.1%** of the immigrant population in the area, were likely refugees.<sup>17</sup>

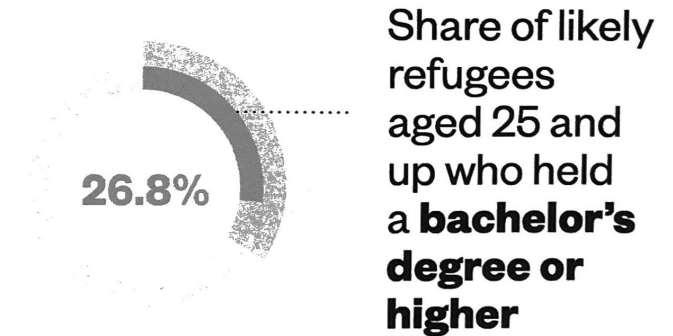
**Share of immigrants in Houston who were likely refugees**



**Refugees in the Metro Area Work in the Following Industries:**



**Education in the Refugee Community:**



Compare to...

- 34.0%** U.S.-born average
- 30.0%** National average

- 1 Manufacturing.....17.5%
- 2 Healthcare.....15.0%
- 3 General Services.....14.4%
- 4 Retail Trade.....9.4%
- 5 Professional Services.....8.4%

For more city, district, and state-level data, visit [MapTheImpact.org](http://MapTheImpact.org) and explore our interactive map.

New  
American  
Economy

- 1 Unless otherwise specified, data are estimated from the 1-year sample of the American Community Survey from 2016 and figures refer to the Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, Texas, Metropolitan Statistical Area.
- 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 These figures derive from our calculations based on immigrants' share of wage income and self-employment income in the 1-year ACS sample from 2016 and GDP statistics from the Bureau of Economic Analysis.
- 5 The percentage of immigrants who had private healthcare coverage includes immigrants who had only private healthcare coverage and those who had both private and public healthcare coverage; likewise, for the percentage of immigrants who had public healthcare coverage.
- 6 General services include personal services (e.g. laundry services, barber shops, and repair and maintenance), religious organizations, social services, and labor unions.
- 7 Professional services: Most of these industries include professions that require a degree or a license, such as legal services, accounting, scientific research, consulting services, etc.
- 8 Miscellaneous managers include funeral service managers and postmasters and mail superintendents.
- 9 Vigdor, Jacob. 2013. "Immigration and the Revival of American Cities: From Preserving Manufacturing Jobs to Strengthening the Housing Market." New American Economy.
- 10 2012 Survey of Business Owners, U.S. Census Bureau.
- 11 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, National Center for Educational Statistics
- 12 Economic data is derived from the International Student Economic Value Tool maintained by NAFSA, the association of international educators.
- 13 U.S. Congressional Budget Office. 2016. "The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2013."
- 14 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.
- 15 Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. 2015. "Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States."
- 16 Gee, Lisa Christensen, Matthew Gardener, and Meg Wiehe, 2016. "Undocumented Immigrants' State and Local Tax Contributions," The Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy.
- 17 New American Economy. 2017. "From Struggle to Resilience: The Economic Impact of Refugees in America."