



# New Americans in Androscoggin County

The Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants<sup>1</sup> in the County<sup>2</sup>

## Population

**4,200**

the number of immigrants living in Androscoggin County, Maine, in 2019.<sup>3</sup>

Immigrants made up



of the total population of the county in 2019.

Between 2014 and 2019, the total population of the county decreased by



The immigrant population increased by

**+11.9%**

during the same time period.

Without immigrants moving to the county, the total population would have decreased by



## Demographics



of households in Androscoggin County in 2019 had at least one immigrant resident.



of immigrants in the county were recent arrivals, with five years of residency in the United States or less, meaning



of immigrants in the county had resided in the United States for more than five years.

In the county, immigrants were



more likely to be of working age than their U.S.-born counterparts, allowing them to actively participate in the labor force and contribute to the economy as taxpayers and consumers.<sup>4</sup>

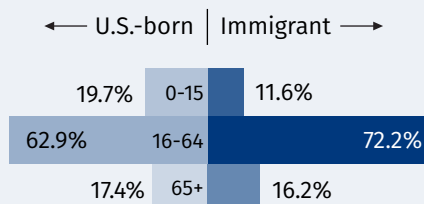
**730**

immigrants between the ages of 18-24 lived in the county, making up **7.8%** of that age group, in 2019.



of individuals aged 18-24 in the county were children of immigrants in 2019.

### Shares of population by age:<sup>5</sup>



1. Estimates provided in this report may slightly undercount the immigrant population. The American Community Survey historically undersamples the immigrant population, especially among lower income, more recently arrived, and less English-fluent immigrant populations.
2. Unless otherwise specified, data comes from 5-year samples of the American Community Survey from 2014 and 2019 and figures refer to Androscoggin County, Maine.
3. We define "immigrant" as any non-citizen or any naturalized U.S. citizen. They include naturalized citizens, green card holders, temporary visa holders, refugees, asylees, and undocumented immigrants, among others.
4. We define working age as 16-64 years of age.
5. Totals may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

## Demographics (continued)

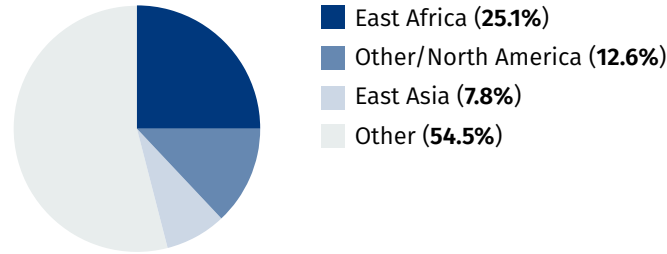
**49,300**

people worked in the county in 2019. Of these,

**3.6%**

or **1,800** workers, were immigrants.

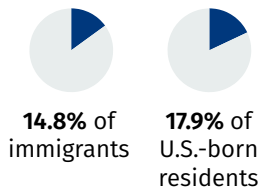
The top regions of origin for immigrants living in the county:



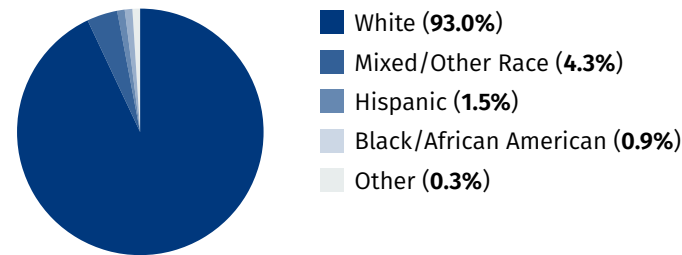
The top languages spoken at home other than English among immigrants:



The breakdown of residents with a disability in the county in 2019:<sup>6</sup>



The racial breakdown of U.S.-born residents in the county in 2019:



