

New Americans in the Treasure State

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

Immigrants and their children are significant shares of Montana's population and electorate.

- **The foreign-born share** of Montana's population was 1.7% in [2008](#) [1] (21,285 people), according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- **52.7% of immigrants (or 11,214 people) in Montana were naturalized U.S. citizens** in [2008](#) [1]—meaning that they are eligible to vote.
- **2.3% (or 11,779) of registered voters** in Montana 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](#) [2].

3.2% of Montanans are Latino or Asian.

- The **Latino share of Montana's population** grew from 1.5% in [1990](#) [3], to 2.0% in [2000](#) [3], to 2.8% (or 27,088 people) in [2008](#) [1]. The **Asian share of the population** was 0.7% (or 6,772 people) in [2008](#) [1], according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- **Latinos accounted for 1.7%** (or 8,000) **of Montana voters** in the 2008 elections, according to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#) [4].
- In Montana, **more than nine-in-ten (or 94%) children in immigrant families were U.S. citizens** in [2007](#) [5], according to the Center for Social and Demographic Analysis at the University of Albany.

Latino and Asian entrepreneurs and consumers add millions of dollars and thousands of jobs to Montana's economy.

- **The 2009 purchasing power of Latinos in Montana totaled \$599.4 million**—an increase of 596.3% since 1990. **Asian buying power totaled \$192.0 million**—an increase of 378.9% since 1990, according to the [Selig Center for Economic Growth](#) [6] at the University of Georgia.
- Montana's 511 **Asian-owned** [7] **businesses** had sales and receipts of \$99.9 million and employed 1,519 people in 2002, the last year for which data is available. The state's 964 **Latino-owned** [8] **businesses** had sales and receipts of \$99.1 million in 2002, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Survey of Business Owners.

Immigrants are important to Montana's economy as workers.

- Immigrants comprised **2.1% of the state's workforce** in [2008](#) [9] (or 10,807 workers), according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- Unauthorized immigrants comprised less than **0.5% of the state's workforce** (or fewer than 10,000 workers) in [2008](#) [10], according to a report by the Pew Hispanic Center.
- If all unauthorized immigrants were removed from Montana, **the state would lose \$96.3 million in economic activity, \$42.8 million in gross state product, and approximately 720 jobs**, even accounting for adequate market adjustment time, according to a report by the [Perryman Group](#) [11].

Immigrants are important to Montana's economy as students.

- Montana's 1,227 **foreign students contributed \$28.4 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](#) [12].

Immigrants excel educationally.

- The number of immigrants in Montana with a college degree **increased by 32.1 percent** between 2000 and 2008, according to [data](#) [13] from the Migration Policy Institute.
- In Montana, **81.5% 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](#) [13].

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Links:

- [1] 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=308&-redoLog=true&-_caller=geoselect&-geo_id=04000US30&-format=&-_lang=en
- [2] <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/../../default/files/docs/NewCitizenVotersWEBversion.pdf%2523page%3D24>
- [3] <http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/c2kbr01-3.pdf#page=4>
- [4] <http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/voting/cps2008/Table 4b.xls>
- [5] http://mumford.albany.edu/children/reports/Data Briefs/AECF_immigrant_families_brief_montana.pdf
- [6] <http://www.terry.uga.edu/selig/docs/GBEC0903q.pdf>
- [7] <http://www.census.gov/prod/ec02/sb0200csasian.pdf#page=24>

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[8] <http://www.census.gov/prod/ec02/sb0200cshisp.pdf#page=24>

[9]

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=04000US30&-format=&-_lang=en

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

[11]

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

[12] http://www.nafsa.org/_/File/_/eis09/Montana.pdf#page=2

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

[14]

http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/docs/New_Americans_in_the_Treasure_State_2010_0.pdf