

# New Americans in Long Beach

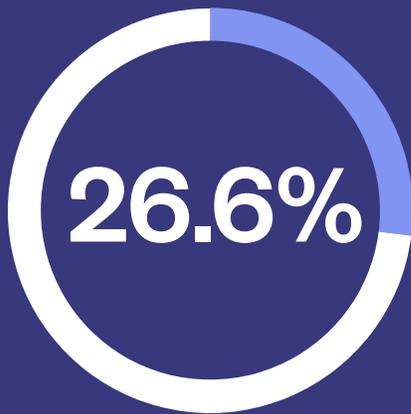
A Snapshot of the Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants in the Long Beach Area<sup>1</sup>



CITY OF LONG BEACH

New American Economy | State & Local

## POPULATION GROWTH



Immigrant share of the population, 2016

Between 2011 and 2016, the population in the area grew by **3.3%**.

The immigrant population increased by **14.3%**.

**Total population**

465,769 → 481,172



**Immigrant population**

112,125 → 128,149



Without an increase in the foreign-born population, the area's overall population would have decreased by...

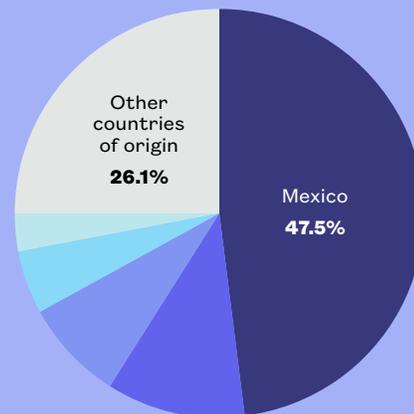
**621**  
people

Number of immigrants living in Long Beach in 2016:

**128,149**

Top five countries of origin for immigrants living in the area:

- 1 Mexico .....47.5%
- 2 Philippines.....10.6%
- 3 Cambodia .....7.8%
- 4 El Salvador ..... 5.2%
- 5 Vietnam ..... 2.8%



## SPENDING POWER & TAX CONTRIBUTIONS

Given their income, immigrants contributed significantly to state and local taxes, including property, sales, and excise taxes levied by state or municipal governments.

Amount earned by immigrant households in 2016: **\$3.4B**

**\$833.4M**  
went to federal taxes.<sup>2</sup>

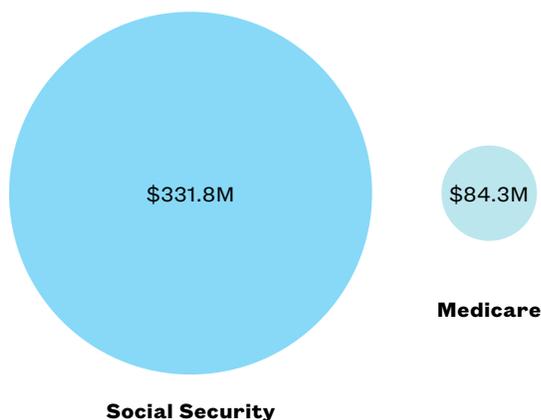
**\$280.7M**  
went to state and local taxes.<sup>3</sup>



Leaving them with **\$2.3B** in spending power.

This means that foreign-born households held **29%** of all spending power in Long Beach, more than their share of the area's overall population.<sup>4</sup>

Immigrants in Long Beach also support federal social programs. In 2016, they contributed **\$331.8M** to Social Security and **\$84.3M** to Medicare.



**39.8%** of immigrants in the area received **Medicare or Medicaid**, compared with **37.9%** of U.S.-born residents in 2016.



About **45.9%** of immigrants had private **healthcare coverage**, while **40.1%** had public healthcare coverage.



