

Immigrant Integration in the City of San Diego



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Main Findings

Foreign-Born Population in the City of San Diego

- The foreign-born population in the City of San Diego is approximately 344,000. This represents 27.1% of the city's total population. To compare, foreign-born persons account for 13.7% of the total population in the U.S.
- The foreign-born population in the City of San Diego is deeply rooted, as the average number of years spent in the U.S. is now nearly twenty-three years
- Approximately 67,900 foreign-born persons in the City of San Diego are undocumented. This represents 19.7% of the total foreign-born population in the City of San Diego. This also represents 43.6% of the estimated 156,000 undocumented immigrants in San Diego County
- Approximately 154,000 San Diegans live in mixed-immigration status households

Countries and Territories of Birth

- The foreign-born population in the City of San Diego comes from at least 115 countries and territories
- With respect to region of birth, 43.7% was born in Latin America, 42.9% was born in Asia, and 6.3% was born in Europe
- Foreign-born persons from the continent of Africa have contributed most significantly to the growth in the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego. Over the past five years, the foreign-born population from the continent of Africa has grown by 53.8%
- By 2030, the plurality of the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego will likely be from Asia, which mirrors national trends in immigration, and those from the continent of Africa will overtake Europe as the third largest immigrant-sending region
- With respect to country and territory of birth, 39.1% were born in Mexico, 13.0% were born in the Philippines, 7.5% were born in Vietnam, 6.0% were born in China (including Hong Kong), and 3.6% were born in India
- The fastest growing foreign-born populations in the City of San Diego come from Syria, Kenya, Sudan, Iraq, and Nigeria, with growth over the past five years of +866.3%, +303.5%, +303.4%, +278.7%, and +224.4%, respectively

Languages

- The foreign-born population in the City of San Diego speaks at least 70 different languages and dialects
- The main languages spoken are Spanish (144,000), English (39,000), Filipino/Tagalog (38,800), Chinese, including Mandarin and Cantonese (24,300), and Vietnamese (23,700)
- Approximately half (50.9%) of the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego are limited English proficient (LEP)
- 65.1% of Spanish speakers, 42.1% of Filipino/Tagalog speakers, 59.9% of Chinese, including Mandarin and Cantonese speakers, and 80.2% of Vietnamese speakers are LEP

Economic Contributions

- The foreign-born population in the City of San Diego adds approximately 213,000 workers to the city's labor force. Among these workers, 93.8% are employed
- Approximately 36,000 essential health workers in the City of San Diego are foreign-born, nearly 4 out of every 10 of whom (37.7%) are noncitizens
- Foreign-born essential health workers account for 34.1% of all essential health workers in the city
- Approximately 32,400 essential food and agricultural workers in the City of San Diego are foreign-born, nearly 2 out of every 3 of whom (63.8%) are noncitizens
- Foreign-born essential food and agricultural workers account for 35.1% of all essential food and agriculture workers in the city
- The foreign-born population in the City of San Diego earned a combined \$9.91 billion in pre-tax wages and salary income. This translates into an estimated \$2.68 billion in federal taxes and an estimated \$946.29 million in state and local taxes

Education and the 21st Century Workforce

- Approximately 98,000 foreign-born persons in the City of San Diego who are 25 years or older have a bachelor's degree or higher, which translates into a rate of 31.9%
- The top five degree areas among those with a bachelor's degree or higher are engineering (19.2%), business (17.9%), biology and life sciences (9.1%), medical and health sciences (8.7%), and social sciences (6.5%)
- Approximately 49,000 foreign-born persons are currently attending school in the City of San Diego. Among these students, approximately 32,000 are currently attending college or university and approximately 15,700 are currently attending K-12 schools

The City of San Diego's Foreign-Born Population

The most recent U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS) microdata show that the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego is approximately 344,000. This represents 27.1% of the city's total population, which is just under twice the national average of 13.7%. The foreign-born population in the City of San Diego is deeply rooted in the community, as the average number of years spent in the U.S. is now nearly twenty-three years.