## Immigrants with Limited English Language Proficiency

**12.4%**

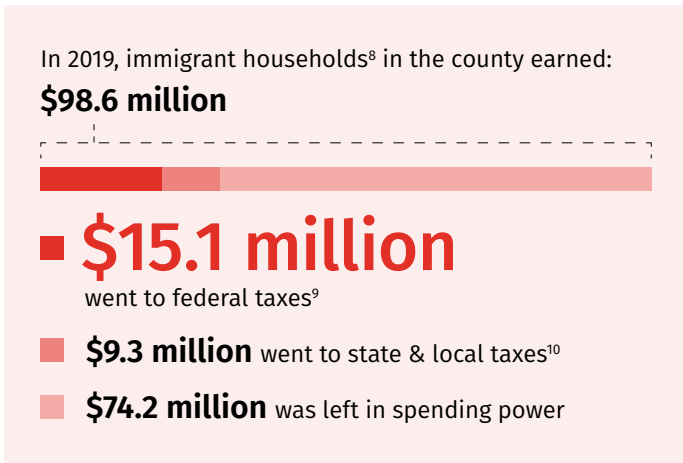
of immigrants living in the county had limited English proficiency.<sup>7</sup>

6. Here, 'disability' uses information provided the American Community Survey which indicates whether the respondent has cognitive difficulties (such as learning, remembering, concentrating, or making decisions) and/or a condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities and/or any physical, mental, or emotional condition lasting six months or more that makes it difficult or impossible to perform basic activities outside the home alone and/or makes it difficult for them to take care of their own personal needs, such as bathing, dressing, or getting around inside the home and/or a long-lasting condition of blindness, deafness, or a severe vision or hearing impairment.

7. For the purpose of this report, we define people with limited English language proficiency as those who do not speak English at all or do not speak English well.

## Spending Power and Tax Contributions

Immigrants paid a significant amount in federal, state, and local taxes, including property, sales, and excise taxes levied by state and local governments.



This means that immigrant households held



of all spending power in the county.

In 2019, immigrants in the county contributed



to the county's gross domestic product (GDP), or **3.4%** of the total GDP for that year.<sup>11</sup>

Immigrants in the county also supported federal social programs. In 2019, they contributed



of immigrants in the county received Medicare or Medicaid in 2019, compared with

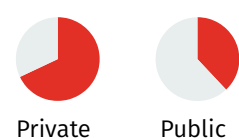


of U.S.-born residents.

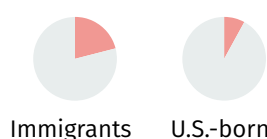
About **41.9%** of immigrants had private health care coverage, while **48.8%** of immigrants had public health care coverage.



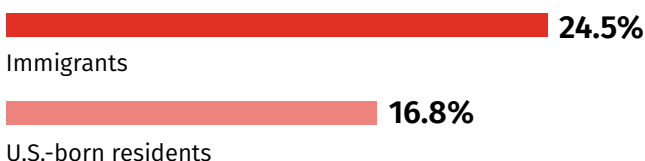
About **67.7%** of U.S.-born residents had private health care coverage, while **38.0%** of U.S.-born residents had public health care coverage.<sup>12</sup>



Approximately **20.9%** of immigrants and **7.8%** of U.S.-born residents had no healthcare coverage.



In 2019, households received assistance in accessing food through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) at the following rates:

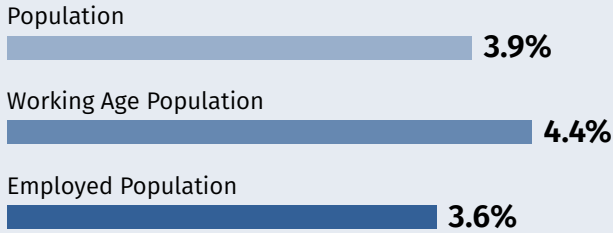


- Immigrant households refer to those with an immigrant as head of the unit.
- U.S. Congressional Budget Office, *The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2019* (Washington, DC: 2022), <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/58353>.
- Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, *Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States* (Washington, DC: 2018), <https://itep.org/whopays>.
- These figures derive from our calculations based on immigrants' share of wage income and self-employment income in the 5-year ACS sample from 2019 and the statistics of GDP from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.
- Including people who have both public and private healthcare coverage.

