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**NEW AMERICANS IN OHIO:
The Political and Economic Power of Immigrants, Latinos, and Asians
in the Buckeye State**

Immigrants, Latinos, and Asians account for large and growing shares of the economy and population in the electoral swing state of Ohio. Immigrants (the foreign-born) make up 4.1% of the state's population, and half of them are naturalized U.S. citizens eligible to vote. "New Americans"—immigrants and the children of immigrants—account for 4% of all registered voters in the state. Latinos and Asians (both foreign-born and native-born) account for one in 20 Ohioans and wield nearly \$19.6 billion in consumer purchasing power. At last count, businesses owned by Latinos and Asians had sales and receipts of \$9.1 billion and employed more than 63,000 people. Ohio is also home to the nation's second largest Somali population, whose many businesses contribute to the state's economy. As the economy continues to grow, Ohio can ill-afford to alienate such an important component of its labor force, tax base, and business community.

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

- **The foreign-born share** of Ohio's population rose from 2.4% in 1990,¹ to 3.0% in 2000,² to 4.1% in 2013,³ according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Ohio was home to 477,337 immigrants in 2013,⁴ which is more than the total population of Atlanta, Georgia.⁵
- **49.7% of immigrants (or 237,404 people) in Ohio were naturalized U.S. citizens in 2013**⁶—meaning that they are eligible to vote.
- Unauthorized immigrants comprised roughly **0.8% of the state's population** (or 95,000 people) in 2012, according to a report by the Pew Hispanic Center.⁷
- **4% (or 241,073) of all registered voters** in Ohio are "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 analysis of 2012 Census Bureau data by the American Immigration Council.⁸

One in 20 Ohioans are Latino or Asian.

- The **Latino share of Ohio's population** grew from 1.3% in 1990,⁹ to 1.9% in 2000,¹⁰ to 3.3% (or 383,113 people) in 2013.¹¹ The **Asian share of the population** grew from 0.8% in 1990,¹² to 1.2% in 2000,¹³ to 1.8% (or 212,547 people) in 2013,¹⁴ according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- **Latinos comprised 1.8% (or 98,000) of Ohio voters** in the 2012 elections, and **Asians 0.7%** (or 38,000), according to the U.S. Census Bureau.¹⁵ Although the numbers of Latino and

Asian voters were relatively small, they were equivalent to more than half of the narrow margin of victory (166,214) by which Barack Obama won this key battleground state.¹⁶

- In Ohio, **85.3% of children with immigrant parents were U.S. citizens** in 2009, according to data from the Urban Institute.¹⁷
- In 2009, **85.1% of children in Asian families** in Ohio were U.S. citizens, as were **94% of children in Latino families**.¹⁸

Franklin County is home to roughly a quarter of Ohio's foreign-born population—especially the Somali refugee community—and they contribute to the state's political and economic landscape.

- **The share of Franklin County's foreign-born population** increased from 3.4% in 1990,¹⁹ to 6.0% in 2000,²⁰ to 9.8% (or 119,162 people) in 2013,²¹ according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- **Columbus, Ohio, ranked second in percent of new foreign-born residents** (those who came to the United States since 2000) compared to other major metropolitan areas, according to a study by Community Research Partners.²²
- The Somali Community Access Network estimates that Central Ohio was home to **more than 45,000 Somali Americans** in 2009—making it the second largest Somali population in the United States behind Minneapolis, Minnesota.²³
- Somalis own **more than 400 small businesses** in Columbus, Ohio, which contribute revenue to the local economy.²⁴
- Somali community leaders estimate that as **much as 30% of the Somali population** in Central Ohio (roughly 14,000 people) has now gained U.S. citizenship—and they vote, according to news reports.²⁵

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

- **The 2014 purchasing power of Ohio's Latinos totaled \$8.8 billion**—an increase of 470% since 1990. **Asian buying power totaled \$10.8 billion**—an increase of 481% since 1990, according to the Selig Center for Economic Growth at the University of Georgia.²⁶
- Immigration boosts housing values in communities. From 2000 to 2010, according to the Americas Society/Council of the Americas, the value added by immigration to the price of the average home was \$4,295 in Franklin County, and \$1,010 in Butler County.²⁷
- Ohio's **18,198 Asian-owned businesses had sales and receipts of \$6.8 billion and employed 51,478 people** in 2007, the last year for which data is available.²⁸ The state's **9,722 Latino-owned businesses had sales and receipts of \$2.3 billion and employed 11,562 people** in 2007, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Survey of Business Owners.²⁹
- From 2006 to 2010, there were **20,768 new immigrant business owners** in Ohio, and new immigrant business owners had total net business income of \$1.3 billion, which is 5.7% of all net business income in the state, according to Robert Fairlie of the University of California, Santa Cruz.³⁰

- In 2010, **6.7% of all business owners** in Ohio were foreign-born according to the Fiscal Policy Institute.³¹

Immigrants are essential to Ohio's economy as workers and taxpayers.

