

New Americans in the Beaver State

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

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

- **The foreign-born share** of Oregon's population rose from 4.9% in [1990](#) [1], to 8.5% in [2000](#) [1], to 9.7% in [2008](#) [2], according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Oregon was home to 366,405 immigrants in [2008](#) [2], which is nearly the total population of [Minneapolis, Minnesota](#) [3].
- **36.1% of immigrants (or 132,238 people) in Oregon were naturalized U.S. citizens** in [2008](#) [2]—meaning that they are eligible to vote.
- **6.5% (or 125,082) of registered voters** in Oregon 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].

Nearly one-in-seven Oregonians are Latino or Asian.

- The **Latino share of Oregon's population** grew from 4.0% in [1990](#) [5], to 8.0% in [2000](#) [5], to 11.0% (or 416,907 people) in [2008](#) [2]. The **Asian share of the population** grew from 2.3% in [1990](#) [6], to 3.0% in [2000](#) [6], to 3.4% (or 128,862 people) in [2008](#) [2], according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- **Latinos accounted for 2.1%** (or 39,000) **of Oregon voters** in the 2008 elections, and **Asians 1.8%** (33,000) according to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#) [7].
- In Oregon, **more than four-in-five (or 84% of) children in immigrant families were U.S. citizens** in [2007](#) [8], 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 tens of thousands of jobs to Oregon's economy.

- **The 2009 purchasing power of Latinos in Oregon totaled \$7.0 billion**—an increase of 660.9% since 1990. **Asian buying power totaled \$4.7 billion**—an increase of 425.0% since 1990, according to the [Selig Center for Economic Growth](#) [9] at the University of Georgia.
- Oregon's 6,360 **Latino-owned** [10] **businesses** had sales and receipts of \$1.4 billion and employed 8,272 people in 2002, the last year for which data is available. The state's 9,046 **Asian-owned** [11] **businesses** had sales and receipts of \$2.2 billion and employed 22,714 people in 2002, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Survey of Business Owners.

Immigrants are essential to Oregon's economy as workers.

- Immigrants comprised **12.2% of the state's workforce** in [2008](#) [2] (or 239,997 workers), according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Unauthorized immigrants are integral to Oregon's economy as workers and taxpayers.

- Immigrants accounted for **12% of total economic output** in the Portland 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."
- Unauthorized immigrants comprised roughly **5.4% of the state's workforce** (or 100,000 workers) in [2008](#) [13], according to a report by the Pew Hispanic Center.
- Unauthorized workers in Oregon paid **between \$134 million and \$187 million** in taxes in [2005](#) [14], according to a 2007 study by the Oregon Center for Public Policy, including:
 - \$65 million to \$90 million in state income, excise, and property taxes.
 - \$56 million to \$79 million in Social Security taxes.
 - \$13 million to \$18 million in Medicare taxes.
- In addition, Oregon employers paid **between \$97 million and \$136 million** in taxes on behalf of unauthorized workers in [2005](#) [14], including:
 - \$56 million to \$79 million in Social Security taxes.
 - \$13 million to \$18 million in Medicare taxes.
 - \$28 million to \$39 million in state unemployment insurance taxes.
- If all unauthorized immigrants were removed from Oregon, **the state would lose \$3.4 billion in economic activity, \$1.5 billion in gross state product, and approximately 19,259 jobs**, even accounting for adequate market adjustment time, according to a report by the [Perryman Group](#) [15].

Immigrants are integral to Oregon's economy as students.

- Oregon's 6,648 **foreign students contributed \$188 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](#) [16].

Naturalized citizens excel educationally.

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

In **Oregon, 33.5% of foreign-born persons** who were naturalized U.S. citizens in [2008](#) [17] **had a bachelor's or higher degree, compared to 19.2% of noncitizens**. At the same time, only 19.6% of naturalized citizens lacked a high-school diploma, compared to 43.4% of noncitizens.

- The number of immigrants in Oregon with a college degree **increased by 51.9%** between 2000 and 2008, according to [data](#) [17] from the Migration Policy Institute.
- In Oregon, **74.1% 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](#) [17].

UPDATED: JULY 2010

Published On: **Fri, May 14, 2010** | [Download File](#) [18]

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

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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=04000US41&-format=&-_lang=en

[3] <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/27/2743000.html>

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

[5] <http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/c2kbr01-3.pdf#page=4>

[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://mumford.albany.edu/children/reports/Data>

[Briefs/AECF_immigrant_families_brief_oregon.pdf](#)

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

[10] <http://www.census.gov/prod/ec02/sb0200cshisp.pdf#page=27>

[11] <http://www.census.gov/prod/ec02/sb0200csasian.pdf#page=27>

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

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

[14] <http://www.ocpp.org/2007/issue070410immigranttaxeseng.pdf>

[15]

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

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

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

[18]

http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/docs/New_Americans_in_the_Beaver_State_2010_0.pdf