## Workforce

Although immigrants made up **3.9%** of the county's total population, they represented **4.4%** of its working age population, and **3.6%** of its employed labor force.

### Immigrant shares of the...



The immigrant working-age population was **46.5%** female and **53.5%** male.



The immigrant employed population was **48.9%** female and **51.1%** male.



Immigrants in the county were

**14.7%**

more likely to be of working age than their U.S.-born counterparts.

Due to the role immigrants play in the workforce helping companies keep jobs on U.S. soil, our research shows that immigrants living in the county helped create or preserve

### 200 manufacturing jobs

that would have otherwise been eliminated or moved elsewhere by 2019.<sup>13</sup>

13. Jacob Vigdor, *Immigration and the Revival of American Cities: From Preserving Manufacturing Jobs to Strengthening the Housing Market* (New York, NY: AmericasSociety/Council of the Americas and New American Economy, 2013), <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/revival-of-american-cities.pdf>.
14. Data is obtained from Lightcast Technologies for the time period between January 1, 2022 and December 31, 2022.
15. Data is obtained from Lightcast Technologies for the time period between January 1, 2022 and December 31, 2022.

### SPOTLIGHT

## Job Demand In Androscoggin County In 2022

Not only were immigrants more likely to be of working age than the U.S.-born, but they were also a crucial part of the county's economy and helped meet the needs of its fastest growing and most in-demand fields.<sup>14</sup>

The top in-demand jobs in the county in 2022 were:

1. Registered Nurses
2. Retail Salespersons
3. First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers
4. Nursing Assistants
5. Customer Service Representatives

The top skills listed for these in-demand jobs were: **Registered Nurse (RN), Customer Service, Communications, Nursing, Sales, Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification.**

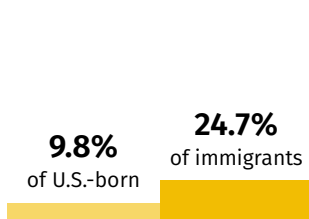
Immigrants help fill many high-demand roles, especially as the need for bilingual and culturally competent public service and healthcare workers increases.

The top five industries with the highest demand for bilingual workers:<sup>15</sup>

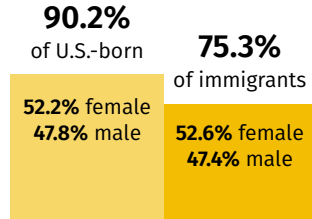
1. Retail Trade
2. Educational Services
3. Health Care and Social Assistance
4. Manufacturing
5. Administrative Support, Waste Management, and Remediation Services

## Education

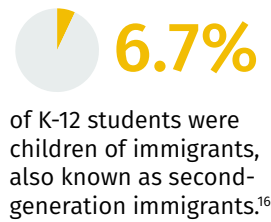
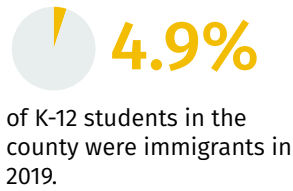
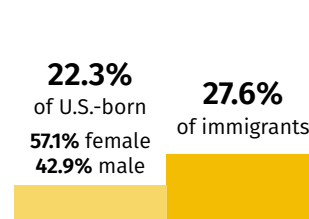
Share of the county's population aged 25 or above that had **less than a high school education** in 2019:



Share of the county's population aged 25 or above that had **at least a high school education or some college** in 2019:

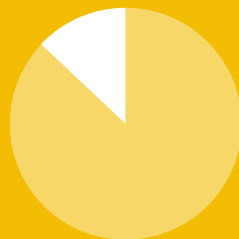


Share of the county's population aged 25 or above that held a **bachelor's degree or higher** in 2019:



### SPOTLIGHT University Population

In fall 2021, **211** students enrolled in colleges and universities in Androscoggin County were international students.<sup>17</sup>



The breakdown of international students is as follows:

- Full-time undergraduate students (184)
- Full-time graduate students (27)

The universities with the largest international student populations were:



In the 2020-21 academic year, **14** degrees were awarded to international students with a primary major in a STEM field, and **four** degrees were awarded to international students with a secondary major in a STEM field.

