

New Americans in the Garden State

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

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

- **The foreign-born share** of New Jersey's population rose from 12.5% in [1990](#) [1], to 17.5% in [2000](#) [1], to 19.8% in [2008](#) [2], according to the U.S. Census Bureau. New Jersey was home to 1,718,034 immigrants in [2008](#) [2], which is more than the population of [Phoenix, Arizona](#) [3].
- **49.9% of immigrants (or 857,649 people) in New Jersey were naturalized U.S. citizens** in [2008](#) [2]—meaning that they are eligible to vote.
- **15.1% (or 526,565) of registered voters** in New Jersey 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-four New Jerseyans are Latino or Asian.

- The **Latino share of New Jersey's population** grew from 9.6% in [1990](#) [5], to 13.3% in [2000](#) [5], to 16.3% (or 1,415,274 people) in [2008](#) [2]. The **Asian share of the population** grew from 3.5% in [1990](#) [6], to 5.7% in [2000](#) [6], to 7.6% (or 659,882 people) in [2008](#) [2], according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- **Latinos comprised 9.3% (or 337,000) of New Jersey voters** in the 2008 elections, and **Asians 5.9%** (or 215,000), according to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#) [7]. The number of Latino and Asian voters in New Jersey is equivalent to more than 90% of Barack Obama's margin of victory ([602,215 votes](#) [8]) over John McCain.
- In New Jersey, **nearly nine-in-ten (or 89% 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.

Latino and Asian entrepreneurs and consumers add billions of dollars and tens of thousands of jobs to New Jersey's economy.

- **The 2009 purchasing power of New Jersey's Latinos totaled \$36.8 billion**—an increase of 307.2% since 1990. **Asian buying power totaled \$31.6 billion**—an increase of 459.5% since 1990, according to the [Selig Center for Economic Growth](#) [10] at the University of Georgia.
- New Jersey's 51,957 **Asian-owned** [11] **businesses** had sales and receipts of \$18.5 billion and employed 85,171 people in 2002, the last year for which data is available. The state's

49,841 [Latino-owned](#) [12] businesses had sales and receipts of \$7.2 billion and employed 40,422 people in 2002, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Survey of Business Owners.

Immigrants are integral to New Jersey's economy as workers.

- Immigrants comprised **25.0% of the state's workforce** in [2008](#) [2] (or 1,168,770 workers), according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- **Immigrant workers contributed at least \$47 billion** to New Jersey's gross state product in 2006, according to a [study](#) [13] at the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University.
- **More than 40% of the state's scientists and engineers** with advanced degrees were foreign-born in 2006, according to the same [study](#) [14].
- Immigration to New Jersey **raised the wages of native-born workers without a high-school diploma by 3.0%** between 1990 and 2000, according to the same [study](#) [15].
- Unauthorized immigrants comprised **9.2% of the state's workforce** (or 425,000 workers) in [2008](#) [16], according to a report by the Pew Hispanic Center.
- If all unauthorized immigrants were removed from New Jersey, **the state would lose \$24.2 billion in economic activity, \$10.7 billion in gross state product, and approximately 103,898 jobs**, even accounting for adequate market adjustment time, according to a report by the [Perryman Group](#) [17].

Immigrants are integral to New Jersey's economy as students.

- New Jersey's 14,785 **foreign students contributed \$435.7 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](#) [18].

Naturalized citizens excel educationally.

- In New Jersey, **39.7% of foreign-born persons who were naturalized U.S. citizens in 2008** [19] **had a bachelor's or higher degree, compared to 32.1% of noncitizens.** At the same time, only 15.5% of naturalized citizens lacked a high-school diploma, compared to 28.0% of noncitizens.
- The number of immigrants in New Jersey with a college degree **increased by 43.8% between 2000 and 2008**, according to [data](#) [19] from the Migration Policy Institute.
- **36.2% of New Jersey's foreign-born population** age 25 and older **had a bachelor's or higher degree** in [2008](#) [19], compared to 33.8% of native-born persons age 25 and older.
- In New Jersey, **81.7% 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](#) [20].

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[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=04000US34&-format=&-_lang=en

[3] <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/04/0455000.html>

[4]

<http://immigrationpolicy.org/images/File/specialreport/NewCitizenVotersWEBversion.pdf#page=24>

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

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

Briefs/AECF_immigrant_families_brief_new_jersey.pdf

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

[11] <http://www.census.gov/prod/ec02/sb0200csasian.pdf#page=25>

[12] <http://www.census.gov/prod/ec02/sb0200cshisp.pdf#page=25>

[13]

<http://www.eagleton.rutgers.edu/programs/immigration/documents/NJImmigrationReport.pdf#page=18>

[14]

<http://www.eagleton.rutgers.edu/programs/immigration/documents/NJImmigrationReport.pdf#page=12>

[15]

<http://www.eagleton.rutgers.edu/programs/immigration/documents/NJImmigrationReport.pdf#page=17>

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

[17]

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

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

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

[20] <http://www.migrationinformation.org/datahub/state2.cfm?ID=NJ#1>

[21]

http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/docs/New_Americans_in_the_Garden_State_2010.pdf