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**NEW AMERICANS IN ARIZONA:
The Political and Economic Power of Immigrants, Latinos, and Asians
in the Grand Canyon State**

Immigrants, Latinos, and Asians account for large and growing shares of the economy and electorate in Arizona. Immigrants (the foreign-born) make up 13.4% of the state's population, and roughly one third of them are naturalized U.S. citizens who are eligible to vote. "New Americans"—immigrants and the children of immigrants—account for 1 in 10 registered voters in Arizona. The state's immigrant workers contributed \$2.4 billion in state tax revenue in 2004, while immigrant-headed households commanded \$10.5 billion in consumer spending power that supported roughly 66,500 full-time jobs. Moreover, Latinos and Asians (both foreign-born and native-born) wield nearly \$41 billion in consumer purchasing power, and the businesses they own had sales and receipts of \$12.5 billion and employed more than 85,000 people at last count. Immigrant, Latino, and Asian workers, consumers, and entrepreneurs are integral to Arizona's economy and tax base—and they are an electoral force with which every politician must reckon.

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

- **The foreign-born share** of Arizona's population rose from 7.6% in [1990](#),¹ to 12.8% in [2000](#),² to 13.4% in [2010](#),³ according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Arizona was home to 856,663 immigrants in [2010](#),⁴ which is more than the population of [San Francisco, California](#).⁵
- **36.3% of immigrants (or 310,835 people) in Arizona were naturalized U.S. citizens in [2010](#)**⁶—meaning that they are eligible to vote.
- **9.7% (or 278,761) of all registered voters** in Arizona 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](#).⁷

Nearly one-third of Arizonans are Latino or Asian.

- The **Latino share of Arizona's population** grew from 18.8% in [1990](#),⁸ to 25.3% in [2000](#),⁹ to 29.8% (or 1,911,294 people) in [2010](#).¹⁰ The **Asian share of the population** grew from 1.4% in [1990](#),¹¹ to 1.8% in [2000](#),¹² to 2.7% (or 173,171 people) in [2010](#),¹³ according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- **Latinos comprised 11.7% (or 291,000) of Arizona voters in the 2008 elections**, according to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#).¹⁴

- In Arizona, **87.3% of children with immigrant parents were U.S. citizens** in [2009](#), according to the Urban Institute.¹⁵
- In [2009](#), **90.5% of children in Asian families** in Arizona were U.S. citizens, as were **92.5% of children in Latino families**.¹⁶

Immigrant, Latino, and Asian entrepreneurs and consumers add billions of dollars and tens-of-thousands of jobs to Arizona's economy.

- **The 2004 consumer spending power of immigrant-headed households in Arizona totaled \$10.5 billion**, according to a [2008 study](#) by the Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy at the University of Arizona.¹⁷ This spending:
 - Supported approximately **66,500 full-time jobs**.
 - Accounted for **\$10.2 billion in state economic output**.
 - Generated **tax revenues of roughly \$776 million**, consisting of \$362 million in sales taxes, \$328 million in business taxes, and \$85 million in personal taxes.
- **The 2010 purchasing power of Arizona's Latinos totaled \$33.9 billion**—an increase of 528.7% since 1990. **Asian buying power totaled \$6.5 billion**—an increase of 768.3% since 1990, according to the [Selig Center for Economic Growth](#) at the University of Arizona.¹⁸
- Arizona's 52,667 **Latino-owned businesses had sales and receipts of \$8 billion and employed 54,530 people** in 2007, the last year for which data is available. The state's 16,333 **Asian-owned businesses had sales and receipts of \$4.5 billion and employed 31,339 people** in 2007, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Survey of Business Owners.¹⁹

Immigrants are integral to Arizona's economy as workers.

- Immigrants comprised **16.6% of the state's workforce** in [2010](#) (or 503,628 workers), according to the U.S. Census Bureau.²⁰
- **Immigrants accounted for 15% of total economic output in the Phoenix metropolitan area** as of 2007, according to a study by the [Fiscal Policy Institute](#).²¹ 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."²²
- Unauthorized immigrants comprised **7.4% of the state's workforce** (or 230,000 workers) in [2010](#), according to a report by the Pew Hispanic Center.²³
- The total economic output attributable to Arizona's immigrant workers was **\$44 billion** in 2004, which **sustained roughly 400,000 full-time jobs**, according to a [2008 study](#) by the Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy.²⁴
- **Immigrant workers contributed \$2.4 billion in state tax revenue in 2004**, consisting of \$1 billion in sales taxes, \$967 million in business taxes, and \$367 million in personal taxes, according to the [same study](#).²⁵

Unauthorized immigrants pay taxes.