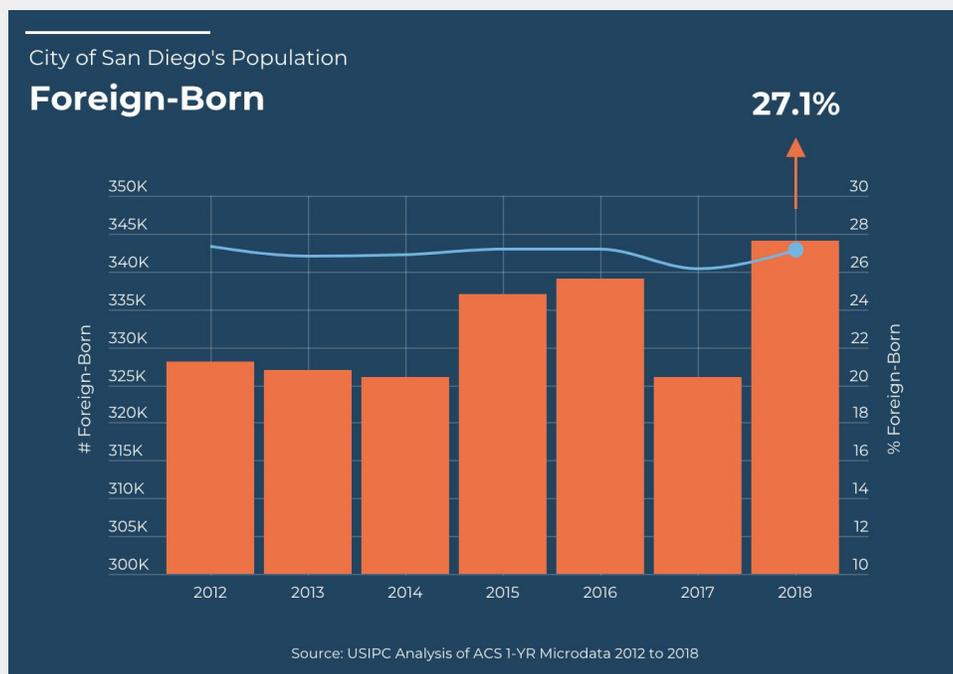


Figure 1

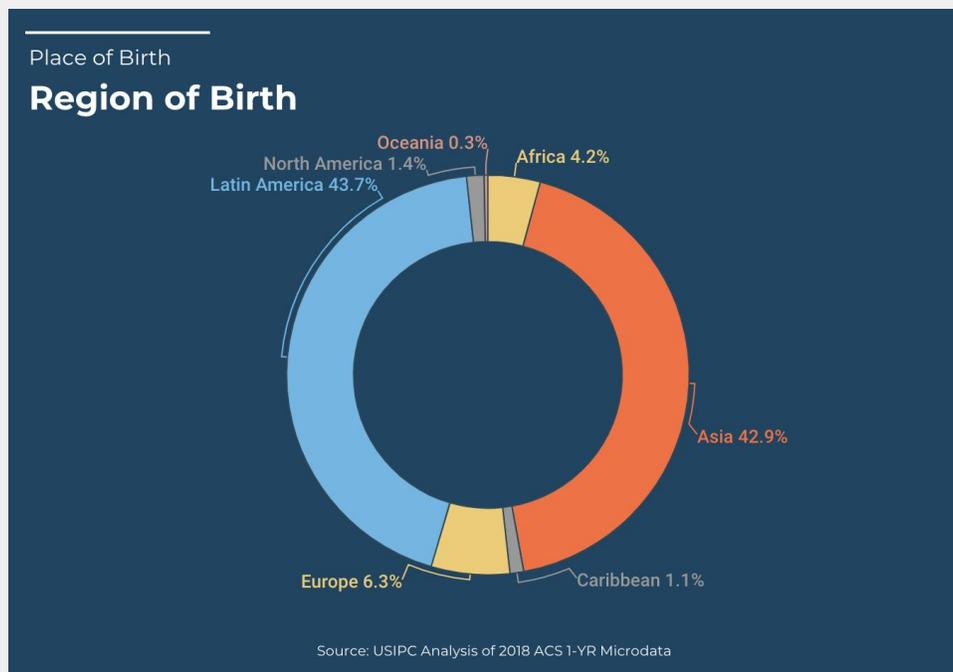
Figure 1 shows how the size of the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego, as well as the foreign-born percentage of the city's total population, has changed over the past several years. As the left axis in the figure shows, from 2012 to present, the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego has grown by 4.7%. However, as the right axis of the figure shows, the foreign-born percentage of the city's total population has remained largely unchanged. For additional perspective, in 2000, the foreign-born percentage of the city's population was 25.7%. In other words, over the past twenty years, the foreign-born percentage of the city's population has increased by 1.4%.¹

