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**NEW AMERICANS IN VERMONT:
The Political and Economic Power of Immigrants, Latinos, and Asians
in the Green Mountain State**

Immigrants, Latinos, and Asians account for growing shares of the economy and population in Vermont. Immigrants (the foreign-born) make up 3.9% of the state's population, and well over half of them are naturalized U.S. citizens who are eligible to vote. "New Americans"—immigrants and the children of immigrants—account for 4.3% of registered voters in the state. Immigrants are not only important to the state's economy as workers, but also account for millions of dollars in tax revenue and consumer purchasing power. Moreover, Latinos and Asians (both foreign-born and native-born) wield \$575 million in consumer purchasing power, and the businesses they own had sales and receipts of more than \$450 million and employed more than 2,400 people at last count. At a time when the economy is still recovering, Vermont can ill-afford to alienate such a significant component of its labor force, tax base, and business community.

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

- **The foreign-born share** of Vermont's population rose from 3.1% in [1990](#)¹ to 3.9% in [2011](#),² according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Vermont was home to 24,243 immigrants in [2011](#).
- **61.2% of immigrants (or 14,836 people) in Vermont were naturalized U.S. citizens in [2011](#)**³—meaning that they are eligible to vote.
- **4.3% (or 14,846) of registered voters** in Vermont 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 2008 Census Bureau data by [Rob Paral & Associates](#).⁴
- Unauthorized immigrants comprised less than 0.5% **of the state's population** (or fewer than 10,000 people) in [2010](#), according to a report by the Pew Hispanic Center.⁵

Roughly 2.7% of Vermonters are Latino or Asian.

- The **Latino share of Vermont's population** grew from 0.7% in [1990](#),⁶ to 0.9% in [2000](#),⁷ to 1.5% (or 9,134 people) in [2011](#).⁸ The **Asian share of the population** grew from 0.6% in [1990](#),⁹ to 0.9% in [2000](#),¹⁰ to 1.2% (or 7,733 people) in [2011](#),¹¹ according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- In Vermont, **87.8% of children with immigrant parents were U.S. citizens** in [2009](#), according to data from the Urban Institute.¹²

Latino and Asian entrepreneurs and consumers add millions of dollars and hundreds of jobs to Vermont's economy.

- **The 2012 purchasing power of Latinos totaled \$369 million**—an increase of 702% since 1990. **Asian buying power totaled \$206 million**—an increase of 489% since 1990, according to the [Selig Center for Economic Growth](#) at the University of Georgia.¹³
- Vermont's 649 [Asian-owned](#) businesses had sales and receipts of **\$265.5 million and employed 2,084 people** in 2007, the last year for which data is available.¹⁴ The state's 470 [Latino-owned](#) businesses had sales and receipts of **\$184.9 million and employed 323 people** in 2007, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Survey of Business Owners.¹⁵

Immigrants are important to Vermont's economy as workers and taxpayers.

- Immigrants comprised **4.1% of the state's workforce** in [2011](#) (or 14,258 workers), according to the U.S. Census Bureau.¹⁶
- Unauthorized immigrants comprised less than **0.5% of the state's workforce** (or fewer than 10,000 workers) in [2010](#), according to a report by the Pew Hispanic Center.¹⁷
- More than half of the milk produced in the state comes from the **roughly 2,000 Hispanic migrant farm workers living and working in Vermont**, according to a [survey](#) by the Vermont Farm Bureau.¹⁸
- If all unauthorized immigrants were removed from Vermont, **the state would lose \$249.4 million in economic activity, \$110.8 million in gross state product, and approximately 1,800 jobs**, even accounting for adequate market adjustment time, according to a report by the [Perryman Group](#).¹⁹

Immigrants are important to Vermont's economy as students.

- Vermont's **1,114 foreign students contributed \$40.3 million** to the state's economy in tuition, fees, and living expenses for the 2011-2012 academic year, according to [NAFSA: Association of International Educators](#).²⁰

Immigrants excel educationally.

- **38.8% of Vermont's foreign-born population age 25 and older** had a bachelor's or higher degree in [2011](#), compared to 35.2% of native-born persons age 25 and older.²¹
- In Vermont, **95.8% of children with immigrant parents** were considered "English proficient" as of [2009](#), according to data from the Urban Institute.²²

Endnotes

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, [The Foreign-Born Population: 2000](#), December 2003.

² 2011 American Community Survey (1-Year Estimates).

³ Ibid.

⁴ Rob Paral & Associates and the Immigration Policy Center, [The New American Electorate: The Growing Political Power of Immigrants and Their Children](#) (Washington, DC: American Immigration Council, October 2010).

⁵ Jeffrey S. Passel and D'Vera Cohn, [Unauthorized Immigrant Population: National and State Trends, 2010](#) (Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center, February 1, 2011), p. 24.

⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, [The Hispanic Population: 2000](#), May 2001.

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- ⁷ Ibid.
- ⁸ 2011 American Community Survey (1-Year Estimates).
- ⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, [The Asian Population: 2000](#), February 2002.
- ¹⁰ Ibid.
- ¹¹ 2011 American Community Survey (1-Year Estimates).
- ¹² [The Urban Institute](#), data from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series datasets drawn from the 2005 - 2009 American Community Survey.
- ¹³ Jeffrey M. Humphreys, [The Multicultural Economy 2012](#) (Athens, GA: Selig Center for Economic Growth, University of Georgia, 2012).
- ¹⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, [Estimates of Business Ownership by Gender, Ethnicity, Race, and Veteran Status: 2007](#), June 2011.
- ¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶ 2011 American Community Survey (3-Year Estimates).
- ¹⁷ Jeffrey S. Passel and D’Vera Cohn, [Unauthorized Immigrant Population: National and State Trends, 2010](#) (Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center, February 1, 2011), p. 24.
- ¹⁸ Chris Urban and Sky Barsch, “[Helping Hands: Migrant labor provides essential help for dairy farms](#),” *Vermont Life Magazine*, Summer 2008.
- ¹⁹ The Perryman Group, [An Essential Resource: An Analysis of the Economic Impact of Undocumented Workers on Business Activity in the US with Estimated Effects by State and by Industry](#) (Waco, TX: April 2008), p. 69.
- ²⁰ NAFSA: Association of International Educators, [The Economic Benefits of International Students to the U.S. Economy: Academic Year 2011-2012](#) (Washington, DC: 2012).
- ²¹ Migration Policy Institute Data Hub, [Vermont: Language & Education](#).
- ²² [The Urban Institute](#), data from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series datasets drawn from the 2005 - 2009 American Community Survey.