- Unauthorized immigrants in Arizona paid **\$443.2 million** in state and local taxes in [2010](#), according to data from the Institute for Taxation and Economic Policy,²⁶ which includes:
 - \$38.9 million in state income taxes.
 - \$45.7 million in property taxes.
 - \$348.7 million in sales taxes.
- If all unauthorized immigrants were removed from Arizona, **the state would lose \$48.8 billion in economic activity, decrease total employment by 17.2%, and eliminate 581,000 million jobs**, according to a [study](#) by Dr. Raul Hinojosa-Ojeda and Marshall Fitz.²⁷ If unauthorized immigrants in Arizona were legalized, it would add **261,000 jobs to the economy, increase labor income by \$5.6 billion, and increase tax revenues by \$1.6 billion.**²⁸

Immigrants are integral to Arizona's economy as students.

- Arizona's 10,676 **foreign students contributed \$243 million** to the state's economy in tuition, fees, and living expenses for the 2009-2010 academic year, according to [NAFSA: Association of International Educators](#).²⁹

Naturalized citizens excel educationally.

- In Arizona, **25.4% of foreign-born persons** who were naturalized U.S. citizens in [2009](#) had a **bachelor's or higher degree**, compared to 14.1% of noncitizens. At the same time, only 25.4% of naturalized citizens lacked a high-school diploma, compared to 48.8% of noncitizens.³⁰
- The number of immigrants in Arizona with a college degree **increased by 86.6%** between 2000 and 2009, according to [data](#) from the Migration Policy Institute.³¹
- In Arizona, **79.5% of children with immigrant parents** were considered "English proficient" as of [2009](#), according to data from the Urban Institute.³²
- The English proficiency rate among **Asian children in Arizona was 91.6%**, while for **Latino children it was 85.1%**, as of [2009](#).³³

Endnotes

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

² Ibid.

³ 2010 American Community Survey (1-Year Estimates).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Rob Paral and Associates, [The New American Electorate: The Growing Political Power of Immigrants and Their Children](#) (Washington, DC: Immigration Policy Center, American Immigration Law Foundation, October 2010).

⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, [The Hispanic Population: 2000](#), May 2001.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ 2010 American Community Survey (1-Year Estimates).

¹¹ U.S. Census Bureau, [The Asian Population: 2000](#), February 2002.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ 2010 American Community Survey (1-Year Estimates).

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- ¹⁴ 2008 Current Population Survey, [Table 4b: Reported Voting and Registration of the Voting-Age Population, by Sex, Race and Hispanic Origin, for States: November 2008](#).
- ¹⁵ [The Urban Institute](#), data from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series datasets drawn from the 2005 - 2009 American Community Survey.
- ¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁷ Judith Gans, [Immigrants in Arizona: Fiscal and Economic Impacts](#) (Tucson, AZ: Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy, University of Arizona, 2008).
- ¹⁸ Jeffrey M. Humphreys, [The Multicultural Economy 2010](#) (Athens, GA: Selig Center for Economic Growth, University of Georgia, 2010).
- ¹⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, [Estimates of Business Ownership by Gender, Ethnicity, Race, and Veteran Status: 2007](#), June 2011.
- ²⁰ 2010 American Community Survey (1-Year Estimates).
- ²¹ David Dyssegaard Kallick, [Immigrants in the Economy: Contribution of Immigrant Workers to the Country's 25 Largest Metropolitan Areas](#) (New York, NY: Fiscal Policy Institute, December 2009), p. 11.
- ²² Ibid., p. 1.
- ²³ Jeffrey S. Passel and D'Vera Cohn, [Unauthorized Immigrant Population: National and State Trends, 2010](#) (Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center, February 1, 2011).
- ²⁴ Judith Gans, [Immigrants in Arizona: Fiscal and Economic Impacts](#) (Tucson, AZ: Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy, University of Arizona, 2008).
- ²⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁶ The Immigration Policy Center, [Unauthorized Immigrants Pay Taxes, Too](#) (Washington, DC: April 2011).
- ²⁷ Raul Hinojosa-Ojeda and Marshall Fitz, [A Rising Tide or a Shrinking Pie: The Economic Impact of Legalization Versus Deportation in Arizona](#) (Washington, DC: Immigration Policy Center and the Center for American Progress, March 2011).
- ²⁸ Ibid.
- ²⁹ NAFSA: Association of International Educators, [The Economic Benefits of International Education to the United States for the 2009-2010 Academic Year: A Statistical Analysis](#) (Washington, DC: NAFSA: Association of International Educators, 2010).
- ³⁰ Migration Policy Institute Data Hub, [Arizona: Language & Education](#).
- ³¹ Ibid.
- ³² [The Urban Institute](#), data from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series datasets drawn from the 2005 - 2009 American Community Survey.
- ³³ Ibid.