¹ During this same period, the foreign-born population in the U.S. grew by 2.6%. This reflects changing immigration patterns wherein newer immigrant populations are increasingly settling in states across the U.S. South.

Country of Birth

The foreign-born population in the City of San Diego is incredibly diverse and comes from at least 115 countries and territories. Figure 2 shows the percentage distribution of the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego by region of birth using United Nations region classifications. As the figure shows, the plurality of the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego was born in Latin America (43.7%), followed by Asia (42.9%), and then Europe (6.3%).

Figure 2



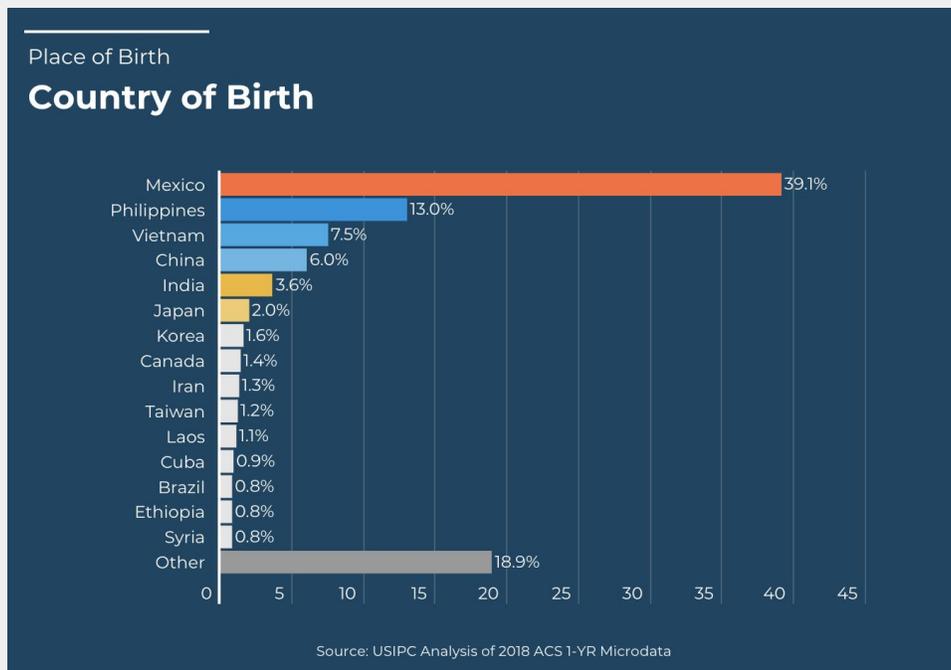
Foreign-born persons from the continent of Africa have contributed most significantly to the growth in the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego. Over the past five years, the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego from the continent of Africa has grown by 53.8%. In contrast, during the same period, the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego from Latin America and Asia grew by 3.9% and 6.9%, respectively, while the foreign-born population from Europe decreased by -7.6%. If current trends hold, by 2030, the plurality of the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego will likely be from Asia, which mirrors national trends in immigration, and those from the continent of Africa will overtake Europe as the third largest immigrant-sending region.

Country of Birth continued

Figure 3 shows the top ten countries and territories of birth among the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego. As the figure shows, Mexico accounts for 39.1% of all of the city's foreign-born population, followed by the Philippines (13.0%), Vietnam (7.5%), China, including Hong Kong (6.0%), and then India (3.6%). These five countries and territories account for nearly 7 out of every 10 (69.3%) of the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego.

