

## New Americans in the Last Frontier

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

***Immigrants and their children are growing shares of Alaska's population and electorate.***

- **The foreign-born share** of Alaska's population rose from 4.5% in [1990](#) [1], to 5.9% in [2000](#) [1], to 6.5% in [2008](#) [2], according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Alaska was home to 44,296 immigrants in [2008](#) [2].
- **52.4% of immigrants (or 23,196 people) in Alaska were naturalized U.S. citizens** in [2008](#) [2]—meaning that they are eligible to vote.
- **5.4% (or 17,962) of registered voters** in Alaska 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](#) [3].

***Nearly 1 in 9 Alaskans are Latino or Asian.***

- The **Latino share of Alaska's population** grew from 3.2% in [1990](#) [4], to 4.1% in [2000](#) [4], to 6.2% (or 42,550 people) in [2008](#) [2]. The **Asian share of the population** grew from 3.2% in [1990](#) [5], to 4.0% in [2000](#) [5], to 4.6% (or 31,569 people) in [2008](#) [2], according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- **Latinos accounted for 2.6% (or 8,000) of Alaska voters** in the 2008 elections, and **Asians 2.3% (7,000)**, according to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#) [6].
- In Alaska, **more than nine-in-ten (or 92% of) children in immigrant families were U.S. citizens** in [2007](#) [7], according to the Center for Social and Demographic Analysis at the University of Albany.

***Latino and Asian entrepreneurs and consumers add billions of dollars and thousands of jobs to Alaska's economy.***

- **The 2009 purchasing power of Latinos in Alaska totaled \$1.2 billion**—an increase of 426.8% since 1990. **Asian buying power totaled \$1.1 billion**—an increase of 260.3% since 1990, according to the [Selig Center for Economic Growth](#) [8] at the University of Georgia.
- Alaska's 1,908 **Asian-owned** [9] **businesses** had sales and receipts of \$421.1 million and employed 5,222 people in 2002, the last year for which data is available. The state's 1,241 **Latino-owned** [10] **businesses** had sales and receipts of \$171.2 million and employed 1,985 people in 2002, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Survey of Business Owners.

### ***Immigrants are integral to Alaska's economy as workers and taxpayers.***

- Immigrants comprised **8.4% of the state's workforce** in [2008](#) [2] (or 32,408 workers), according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- Unauthorized immigrants comprised **less than 1.5% of the state's workforce** (or fewer than 10,000 workers) in [2008](#) [11], according to a report by the Pew Hispanic Center.
- If all unauthorized immigrants were removed from Alaska, **the state would lose \$484.7 million in economic activity, \$215.3 million in gross state product, and approximately 1,980 jobs**, even accounting for adequate market adjustment time, according to a report by the [Perryman Group](#) [12].

### ***Immigrants contribute to Alaska's economy as students.***

- Alaska's 596 **foreign students contributed \$13.4 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](#) [13].

### ***Immigrants excel educationally.***

- The number of immigrants in Alaska with a college degree **increased by 50.6%** between 2000 and 2008, according to [data](#) [14] from the Migration Policy Institute.
- In Alaska, **80.0% 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](#) [15].

UPDATED: JULY 2010

Published On: **Tue, Feb 16, 2010** | [Download File](#) [16]

- [Just the Facts](#)
- [Policy](#)

**Source URL:** <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/new-americans-last-frontier>

#### **Links:**

- [1] <http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/c2kbr-34.pdf#page=3>
- [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=04000US02&-format=&-\\_lang=en](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=04000US02&-format=&-_lang=en)
- [3] <http://immigrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/docs/NewCitizenVotersWEBversion.pdf#page=24>
- [4] <http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/c2kbr01-3.pdf#page=4>
- [5] <http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/c2kbr01-16.pdf#page=5>
- [6] [http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/voting/cps2008/Table\\_4b.xls](http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/voting/cps2008/Table_4b.xls)
- [7] [http://mumford.albany.edu/children/reports/Data\\_Briefs/AECF\\_immigrant\\_families\\_brief\\_alaska.pdf](http://mumford.albany.edu/children/reports/Data_Briefs/AECF_immigrant_families_brief_alaska.pdf)
- [8] <http://www.terry.uga.edu/selig/docs/GBEC0903q.pdf>
- [9] <http://www.census.gov/prod/ec02/sb0200csasian.pdf#page=17>

## New Americans in the Last Frontier

Published on Immigration Policy Center (<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org>)

---

[10] <http://www.census.gov/prod/ec02/sb0200cshisp.pdf#page=17>

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

[12]

[http://americansforimmigrationreform.com/files/Impact\\_of\\_the\\_Undocumented\\_Workforce.pdf#page=69](http://americansforimmigrationreform.com/files/Impact_of_the_Undocumented_Workforce.pdf#page=69)

[13] [http://www.nafsa.org/\\_/File/\\_/eis09/alaska.pdf#page=2](http://www.nafsa.org/_/File/_/eis09/alaska.pdf#page=2)

[14] <http://www.migrationinformation.org/datahub/state2.cfm?ID=ak#5>

[15]

<http://www.migrationinformation.org/datahub/state2.cfm?ID=ak#5><http://www.migrationinformation.org/datahub/state2.cfm?ID=ma>

[16]

[http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/docs/New\\_Americans\\_in\\_the\\_Last\\_Frontier\\_2010\\_0.pdf](http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/docs/New_Americans_in_the_Last_Frontier_2010_0.pdf)