International students supported **47** jobs in the county and these students contributed **\$9.6M** to the economy in the 2021-22 academic year.<sup>18</sup>

16. Children of immigrants include U.S.-born children who are under the age of 18 with at least one immigrant parent.

17. Data on student enrollment in the county is derived from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System maintained by the National Center for Education Statistics. Temporary residents refer to people who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents.

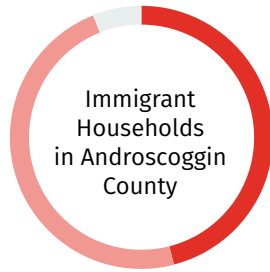
18. Economic data is derived from the International Student Economic Value Tool maintained by NAFSA: Association of International Educators.

## Housing

In 2019, **55.4%** of immigrant households in Androscoggin owned their own homes, compared with **63.9%** of U.S.-born households.



Immigrant U.S.-born



- Lived in houses (45.9%)
- Lived in apartments (48.2%)
- Other types of housing (5.9%)

Total property value of immigrant households was

**\$154.1M**



of immigrant households were renters. Their total annual rent paid was

**\$5.7M**

**86.6%** of both immigrant and U.S.-born households in the county had access to broadband connection in their place of residence in 2019.<sup>19</sup>



Immigrant U.S.-born

The average household size for immigrants in 2019 was **2.4** compared with **2.3** for U.S.-born residents.

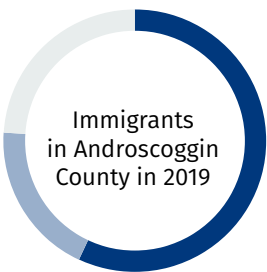


Immigrant households



U.S.-born households

## Naturalization



- **57.3%** Naturalized<sup>20</sup> citizens (2,400)
- **18.8%** Likely eligible to naturalize (800)
- **23.9%** Not eligible to naturalize (1,000)



Nationally, **48.7%** of immigrants are naturalized citizens, **15.9%** are likely eligible to naturalize, and **35.4%** are not yet eligible to naturalize.

When eligible immigrants naturalize, their income increased by

**+8.9%**

on average.<sup>21</sup>

19. This data point reports whether the respondent or any member of their household subscribed to the internet using broadband (high speed) internet service such as cable, fiber optic, or DSL.
20. Naturalization is the process through which one can become a U.S. citizen, dependent on certain eligibility requirements. Learn more here: <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/how-united-states-immigration-system-works>.
21. Maria E. Enchautegui and Linda Giannarelli, *The Economic Impact of Naturalization on Immigrants and Cities*, Urban Institute, 2015, <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/economic-impact-naturalization-immigrants-and-cities>.

## Refugees

**19.7%**  
of the immigrant population in Androscoggin County were likely refugees<sup>22</sup> in 2019.<sup>23</sup>

**71.1%**  
of refugees were naturalized U.S. citizens.

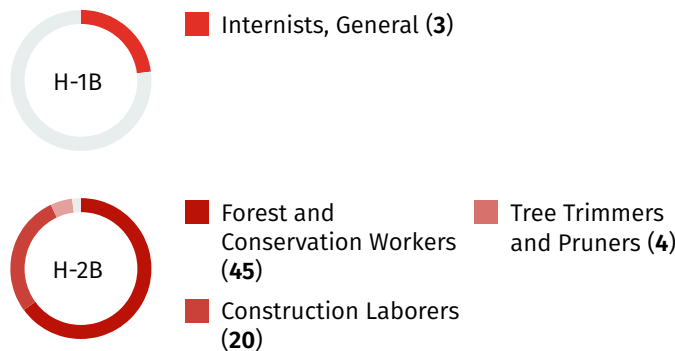
In 2019, refugee households<sup>24</sup> in the county earned: **\$10.3 million**

- **\$800 thousand** went to federal taxes<sup>25</sup>
- **\$1.0 million** went to state & local taxes<sup>26</sup>
- **\$8.6 million** was left in spending power