However, the data paint a starkly different portrait when analyzing growth in the foreign-born population by country and territory of birth. Over the past five years, the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego from Mexico, the Philippines, Vietnam, China, including Hong Kong, and India has grown by 3.3%, -5.2%, 17.3%, 31.8%, and 20.9%, respectively. In contrast, the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego from Syria, Kenya, Sudan, Iraq, and Nigeria has grown by 866.3%, 303.5%, 303.4%, 278.7%, and 224.4%, respectively.²

Figure 3



² These are the top five countries and territories of birth when it comes to growth in the size of the foreign-born population for all countries and territories of birth with at least 1,000 foreign-born persons in the City of San Diego.

Race and Ethnicity

The foreign-born population in the City of San Diego contributes significantly to the city's racial and ethnic diversity. Table 1 shows the racial and ethnic composition of the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego. As the table shows 39.7% are Hispanic, 37.6% are non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander (API), 3.9% are non-Hispanic Black/African-American, and 16.7% are non-Hispanic White.

	Foreign-Born % Population	% Racial/Ethnic Group Foreign-Born
Hispanic	39.7%	35.9%
Non-Hispanic API	37.6%	62.4%
Non-Hispanic Black	3.9%	15.1%
Non-Hispanic White	16.7%	10.8%

Source: USIPC analysis of 2018 ACS 1-YR microdata

Viewed from a slightly different perspective, the foreign-born Hispanic population accounts for 35.8% of the entire Hispanic population in the City of San Diego. The foreign-born non-Hispanic API population accounts for 62.4% of the entire non-Hispanic API population in the City of San Diego. The foreign-born Black/African-American population accounts for 15.1% of the entire non-Hispanic Black/African-American population in the City of San Diego. And the foreign-born non-Hispanic White population accounts for 10.8% of the entire non-Hispanic White population in the City of San Diego.

Languages

The foreign-born population in the City of San Diego speaks at least 70 different languages and dialects. Approximately half (49.1%) are bilingual and speak English “very well.”³ However, this means that approximately half (50.9%) are limited English proficient (LEP).

The main languages spoken among the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego are Spanish (144,000), English (39,000), Filipino/Tagalog (38,800), Chinese, including Mandarin and Cantonese (24,300), and Vietnamese (23,700).⁴ These languages also represent all of the languages spoken among the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego with at least 10,000 speakers. Among these languages, and excluding English, 65.1% of Spanish speakers, 42.1% of Filipino/Tagalog speakers, 59.9% of Chinese, including Mandarin and Cantonese speakers, and 80.2% of Vietnamese speakers are LEP.

The percentage of foreign-born persons in the City of San Diego who are limited English proficient amplifies the need for culturally competent in-language assistance. Indeed, tracking English language proficiency is used, for example, to enforce civil rights and voting rights laws, as well as to identify language access needs that federal, state, and local governments can address. We thus model the determinants of becoming LEP.⁵ After controlling for several immigration-specific factors and socioeconomic characteristics, the analysis shows that the likelihood of being LEP decreases with the number of years a person has been in the U.S. However, as Figure 4 shows, the trend lines differ depending on which language is spoken.

³ English language proficiency is self-reported.

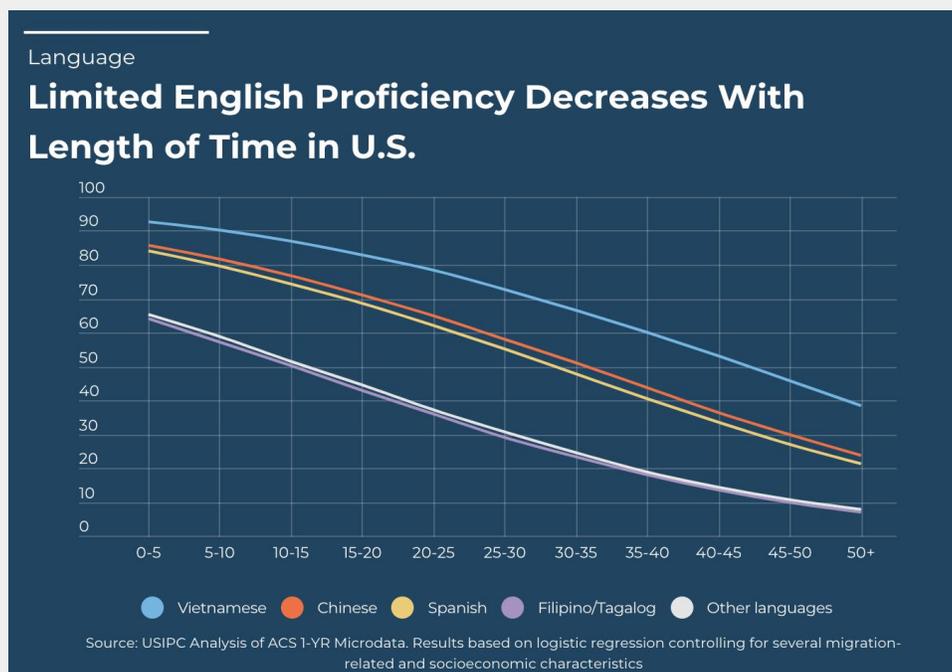
⁴ Rounded to the nearest thousand for values 100,000 and over and rounded to the nearest hundred for values between 10,000 and 99,999.