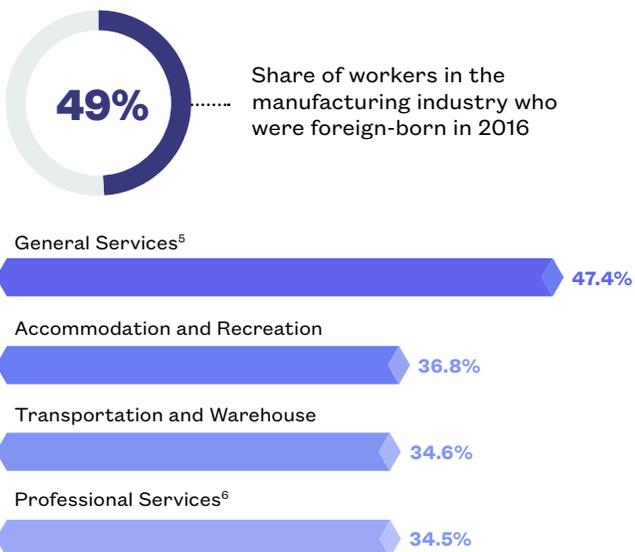
## LABOR FORCE GROWTH

Although the foreign-born made up **26.6%** of the area's overall population, they represented **32.6%** of its working-age\* population, **32.1%** of its employed labor force, and **22.8%** of its STEM\*\* workers in 2016.

\* Working-age refers to people ages 16-64 years old.

\*\* Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math

Immigrants play a critical role in several **key industries** in the area. This includes:



Because of the role immigrants play in the workforce helping companies keep jobs on U.S. soil, we estimate that, by 2016, immigrants living in the area had helped create or preserve

# 5,895

**local manufacturing jobs**

that would have otherwise vanished or moved elsewhere.<sup>7</sup>

## SPOTLIGHT ON

# Pasin Chanou

Chairman, *Cambodia Town*  
and Retired Systems Developer,  
*The Boeing Company*

In 1978, after receiving a computer science degree from American University in Washington, D.C., Pasin Chanou knew that he could not return to his native Cambodia. Three years earlier, the Khmer Rouge had brutally gained power and threatened his family's gemstone business. His parents feared for their lives and fled to Thailand. "There was no hope of going back, and my father told me I needed to make a life in America," he says. "I made up my mind to do whatever it would take to succeed here."

By that time, a steady flow of Cambodian refugees had made their home in Long Beach. So Chanou and his Cambodian fiancée, whom he'd met in college, moved to southern California. Chanou was hired as a computer analyst at McDonnell-Douglas, the aerospace manufacturer that later merged with Boeing. He spent 32 years at the company, where he worked on military cargo aircrafts. "I was so proud to play a role in contributing to such important projects, like launching commercial and military communications satellites into space," says Chanou, who earned an MBA from Pepperdine University in 1993. His two sons followed in his footsteps and became engineers.

After retiring in 2011, Chanou shifted his focus to community work. He became chairman of the board for Cambodia Town, a 1.2-mile business and cultural district that features ethnic restaurants and retailers. In 2015, he worked with the City of Long Beach to create a business improvement district that funds a security guard and sidewalk maintenance and helps underwrite a cultural festival that now attracts two thousand visitors annually.

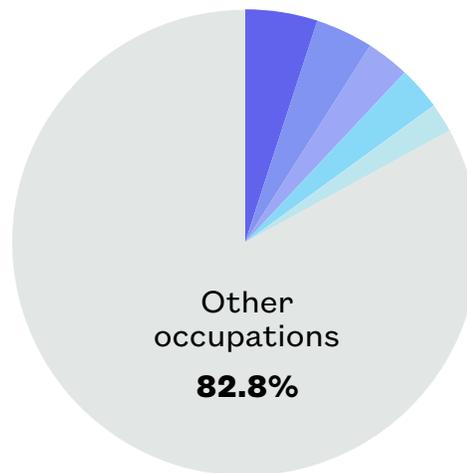
Chanou's mission for Cambodia Town is to celebrate immigrants' economic contributions to Long Beach. "Instead of going to college, many Cambodian refugees became entrepreneurs," he says, pointing to the restaurants, jewelry stores, beauty salons, grocery stores and tailoring businesses they run. "They're also famous for their donut shops," he says. Cambodians in Long Beach faced a rough transition, Chanou says, because of local skepticism toward the influx of refugees. But they have become essential to the area's identity and native Californians have embraced them. "We are a success story of integration. We are a proud part of Long Beach," he says.

