

New Americans in the Sunshine State

The Political and Economic Power of Immigrants, Latinos, and Asians in Florida.

Immigrants and their children are a large and growing share of Florida's electorate.

- **The foreign-born** share of Florida's population rose from 12.9% in [1990](#) [1], to 16.7% in [2000](#) [1], to 18.5% in [2008](#) [2], according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Florida was home to 3,391,511 immigrants in [2008](#) [2], which is nearly the total population of [Los Angeles, California](#) [3].
- **47.1% of immigrants (or 1,598,880 people) in Florida were naturalized U.S. citizens** in [2008](#) [2] (up from 42.9% in [1990](#) [1])—meaning that they are eligible to vote.
- **14% (or 1,099,736) of registered voters** in Florida were “New Americans”—naturalized citizens or the U.S.-born children of immigrants who were raised during the current era of immigration from Latin America and Asia which began in 1965—according to an analysis of 2006 Census Bureau data by [Rob Paral & Associates](#) [4].

1-in-5 Floridians are Latino—and they vote.

- The **Latino share of Florida's population** grew from 12.2% in [1990](#) [5], to 16.8% in [2000](#) [5], to 21.0% (or 3,848,951 people) in [2008](#) [2]. The **Asian share of the population** grew from 1.2% in [1990](#) [6], to 1.7% in [2000](#) [6], to 2.3% (or 421,552 people) in [2008](#) [2], according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- **Latinos accounted for 15.4%** (or 1,227,000) of Florida voters in the 2008 elections, and **Asians 1.1%** (or 84,000), according to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#) [7]. The number of Latino and Asian voters far exceeded the margin of victory ([236,450 votes](#) [8]) by which Barack Obama defeated John McCain in Florida.
- In Florida, **more than four-in-five (or 84% of) children in immigrant families were U.S. citizens** in [2007](#) [9], according to the Center for Social and Demographic Analysis at the University of Albany.

Immigrant workers and taxpayers are integral to Florida's economy.

- Florida's immigrant workers contribute an estimated \$20 billion to the state in taxes each year, according to a 2007 study by [Florida International University](#) [10]:
 - \$10.5 billion in federal taxes
 - \$4.5 billion in state and local taxes
 - \$1.3 billion in property taxes
 - \$3.2 billion in sales taxes.

- Immigrants comprised **23.2% of the state's workforce** in [2008](#) [2] (or 2,121,988 workers), according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- Unauthorized immigrants comprised **8.2% of the state's workforce** (or 750,000 workers) in [2008](#) [11], according to a report by the Pew Hispanic Center.
- Immigrants accounted for **38% of total economic output in the Miami metropolitan area** and **13% of total economic output in the Tampa metropolitan area** as of 2007, according to a study by the [Fiscal Policy Institute](#) [12]. In fact, "immigrants contribute to the economy in direct relation to their share of the population. The economy of metro areas grows in tandem with the immigrant share of the labor force."
- If all unauthorized immigrants were removed from Florida, **the state would lose \$43.9 billion in economic activity, \$19.5 billion in gross state product, and approximately 262,436 jobs**, even accounting for adequate market adjustment time, according to a report by the [Perryman Group](#) [13].

Latino and Asian consumers and business owners are integral to Florida's economy.

- **The 2009 purchasing power of Latinos in Florida totaled \$101.2 billion**—an increase of 408.9% since 1990. **Asian buying power totaled \$15.5 billion**—an increase of 552.5% since 1990, according to the [Selig Center for Economic Growth](#) [14] at the University of Georgia.
- Florida's 266,688 **Latino-owned [15] businesses** had sales and receipts of \$40.9 billion and employed 222,516 people in 2002, the last year for which data is available. The state's 41,258 **Asian-owned [16] businesses** had sales and receipts of \$11.2 billion and employed 91,422 people in 2002, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Survey of Business Owners.

Immigrants are integral to Florida's economy as students.

- Florida's 30,386 **foreign students contributed \$806.6 million** to the state's economy in tuition, fees, and living expenses for the 2008-2009 academic year, according to [NAFSA: Association of International Educators](#) [17].

Naturalized citizens excel educationally.

- In Florida, **27.9% of foreign-born persons** who were naturalized U.S. citizens in [2008](#) [18] **had a bachelor's or higher degree**, compared to 21.9% of noncitizens. At the same time, only 19.9% of naturalized citizens lacked a high-school diploma, compared to 30.2% of noncitizens.
- The number of immigrants in Florida with a college degree **increased by 62.9%** between 2000 and 2008, according to [data](#) [18] from the Migration Policy Institute.
- In Florida, **79.9% of all children** between the ages of 5 and 17 in families that spoke a language other than English at home also spoke English "very well" as of [2008](#) [18].

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Links:

[1] <http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/c2kbr-34.pdf>

[2]

http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/STTable?_bm=y&-context=st&-qr_name=ACS_2008_1YR_G00_S0501&-ds_name=ACS_2008_1YR_G00_&-CONTEXT=st&-tree_id=307&-redoLog=false&-geo_id=04000US12&-format=&-_lang=en

[3]

http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/STTable?_bm=y&-context=st&-qr_name=ACS_2008_1YR_G00_S0501&-ds_name=ACS_2008_1YR_G00_&-CONTEXT=st&-tree_id=307&-redoLog=false&-geo_id=16000US0644000&-format=&-_lang=en

[4]

<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/.../default/files/docs/NewCitizenVotersWEBversion.pdf%2523page%3D24>

[5] <http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/c2kbr01-3.pdf>

[6] <http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/c2kbr01-16.pdf#page=5>

[7] <http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/voting/cps2008/Table 4b.xls>

[8] <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/2008/popular-vote.html>

[9] <http://mumford.albany.edu/children/reports/Data>

[Briefs/AECF_immigrant_families_brief_florida.pdf](#)

[10] http://www.risep-fiu.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/03/immigrants_spring_2007_reduced.pdf

[11] <http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/107.pdf#page=40>

[12] http://www.fiscalpolicy.org/ImmigrantsIn25MetroAreas_20091130.pdf#page=18

[13]

http://americansforimmigrationreform.com/files/Impact_of_the_Undocumented_Workforce.pdf#page=69

[14] <http://www.terry.uga.edu/selig/docs/GBEC0903q.pdf>

[15] <http://www.census.gov/prod/ec02/sb0200cshisp.pdf#page=19>

[16] <http://www.census.gov/prod/ec02/sb0200csasian.pdf#page=19>

[17] http://www.nafsa.org/_File/_eis09/florida.pdf#page=2

[18] <http://www.migrationinformation.org/datahub/state2.cfm?ID=FL>

[19]

http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/docs/New_Americans_in_the_Sunshine_State_2010.pdf