⁵ We ran a series of logistic regression models that controlled for the migratory histories and the socioeconomic characteristics of foreign-born persons in the City of San Diego. The covariates included: number of years in the U.S., age at immigrating to the U.S., whether the person was born in an English-speaking country, the language the person speaks, income, employment, educational attainment, age, and sex.

Languages continued

For example, the likelihood of being LEP among Filipino/Tagalog speakers has a lower baseline compared to other languages and decreases by approximately 7% every five years for the first twenty-five years in the U.S. before tapering off. In contrast, the likelihood of being LEP among Vietnamese speakers has a much higher baseline compared to other languages and does not significantly decline until after twenty years in the U.S. Lower-income foreign-born persons and those without a bachelor's degree or higher are also statistically significantly more likely to be LEP, which again amplifies the importance of purposive language access assistance.

Figure 4



Age and Sex

The average age of the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego is 46.7 years old with the youngest being 0 years old and the oldest being 94 years old.⁶ Approximately 17,000 are under the age of 18, approximately 80,000 are between the ages of 18 and 34, approximately 188,000 are between the ages of 35 and 64, and approximately 59,000 are 65 years and older. In other words, 4.9% of the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego is under the age of 18, 23.4% are between the ages of 18 and 34, 54.6% are between the ages of 35 and 64, and 17.2% are 65 years and older.

Table 2 compares the age distribution of the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego by race and ethnicity. As the table shows, the foreign-born non-Hispanic API population tends to be older with 20.2% being 65 years and older. In other words, the foreign-born non-Hispanic API population is 1.2 times more likely to be 65 years and older when compared to the rest of the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego. The table also shows that the foreign-born non-Hispanic Black/African-American population tends to be younger with 16.6% being under the age of 18. In other words, the foreign-born non-Hispanic Black/African-American population is over 3 times more likely to be under the age of 18 when compared to the rest of the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego.

	0-17 years	18-34 years	35-64 years	65 and older
Hispanic	4.9%	20.6%	60.4%	14.2%
Non-Hispanic API	2.9%	23.8%	52.9%	20.2%
Non-Hispanic Black	16.6%	27.9%	46.3%	9.2%
Non-Hispanic White	5.1%	27.9%	47.7%	19.3%
All Foreign-Born	4.9%	23.4%	54.6%	17.2%

Source: USIPC analysis of 2018 ACS 1-YR microdata

⁶ The average age of the foreign-born population is approximately thirteen years older than the average age of the native-born population (33.7 years old). We note here that the average age of the foreign-born population is older than the native-born population, in part, because many of the children of immigrants are born in the U.S., which drives down the average age of the native-born population.

Age and Sex continued

The foreign-born population in the City of San Diego is majority female, as 52.6% is female and 47.4% is male. This distribution mirrors the national trends.⁷ Again, we see significant variation by race and ethnicity. Whereas the foreign-born Hispanic population in the City of San Diego is even more likely to be female, with 53.8% being female and 46.2% being male, than the rest of the foreign-born population, the opposite is true for the foreign-born Black/African-American population. Whereas 44.9% of the foreign-born Black/African-American population are female, 55.1% are male.