**LABOR FORCE GROWTH CONT.**

Immigrants tend to concentrate in these **occupations** in the area:

- 1 Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners .5.2%\*
- 2 Truck Drivers .....3.7%
- 3 Janitors and Building Cleaners ... 3.0%
- 4 Cooks. .... 2.8%
- 5 Production Workers .....2.5%

\* Share of immigrants in these occupations



**ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

In Long Beach, immigrants were **18.5%** more likely to be entrepreneurs than their U.S.-born counterparts.



While **9.4%** of the U.S.-born population were self-employed, **11.1%** of the foreign-born residents worked for their own businesses.



**8,409** immigrant entrepreneurs generated **\$162.1M** in business income for the area.

Despite making up **26.6%** of the overall population, immigrants represented **35.9%** of the entrepreneurs in Long Beach in 2016.



In 2012, African American-owned businesses in the area generated...

**\$136.7M** in sales and paid **509** employees.

Asian-owned businesses generated...

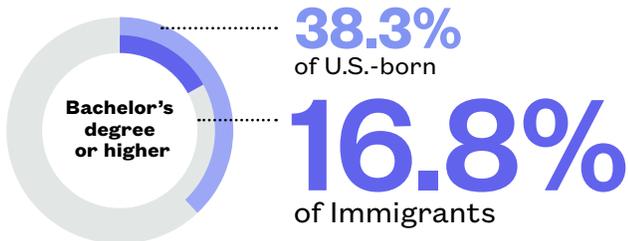
**\$2.4B** in sales and paid **8,992** employees.

Hispanic-owned businesses generated...

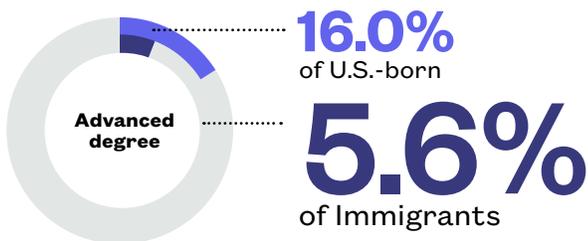
**\$602.7M** in sales and paid **4,015** employees.<sup>8</sup>

**EDUCATION**

Share of the Long Beach population over age 25 with a **bachelor's degree or higher** in 2016:



Share of the Long Beach population over age 25 with an **advanced degree** in 2016:



**2,969**

students who were enrolled in colleges and universities in the area during the fall of 2015 were temporary residents.<sup>9</sup> International students supported...

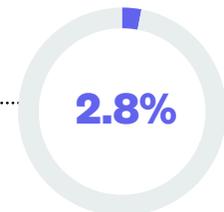
**611**

local jobs and spent...

**\$96.3M**

in the 2016-2017 academic year.<sup>10</sup>

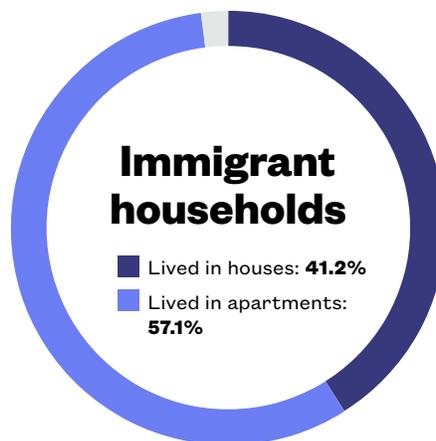
Immigrants make up **2.8%** the students under age 18 who attended public schools in the area in 2016.



**HOUSING WEALTH**

In 2016, **30.0%** of immigrant households in Long Beach owned their own homes, compared to **39.4%** of the U.S.-born.

