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**NEW AMERICANS IN MISSISSIPPI:  
The Economic Power of Immigrants, Latinos, and Asians in the Magnolia State**

Immigrants, Latinos, and Asians account for growing shares of Mississippi's population and economy. Immigrants (the foreign-born) make up 2.1% of the state's population, and nearly one-third of them are naturalized U.S. citizens who are eligible to vote. Immigrants not only contribute to the state's economy as workers, but also account for billions of dollars in tax revenue and consumer purchasing power. Moreover, Latinos and Asians (both foreign-born and native-born) wield \$2.9 billion in consumer purchasing power, and the businesses they own had sales and receipts of \$1.7 billion and employed more than 14,000 people at last count. At a time when the economy is in a slump, Mississippi would be ill-advised to alienate such an important component of its tax base and business community.

*Immigrants and their children are growing shares of Mississippi's population.*

- **The foreign-born share** of Mississippi's population rose from 0.8% in [1990](#),<sup>1</sup> to 1.4% in [2000](#),<sup>2</sup> to 2.1% in [2010](#),<sup>3</sup> according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Mississippi was home to 61,428 immigrants in [2010](#).<sup>4</sup>
- **30.7% of immigrants (or 18,839 people) in Mississippi were naturalized U.S. citizens in [2010](#)**<sup>5</sup>—meaning that they are eligible to vote.

*3.6% of Mississippians are Latino or Asian.*

- The **Latino share of Mississippi's population** grew from 0.6% in [1990](#),<sup>6</sup> to 1.4% in [2000](#),<sup>7</sup> to 2.7% (or 81,481 people) in [2010](#).<sup>8</sup> The **Asian share of the population** grew from 0.5% in [1990](#)<sup>9</sup> to 0.9% (or 25,742 people) in [2010](#),<sup>10</sup> according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- In Mississippi, **85.4% of children with immigrant parents were U.S. citizens in [2009](#)**, according to data from the Urban Institute.<sup>11</sup>
- In [2009](#), **89.7% of children in Asian families** in Mississippi were U.S. citizens, as were **89.5% of children in Latino families**.<sup>12</sup>

***Latino and Asian entrepreneurs and consumers add billions of dollars and thousands of jobs to Mississippi's economy.***

- **The 2010 purchasing power of Latinos in Mississippi totaled \$1.9 billion**—an increase of 1,125.3% since 1990. **Asian buying power totaled \$1 billion**—an increase of 681.9% since 1990, according to the [Selig Center for Economic Growth](#) at the University of Georgia.<sup>13</sup>
- Mississippi's 1,828 **Latino-owned businesses had sales and receipts of \$323.7 million and employed 2,759 people** in 2007, the last year for which data is available.<sup>14</sup> The state's 4,002 **Asian-owned businesses had sales and receipts of \$1.4 billion and employed 11,878 people** in 2007, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Survey of Business Owners.<sup>15</sup>

***Immigrants contribute to Mississippi's economy as workers.***

- Immigrants comprised **2.8% of the state's workforce** in [2008](#) (or 38,786 workers), according to the U.S. Census Bureau.<sup>16</sup>

***Unauthorized immigrants contribute to Mississippi's economy as workers and taxpayers.***

- Unauthorized immigrants comprised roughly **2.9% of the state's workforce** (or 35,000 workers) in [2010](#), according to a report by the Pew Hispanic Center.<sup>17</sup>
- Unauthorized immigrants in Mississippi paid **\$52.4 million** in state and local taxes in [2010](#), according to data from the Institute for Taxation and Economic Policy,<sup>18</sup> which includes:
  - \$8.1 million in state income taxes.
  - \$2.6 million in property taxes.
  - \$41.7 million in sales taxes.
- If all unauthorized immigrants were removed from Mississippi, **the state would lose \$583 million in economic activity, \$259 million in gross state product, and approximately 4,680 jobs**, even accounting for adequate market adjustment time, according to a report by the [Perryman Group](#).<sup>19</sup>

***Immigrants contribute to Mississippi's economy as students.***

- Mississippi's 2,467 **foreign students contributed \$42.3 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](#).<sup>20</sup>

### *Naturalized citizens excel educationally.*

- In Mississippi, **29.6% of foreign-born persons** who were naturalized U.S. citizens in [2009](#) had a bachelor's or higher degree, compared to 24.5% of noncitizens. At the same time, 19.9% of naturalized citizens lacked a high-school diploma, compared to 41.5% of noncitizens.<sup>21</sup>
- The number of immigrants in Mississippi with a college degree **increased by 54.2%** between 2000 and 2009, according to [data](#) from the Migration Policy Institute.<sup>22</sup>
- In Mississippi, **85.5% of children with immigrant parents** were considered “English proficient” as of [2009](#), according to data from the Urban Institute.<sup>23</sup>
- The English proficiency rate among **Asian children in Mississippi was 87.6%**, while for **Latino children it was 84.2%**, as of [2009](#).<sup>24</sup>

### **Endnotes**

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

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> 2010 American Community Survey (1-Year Estimates).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

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

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> 2010 American Community Survey (1-Year Estimates).

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, [The Asian Population: 2000](#), February 2002.

<sup>10</sup> 2010 American Community Survey (1-Year Estimates).

<sup>11</sup> [The Urban Institute](#), data from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series datasets drawn from the 2005 - 2009 American Community Survey.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Jeffrey M. Humphreys, [The Multicultural Economy 2010](#) (Athens, GA: Selig Center for Economic Growth, University of Georgia, 2010).

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, [Estimates of Business Ownership by Gender, Ethnicity, Race, and Veteran Status: 2007](#), June, 2011.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> 2008 American Community Survey (1-Year Estimates).

<sup>17</sup> 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.

<sup>18</sup> The Immigration Policy Center, [Unauthorized Immigrants Pay Taxes, Too](#) (Washington, DC: April 2011).

<sup>19</sup> 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.

<sup>20</sup> 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).

<sup>21</sup> Migration Policy Institute Data Hub, [Mississippi: Language & Education](#).

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> [The Urban Institute](#), data from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series datasets drawn from the 2005 - 2009 American Community Survey.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.