Figure 5

⁷ 51.8% of the foreign-born population outside of the City of San Diego is female and 48.2% is male.

Economic Contributions

The foreign-born population in the City of San Diego adds approximately 213,000 workers to the city’s labor force. Among these workers, 93.8% are currently employed. Although we use the most recent U.S. Census American Community Survey microdata, it is important to note that these data precede the COVID-19 pandemic.⁸

Occupation

Table 3 shows the top twenty occupations among foreign-born workers in the City of San Diego. Using U.S. Census Bureau occupation codes, the data show that the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego work in occupations ranging from “maids and housekeeping cleaners,” “janitors and building cleaners,” and “cooks” to “software developers,” “registered nurses,” and “physical scientists, all other.”⁹

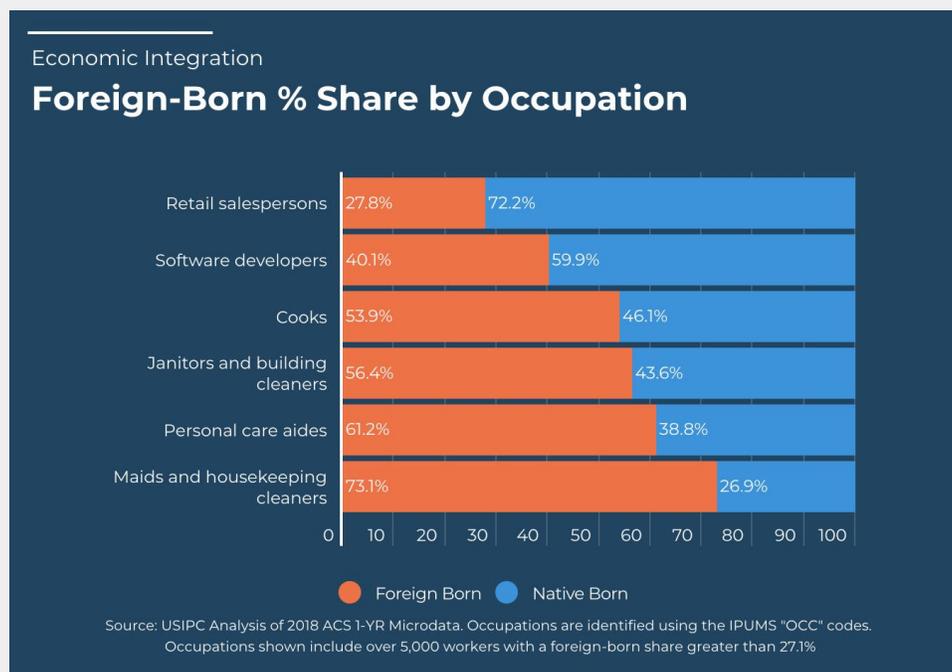
Occupation	# Foreign-Born Workers
Maids and housekeeping cleaners	8,300
Cooks	7,900
Janitors and building cleaners	7,700
Personal care aides	7,300
Retail salespersons	5,900
Software developers	5,300
Construction laborers	5,000
Waiters and waitresses	4,900
Registered nurses	4,300
First-Line supervisors of retail sales workers	3,600
Physical scientists, all other	3,500
Driver/sales workers and truck drivers	3,400
Childcare workers	3,400
Elementary and middle school teachers	3,300
Managers, all other	3,200
Landscaping and groundskeeping workers	3,000
Manicurists and pedicurists	2,900
Accountants and auditors	2,700
Postsecondary teachers	2,500
First-Line supervisors of non-retail sales workers	2,500

Source: USIPC analysis of 2018 ACS 1-YR microdata. Occupations are identified using IPUMS “OCC” codes. Rounded to the nearest hundred.

Economic Contributions continued

Figure 6 provides a slightly different perspective. The figure shows just how much certain occupations depend on foreign-born workers in the City of San Diego. The figure includes all occupations with at least 5,000 foreign-born workers and where foreign-born workers account for more than 27.1% in each respective occupation. Whereas foreign-born persons account for 27.1% of the total population in the City of San Diego, and again referring to U.S. Census Bureau occupation codes, foreign-born workers account for 33.9% of “registered nurses,” 40.1% of “software developers,” 40.2% of “childcare workers,” 40.8% of “engineers, all other,”¹⁰ 43.4% of “chefs and head cooks,” 46.8% of “physical scientists, all other,” 61.2% of “personal care aides,” and 73.1% of “maids and housekeeping cleaners.”