**67.9%** of immigrant households were renters.



The total property value of immigrant households was

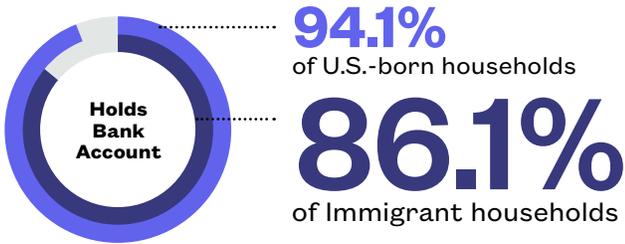
**\$7.5B.**

Their total annual rent was

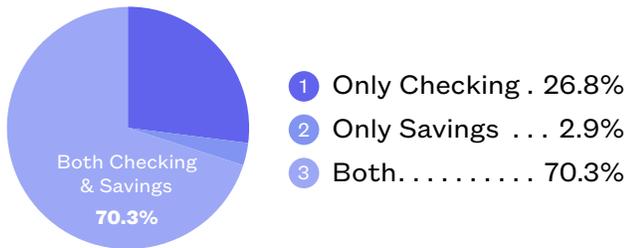
**\$442.5M.**

**BANKING<sup>11</sup>**

Share of households in the Los Angeles metro area, including the cities of Los Angeles, Long Beach, Santa Ana, and Irvine, that **had bank accounts** in 2015<sup>12</sup>...



Of these immigrant households with bank accounts...

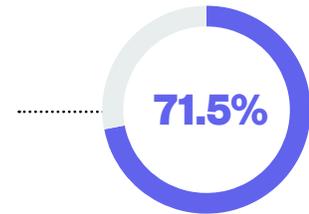


The top three ways for immigrant households in the Los Angeles metro area to pay bills:

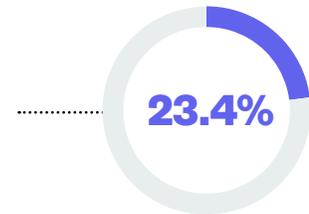


Income of immigrant households in the Los Angeles metro area remains relatively stable.

In 2015, **71.5%** of immigrant households reported their income remained roughly the same each month.



**23.4%** reported some small variation in their monthly income.



**62.2%** of immigrant households in the Los Angeles metro area have access to credit cards in 2015, compared with **73.2%** of U.S.-born households.

**14.7%** of immigrant households applied for a bank loan of line of credit in 2014, compared with **19.4%** of U.S.-born households in the metro area.

**NATURALIZATION**



SPOTLIGHT ON

# Josefina Cruz-Molina

Immigration Case Manager,  
*Centro CHA*

**F**or Josefina Cruz-Molina, who was 14 when her family fled increasing violence in El Salvador, moving to a new country was especially difficult. The daughter of an engineer, she had a comfortable life in San Salvador and a close-knit group of friends. But when a classmate of her younger brother was kidnapped at his school, the family realized they couldn't stay. "Leaving everything I knew to come here and start again with a new language was really hard, but I know my parents didn't have a choice," she says.

Cruz-Molina's uncle, a U.S. citizen, petitioned the government to give her family legal residency. They settled in Long Beach, where her father became a loan officer with Opportunity Fund, a microfinance organization, and her mother became a certified nursing assistant. Cruz-Molina focused on mastering English and, after high school, worked her way from Long Beach City College to the University of California at Riverside, where she majored in psychology.

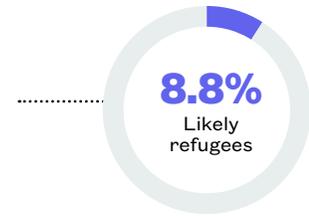
After graduating, she interned with the Community Hispanic Association, a non-profit social service agency that assists local low-income Hispanic youth and families. There Cruz-Molina found her calling: to help other immigrants become vibrant members of the Long Beach community. "I've met so many hard-working people who need to know how to navigate the immigration system," she says. "They just want the chance to contribute to society."

Last year, Cruz-Molina became a fulltime immigration case manager, guiding clients through residency and citizenship applications. She's especially passionate about helping young Dreamers renew their work permits. "We didn't choose our path as children," she says. "But we have a responsibility to make a bright future. I want to help people realize their full potential."

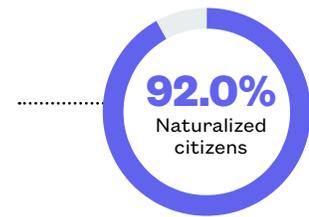
Cruz-Molina and her brothers, who are both engineering students, are now U.S. citizens—a testament to their perseverance. "Some people believed it would be too hard to adjust to a new country, but I proved them wrong," she says. "I was very lucky, and I'm grateful for the opportunities I've been given."