## H-1B and H-2B Visas

**13**  
H-1B visas were certified<sup>27</sup> in Androscoggin County during Fiscal Year 2022.

The top occupations among certified H-1B and H-2B visa applications were:



**69**  
H-2B visas were certified<sup>28</sup> in Androscoggin County during Fiscal Year 2022.

22. Refugees are admitted to the United States based upon an inability to return to their home countries because of a “well-founded fear of persecution” due to their race, membership in a particular social group, political opinion, religion, or national origin. Learn more here: <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/how-united-states-immigration-system-works>.
23. New American Economy, From Struggle to Resilience: The Economic Impact of Refugees in America, (New York, NY: 2017), [https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/NAE-Refugees\\_V5.pdf](https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/NAE-Refugees_V5.pdf).
24. Refugee households refer to those with a refugee as head of the unit.
25. U.S. Congressional Budget Office, The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2019 (Washington, DC: 2022), <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/58353>.
26. Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States (Washington, DC: 2018), <https://itep.org/whopays/>.
27. Before an employer can file a petition with United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to hire an employee using an H-1B visa, the employer must take steps to ensure that hiring the foreign worker will not adversely affect U.S. workers. To do this, employers file a labor condition application (LCA) to be certified by the Department of Labor (DOL), which ensures that employment of the H-1B worker will not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of similarly employed U.S. workers. The number of certified H-1B visas is therefore a good indication of the demand for foreign-born workers of a given occupation in a given region. More information on the H-1B process can be found here: <https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/h-1b-specialty-occupations>.
28. Similar to the H-1B process, in order for an employer to obtain an H-2B certification, the DOL must determine that there are not enough U.S. workers available to do the temporary job being petitioned for, and that employing H-2B workers will not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of similar workers. Additionally, the need for the worker must be temporary. Certified jobs are not necessarily the jobs filled, though they do indicate a level of demand for temporary foreign-born workers in a particular occupation. More information on the H-2B process can be found here: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/foreign-labor/programs/h-2b>.

SPOTLIGHT

## Amran Osman

Director and Founder of [Generational Noor](#)

When she was three years old, Amran Osman, who was born in Somalia, came with her mom to Lewiston, Maine. She learned English quickly, but when she entered school, she realized how different she was. “I was the only Somali person wearing a hijab, which kicked off an identity crisis of figuring out who I was,” Amran says.

Amran kept her struggles quiet. She didn’t want to burden her mother, who worked multiple jobs. She hoped that by excelling in school—taking AP classes and diving into debate team and Key Club—she would feel she belonged. At age 14, she became a U.S. citizen. “It made me feel like I belonged and included among my peers who were born here once I could say, ‘Yes, I am an American,’” she says.

Over time, Amran found her place as a caregiver. As her family grew to include eight siblings, she embraced “the big sister in me,” she says. In her senior year of high school, she became a certified nursing assistant and worked at an assisted living facility, Clover Health Care, in Auburn, while also studying at Central Maine Community College. “I have always been a giver and wanted to take care of others,” she says. But it was after she transferred to the University of Southern Maine (USM) in 2018 and started a degree in political science that Amran found her voice and her purpose.

On USM’s campus, Amran was surrounded by students of color, Muslims, and other immigrants. This community gave her the confidence to speak up in class and on campus. Amran started organizing spaces where students could discuss their experiences with discrimination. “I wanted more students of color to feel safe and welcome, especially in the place they call home,” she says. She joined the student senate and the president’s cabinet as the director of racial equity and inclusion.

In 2021, after receiving her bachelor’s degree, her 20-year-old brother overdosed. Amran became determined to help all Mainers of color share their struggles with substance use and mental illness, and find support. She founded the nonprofit [Generational Noor](#), which helps immigrant households better understand and combat substance abuse. Now 25, Amran has connected hundreds of Mainers to culturally sensitive programming, discussions, and treatment. “Being someone who’s grown up in a similar environment, I want to show youth of color that we all struggle with something,” she says. “But I hear you, I see you, I’m here.”