Figure 6



⁸ Updated employment statistics will undoubtedly show the severe downward effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on employment.

⁹ This U.S. Census occupation code refers to physical scientists who are not astronomers and physicists, atmospheric and space scientists, chemists and materials scientists, environmental scientists and specialists, including health, or geoscientists and hydrologists.

¹⁰ This U.S. Census occupation code refers to engineers who are not aerospace engineers, agricultural engineers, bioengineers and biomedical engineers, chemical engineers, civil engineers, computer hardware engineers, electrical and electronics engineers, environmental engineers, industrial engineers, including health and safety, marine engineers and naval architects, materials engineers, mechanical engineers, mining and geological engineers, including mining safety engineers, nuclear engineers, or petroleum engineers.

Economic Contributions continued

Industry

Table 4 shifts from occupation to industry and shows the top ten industries among foreign-born workers in the City of San Diego. Using U.S. Census Bureau industry codes, the data show that the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego work in industries ranging from “restaurants and other food services,” “construction,” and “services to buildings and dwellings” to “general medical and surgical hospitals, and speciality (except psychiatric and substance abuse) hospitals,” “colleges, universities, and professional schools, including junior colleges,” “computer systems design and related services,” and “scientific research and development services.”

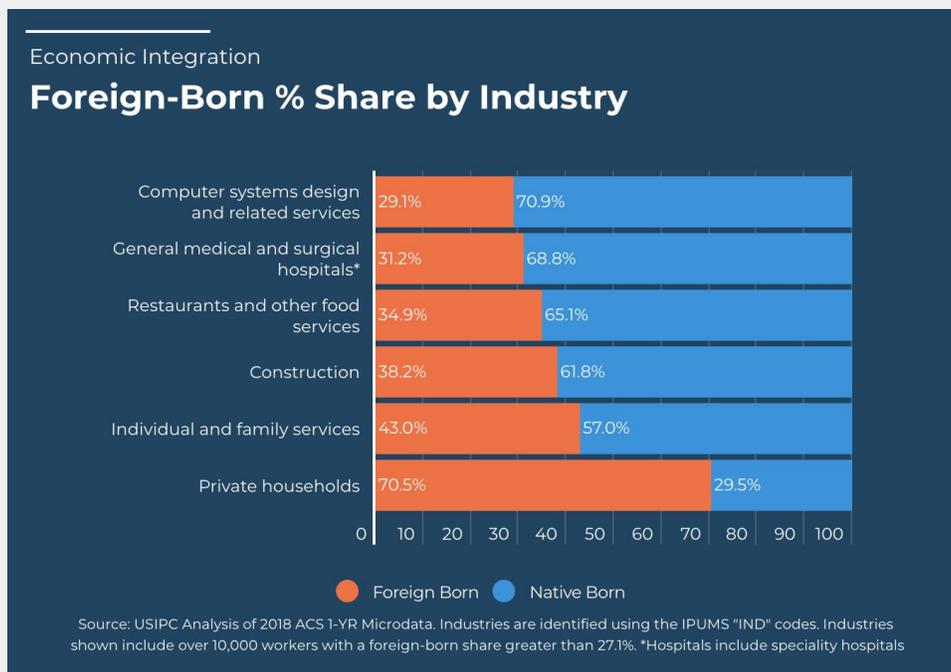
Industry	# Foreign-Born Workers
Restaurants and other food services	23,000
Construction	14,900
General medical and surgical hospitals, and specialty hospitals ^a	9,500
Elementary and secondary schools	8,000
Colleges, universities, and professional schools ^b	7,100
Computer systems design and related services	5,900
Private households	5,700
Individual and family services	5,400
Services to buildings and dwellings ^c	4,800
Scientific research and development services	4,400

Source: USIPC analysis of 1-YR microdata. Industries are identified using IPUMS “IND” codes. ^a Specialty hospitals exclude psychiatric and substance abuse facilities. ^b Colleges, universities, and professional schools include junior colleges. ^c Services to buildings and dwellings exclude cleaning during construction and immediately after construction. Rounded to the nearest hundred.