- Immigrants comprised **4.8% of the state's workforce** in 2013 (or 281,151 workers), according to the U.S. Census Bureau.³²
- Latinos in Ohio paid over **\$1 billion in federal taxes and \$553.8 million in state/local taxes in 2013**, according to the Partnership for a New American Economy.³³ In particular, foreign-born Latinos paid \$237 million in federal taxes and \$141.5 million in state/local taxes in 2013.
 - The federal tax contribution of Ohio's Latino population included **\$730 million to Social Security and \$170 million to Medicare in 2013**.³⁴ In particular, foreign-born Latinos contributed \$182.6 million to Social Security and \$42 million to Medicare in 2013.
- Unauthorized immigrants comprised **1.1% of the state's workforce** (or 65,000 workers) in 2012, according to a report by the Pew Hispanic Center.³⁵
- Immigrants accounted for **7% of total economic output** in the Cleveland metropolitan area and **5% of economic output** in the Cincinnati metropolitan area as of 2007, according to a study by the Fiscal Policy Institute.³⁶
- If all unauthorized immigrants were removed from Ohio, **the state would lose \$4 billion in economic activity, \$1.8 billion in gross state product, and approximately 25,019 jobs**, even accounting for adequate market adjustment time, according to a report by the Perryman Group.³⁷

Unauthorized immigrants pay taxes.

- Unauthorized immigrants in Ohio paid **\$72.8 million** in state and local taxes in 2010, according to data from the Institute for Taxation and Economic Policy, which includes \$13.9 million in state income taxes, \$6.3 million in property taxes, and \$52.6 million in sales taxes.³⁸
- Were unauthorized immigrants in Ohio to have legal status, they would pay **\$95 million** in state and local taxes, including \$56.3 million in sales taxes, \$32 million in state income taxes, and \$6.7 million in property taxes.³⁹

Immigrants are integral to Ohio's economy as students.

- Ohio's 32,498 **foreign students contributed \$911.6 million** to the state's economy in tuition, fees, and living expenses for the 2013-2014 academic year, according to NAFSA: Association of International Educators.⁴⁰
- Foreign students contribute to Ohio's metropolitan areas. From 2008 to 2012, according to the Brookings Institution, 9,793 foreign students paid \$264 million in tuition and \$140 million in living costs in the Columbus metropolitan area.⁴¹ In the Akron metro area, 4,753

foreign students paid \$71 million in tuition and \$50 million in living costs. In the Cincinnati-Middletown metro area, 6,137 foreign students paid \$133 million in tuition and \$68 million in living costs. In the Cleveland-Elyria-Mentor metro area, 5,477 foreign students paid \$137 million in tuition and \$58 million in living costs. In the Dayton metro area, 3,878 foreign students paid \$72 million in tuition and \$37 million in living costs. In the Toledo metro area, 3,689 foreign students paid \$66 million in tuition and \$28 million in living costs.

- Foreign students also contribute to innovation in Ohio. In 2009, “non-resident aliens” comprised 45.4% of master’s degrees and 57% of doctorate degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, according to the Partnership for a New American Economy.⁴²

Immigrants in Ohio excel educationally.

- The number of immigrants in Ohio with a college degree **increased by 47.5% between 2000 and 2011**, according to data from the Migration Policy Institute.⁴³
- 41.4% of Ohio’s foreign-born** population age 25 and older **had a bachelor’s or higher degree** in 2011, compared to 23.8% of native-born persons age 25 and older.⁴⁴
- In Ohio, **87.1% of children with immigrant parents** were considered “English proficient” as of 2009, according to data from the Urban Institute.⁴⁵
- The English proficiency rate among **Asian children in Ohio was 88.7%**, while for **Latino children it was 87.8%**, as of 2009.⁴⁶

Endnotes

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, *The Foreign-Born Population: 2000*, December 2003.

² Ibid.

³ 2013 American Community Survey (1-Year Estimates).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Jeffrey S. Passel, D’Vera Cohn, and Molly Rohal, *Unauthorized Immigrant Totals Rise in 7 States, Fall in 14* (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center’s Hispanic Trends Project, November 18, 2014), p. 30.

⁸ Walter A. Ewing and Guillermo Cantor, *New Americans in the Voting Booth: The Growing Electoral Power of Immigrant Communities* (Washington, DC: American Immigration Council, October 2014), p. 29.

⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, *The Hispanic Population: 2000*, May 2001.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ 2013 American Community Survey (1-Year Estimates).

¹² U.S. Census Bureau, *The Asian Population: 2000*, February 2002.

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¹⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, *Voting and Registration in the Election of November 2012*, “Table 4b. Reporting Voting and Registration by Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin, for States: November 2012.”

¹⁶ U.S. Electoral College, *2012 Presidential Election: Popular Vote Totals*.

¹⁷ The Urban Institute, data from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series datasets drawn from the 2005-2009 American Community Survey.

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¹⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, *Franklin County Estimates*, 1990.

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²² Community Research Partners, *Benchmarking Central Ohio 2009* (Columbus, OH: Community Research Partners, March 2009).

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- ²⁹ Ibid.
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- ³⁴ Partnership for a New American Economy, *The Power of the Purse: The Contributions of Hispanics to America’s Spending Power and Tax Revenues in 2013* (New York City, NY: Partnership for a New American Economy, 2014).
- ³⁵ Jeffrey S. Passel, D’Vera Cohn, and Molly Rohal, *Unauthorized Immigrant Totals Rise in 7 States, Fall in 14* (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center’s Hispanic Trends Project, November 18, 2014), p. 30.
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