SPOTLIGHT

## Marwo Sougue

Senior-year Nursing Major at the University of Southern Maine

When Marwo Sougue was 15, her aunt died—meaning that, per custom, in her native Djibouti, she would have to marry the widowed uncle. To save her from this fate, her parents sought asylum in America. The family settled in Westbrook, Maine, in 2017, and from that moment, Marwo took every opportunity to give back to the country that welcomed her.

“There is something inside of me that always wants to do more,” said Marwo, who is now a nursing student at the University of Southern Maine (USM). “More school, more programs, more clubs. I don’t believe in sitting at home with my free time. There’s always something more I can be doing for my community.”

When Marwo first enrolled at Portland High School, she spoke no English. It was her ESL teacher who told her: “Believe you can do something big with your life.” Marwo took this to heart. By her senior year, she had qualified for Advanced Placement English. She also began volunteering with the Ronald McDonald House in Portland and joined her school’s International Club and its Muslim Student Association. She became a 4-H advocate for homeless youth working with a local shelter to secure personal hygiene products and protective gear for young Mainers during the pandemic.

In 2019, Marwo joined the Portland Mentoring Alliance, a nonprofit that matches students with community leaders, where she developed a strong bond with her mentor, a 60-year-old immigrant from India. They worked on Marwo’s college applications, went on hikes, and spent time with each other’s families. Marwo still regularly visits this mentor, and even waters her plants when she travels to California to visit grandchildren.

After graduating high school in 2020, Marwo became a nursing student at USM. She loved anatomy and physiology, but she had also watched her diabetic mother navigate the complicated American healthcare system. “We’d be back and forth to the hospital because of her diabetes and intolerance of the medications they were giving her,” Marwo recalls. “I could barely understand what the doctors were saying and thought, ‘Well, why not go into nursing so I gain that understanding.’”

After she becomes a certified registered nurse this spring, Marwo will pursue a master’s degree to become a nurse practitioner. In the meantime, she continues to work with vulnerable youth through the 4-H.

“I feel very connected here in Maine,” Marwo says. “And I’ll do anything to help others feel the same. I just want to contribute as much as I can, any chance I get.”



# New Americans in Portland-South Portland, Maine

The Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants in the Region\*<sup>29</sup>

## Population

**25,100**

the number of immigrants living in Portland-South Portland, Maine, in 2019.

Immigrants made up



of the total population of the region in 2019.

Between 2014 and 2019, the total population of the region increased by

**+2.7%**

The immigrant population increased by

**+6.0%**

during the same time period.



of the total population growth in the region was attributable to immigrants.

## Demographics



of households in Portland-South Portland in 2019 had at least one immigrant.



of immigrants in the region were recent arrivals, with five years of residency in the United States or less, meaning



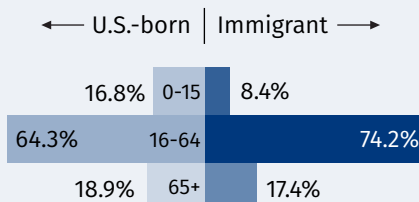
of immigrants in the region had resided in the United States for more than five years.

In the region, immigrants were

**15.4%**

more likely to be of working age than their U.S.-born counterparts, allowing them to actively participate in the labor force and contribute to the economy as taxpayers and consumers.

### Shares of population by age:



\* For the purposes of this report, "region" is used interchangeably to describe the "Metropolitan Statistical Area," or the "MSA."

29. Unless otherwise specified, data comes from 5-year samples of the American Community Survey from 2014 and 2019 and figures refer to the Portland-South Portland, Maine Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

