

Massachusetts Immigrants by the Numbers: Demographic Characteristics and Economic Footprint

Fast Facts from a study by Alan Clayton-Matthew, PhD & Paul Watanabe, PhD with Faye Karp, MS
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There were 912,310 immigrants in Massachusetts in 2007, comprising 14.1% of the state's population. **Immigrants are stabilizing Massachusetts' population numbers and by extension, substantial representation in Congress and access to needed federal funds.**

In 2007, **47.7% of the Massachusetts foreign-born residents were naturalized citizens and two-thirds of established immigrants (in the United States 10 or more years) were citizens.**

Over one-half of Boston residents are immigrants. Chelsea has the highest concentration of immigrants, followed, in order, by Malden, Lawrence, Everett, Lynn and Cambridge.

Immigrants are much more likely to be between **25 and 44 years of age than natives. This is important to the Massachusetts labor force because these workers will be here to fill jobs that baby boomers will soon vacate.**

Few differences were found between established Massachusetts immigrants and the native-born along key demographic and economic characteristics. In 2005, **established immigrants earned average salaries of \$47,800, or only 1.3% less than natives.**

Immigrants comprised 16.4% of the state income tax filers in 2005, higher than their share of population (14.1%) and showing a significant propensity to pay income taxes.

They paid \$1.2 billion in Massachusetts state income taxes in 2005.

Massachusetts' immigrant-headed households **paid \$1.06 billion in local property taxes in 2007.**

Immigrants paid \$346 million in sales and excise taxes in 2006 or 14.5 percent of the total.

Immigrants were 14.5% of consumer spending for a total of \$19.5 billion in 2006.

Low rates of incarceration and institutionalization **among immigrants balance costs associated with educating immigrant children.**

Immigrants' reliance on public assistance income is about the same as for natives.

Immigrants bring tremendous education and training. **Among highly educated recent immigrants in Massachusetts, 24% hold a master's degree or higher compared to 16% of natives and hold 50.3% of all doctorates in the state.**

These highly educated **immigrants bring technology and science-based skills that enhance the biotechnology, technology, health care and educational sectors that are vital to the Massachusetts' economy and keep the Commonwealth competitive in the world economy.**

There are many challenges for **recent, less well-educated immigrants as they struggle to adapt to a new language, culture and economy. They earn 29.8% less in salary than natives, are more likely to have limited English language skills. Eighteen percent of recent immigrants were living below the poverty line in 2007 versus 11% of natives.**