## REFUGEES

In 2016, **11,317** immigrants, or **8.8%** of the foreign-born population in Long Beach, were likely refugees.<sup>13</sup>



About **92.0%** of these refugees were naturalized citizens.



Median income of refugees in Long Beach, 2016:

# \$49,400



Share of refugees aged 25 and above with at least a bachelor's degree, 2016



Share of refugees aged 25 and above with an advanced degree, 2016

**UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS**

Number of undocumented immigrants in Long Beach in 2016:

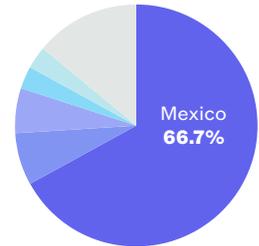
**30,775**

Share of immigrants who were undocumented:

**24.0%**

Top countries of origin for the undocumented immigrants in the area:

- 1 Mexico . . . . . 66.7%
- 2 Philippines . . . . . 6.8%
- 3 India . . . . . 5.9%
- 4 El Salvador . . . . . 3.2%
- 5 Honduras . . . . . 2.5%

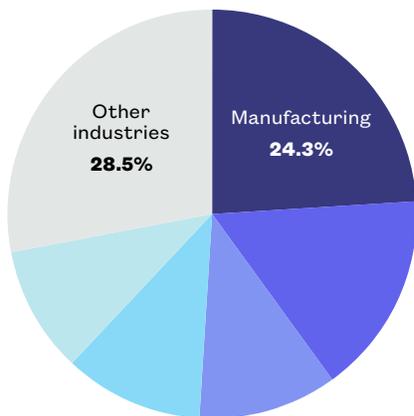


Amount earned by undocumented immigrant households in 2016: **\$481.7M**

**\$61.7M**  
went to federal taxes.<sup>14</sup>

**\$20.2M**  
went to state and local taxes.<sup>15</sup>

Leaving them with **\$399.7M** in spending power.<sup>16</sup>



Undocumented immigrants tended to concentrate in these industries in 2016:

- 1 Manufacturing . . . . . 24.3%\*
- 2 Recreation and Accommodation . . 15.9%
- 3 General Services<sup>17</sup> . . . . . 10.7%
- 4 Transportation & Warehouses . . . 10.6%
- 5 Professional Services<sup>18</sup> . . . . . 10.0%

\* Share of undocumented immigrants in these occupations

For more area, district, and state-level data, visit [MapTheImpact.org](http://MapTheImpact.org) and explore our interactive map.



- 1 Unless otherwise specified, data comes from 1-year samples of the American Community Survey from 2011 and 2016 and figures refer to the Cities of Long Beach and Signal Hill.
- 2 U.S. Congressional Budget Office. 2016. "The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2013."
- 3 Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. 2015. "Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States."
- 4 Estimates are based on federal tax rates from the U.S. Congressional Budget Office, and state and local tax rates from the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy.
- 5 General services include personal services (e.g. laundry services, barber shops, and repair and maintenance), religious organizations, social services, and labor unions.
- 6 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.
- 7 Vigdor, Jacob. 2013. "Immigration and the Revival of American Cities: From Preserving Manufacturing Jobs to Strengthening the Housing Market." New American Economy.
- 8 2012 Survey of Business Owners, U.S. Census Bureau
- 9 Data on total student enrollment in the area 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.
- 10 Economic data is derived from the International Student Economic Value Tool maintained by NAFSA, the association of international educators.
- 11 2015 Current Population Survey, U.S. Census Bureau
- 12 We define the Los Angeles metro area using the Office of Management and Budget definition of the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim Metropolitan Statistical Area.
- 13 New American Economy. 2017. "From Struggle to Resilience: The Economic Impact of Refugees in America,"
- 14 U.S. Congressional Budget Office. 2016. "The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2013."
- 15 Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. 2015. "Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States."
- 16 Estimates are based on federal tax rates from the U.S. Congressional Budget Office, and state and local tax rates from the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy.
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