## Demographics (continued)

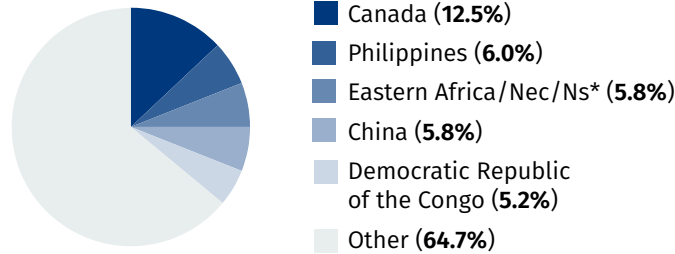
**282,300**

people worked in the region in 2019, of these,

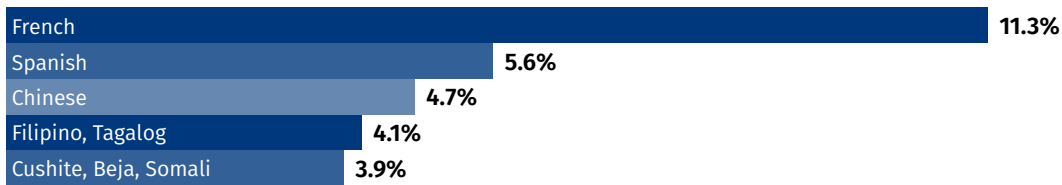


or **13,800** workers were immigrants.

The top countries of origin for immigrants living in the region:



The top languages spoken at home other than English among immigrants:



## Spending Power and Tax Contributions

Immigrants paid a significant amount in federal, state, and local taxes, including property, sales, and excise taxes levied by state and local governments.

In 2019, immigrant households in Portland-South Portland earned:

**\$840.5 million**

■ **\$152.6 million**

went to federal taxes<sup>30</sup>

■ **\$78.6 million** went to state & local taxes<sup>31</sup>

■ **\$609.2 million** was left in spending power

This means that immigrant households held



of all spending power in the region.

In 2019, immigrants contributed

**\$2.2 billion**

to the region's gross domestic product (GDP), or **5.0%** of the total GDP for that year.<sup>32</sup>

30. U.S. Congressional Budget Office, *The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2019* (Washington, DC: 2022), <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/58353>.
31. Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, *Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States* (Washington, DC: 2018), <https://itep.org/whopays>.
32. *These figures derive from our calculations based on immigrants' share of wage income and self-employment income in the 5-year ACS sample from 2019 and the statistics of GDP from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.*

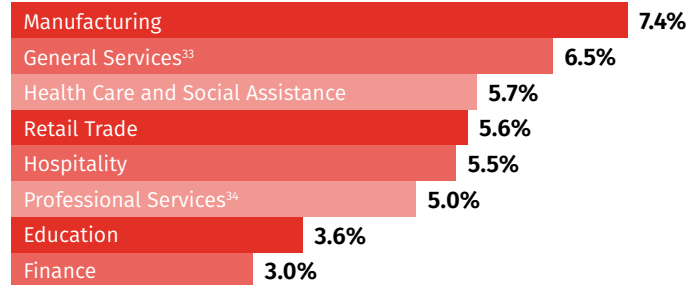
\* Nec stands for "not elsewhere classified" and includes all responses for which there is no specific code for the given geography. Ns stands for "not specified" and refers to cases where more precise information about the place of birth is not available.

## Workforce

**35.9%**

of immigrants in Portland-South Portland, Maine, with a college degree worked in a position that did not require this level of education in 2019.

Immigrants played a critical role in several key industries in the region. The immigrant share of workers was highest in the following industries:



## Undocumented Immigrants

**2,500**

undocumented immigrants<sup>35</sup> lived in Portland-South Portland, Maine, in 2019. They made up

**9.9%**

of the region's immigrant population.

In 2019, undocumented immigrant households earned: **\$89.3 million**

■ **\$7.3 million**

went to federal taxes<sup>36</sup>

■ **\$4.2 million** went to state & local taxes<sup>37</sup>

■ **\$77.7 million** was left in spending power

33. General services include personal services (e.g. laundry services, barber shops, and repair and maintenance), religious organizations, social services, and labor unions.
34. Professional services: Most of these industries include professions that require a degree or a license, such as legal services, accounting, scientific research, consulting services, etc.
35. Undocumented immigrant households refer to people living in a housing unit with an undocumented immigrant being the head of their unit.
36. U.S. Congressional Budget Office, *The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2019* (Washington, DC: 2022), <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/58353>.
37. Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, *Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States* (Washington, DC: 2018), <https://itep.org/whopays/>.