



IMMIGRATION POLICY CENTER

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PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Tim Vettel
202-742-5608 (ofc), 202-281-0780 (cell)
tvettel@ailf.org

Focus on Florida: "Sunshine State's" Latinos and Foreign-Born Important to the Economy and Electorate

Survey of the Studies: Immigrants' Impact at the State and Local Level

Immigration and its impact at the local level is a hot issue, especially during this presidential election year. Both the immigration debate and the immigrant vote will play a key role in the upcoming caucus in Florida -a state with both recent arrivals and established foreign born communities where both play an important role in the state's economy and make up an increasing percentage of the electorate. See below for the fast facts on the "Sunshine State" and its newest residents. The Immigration Policy Center has also pulled together a [survey of local- and state-level studies](#) that examine the costs and contributions of immigrants on America's communities.

Latino Population has Growing Clout: Florida has become a key battleground state in recent years. Because small margins make a big difference, the growing Latino population could swing the upcoming election. According to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), the Latino population in Florida is on the rise; immigrants – be they undocumented, legal permanent residents, or U.S. citizens – comprise 20 percent of the state's population (up from 12 percent in 1990).

Immigrants Naturalizing: Overall 45 percent of immigrants are naturalized citizens, and the number of naturalized citizens increased 20.1 percent from 2000 to 2005. According to [NALEO](#), the 924,000 registered Latino voters in Florida make up 11.2 percent of the state electorate.

The Impact of Immigrants is Significant and Positive: Immigrants contribute enormously to the economy of Florida, not to mention the United States as a whole. A [2007 study](#) by Florida International University found that in 2005, immigrants made up 23 percent of Florida's labor force, compared with 19 percent in 2000, an increase of 4 percent or nearly 512,000 workers. In 2005 immigrants represented 26 percent of all self-employed workers, compared with 23 percent of the total Florida labor force. From 2000 to 2005 the percent of self-employed who are immigrants grew by 18 percent.

From 2002 to 2004, Florida's immigrant workers paid an estimated annual average of \$10.49 billion in federal taxes and \$4.5 billion in state and local taxes; during the same time period, immigrants in Florida contributed an annual average of \$1.3 billion in property taxes and \$3.2 billion in sales taxes. Florida ranks third in the nation in Hispanic buying power with \$90.8 billion. According to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), there are 41,258 Asian-owned businesses and 266,688 Hispanic-owned businesses in Florida.

A DIVISION OF THE AMERICAN IMMIGRATION LAW FOUNDATION

918 F STREET, NW, 6TH FLOOR • WASHINGTON, DC 20004 • TEL: (202) 742-5600 • FAX: (202) 742-5619

www.immigrationpolicy.org