Economic Contributions continued

Figure 7 shows just how much certain industries depend on foreign-born workers in the City of San Diego. The figure includes all industries with at least 5,000 foreign-born workers and where foreign-born workers account for more than 27.1% in each respective industry. Whereas foreign-born persons account for 27.1% of the total population in the City of San Diego, and again referring to U.S. Census Bureau industry codes, foreign-born workers account for 29.1% of those who work in “computer systems design and related services,” 31.2% of those who work in “general medical and surgical hospitals, and speciality (except psychiatric and substance abuse) hospitals,” 38.2% of those who work in “construction,” 34.9% of those who work in “restaurants and other food services,” 43.0% of those who work in “individual and family services,” and 70.5% of those who work in “private households.”

Figure 7



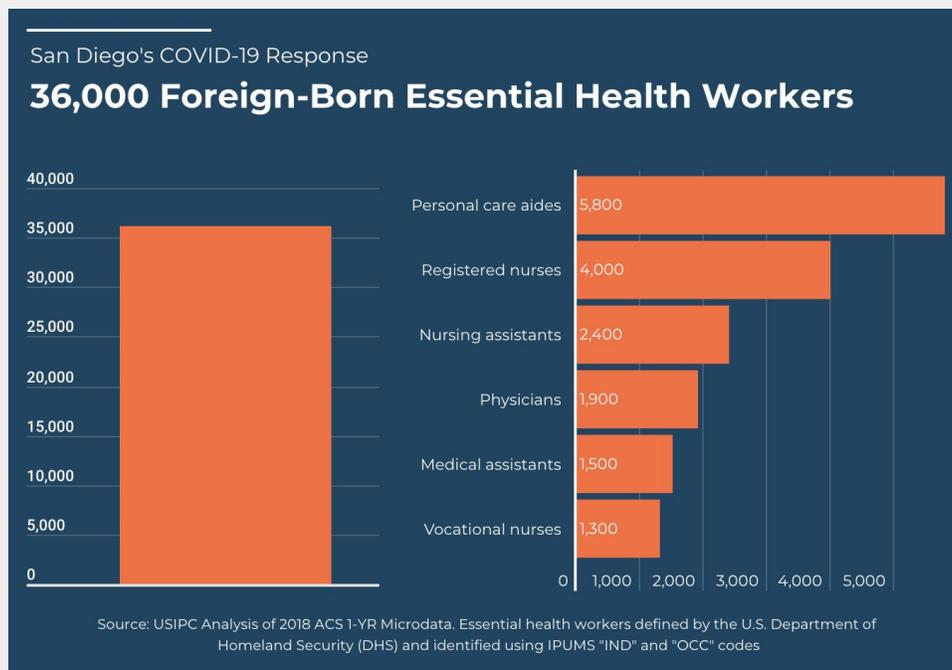
The City of San Diego's Foreign-Born Population on the Front Lines of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Essential Health Workers

There are just over 36,000 foreign-born essential health workers in the City of San Diego, nearly 4 out of every 10 of whom (37.7%) are noncitizens.¹¹ Foreign-born essential health workers account for 34.1% of all essential health workers in the city. This includes, and again using U.S. Census Bureau occupation codes, approximately 5,800 “personal care aides,” 4,000 “registered nurses,” 2,400 “nursing assistants,” 1,900 “physicians,” 1,500 “medical assistants,” and 1,300 “licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses.”

Figure 8 shows just how much certain health occupations depend on foreign-born workers in the City of San Diego. The figure includes all health occupations with at least 1,000 foreign-born workers and where foreign-born workers account for more than 27.1% in each respective occupation. As the figure shows, and again using U.S. Census Bureau occupation codes, foreign-born workers account for 28.4% of “physicians,” 35.6% of “registered nurses,” 41.5% of “licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses,” 61.2% of “nursing assistants,” 61.7% of “personal care aids,” and 66.4% of “medical assistants.”

Figure 8



¹¹ Essential health workers are defined by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and identified using IPUMS “IND” and “OCC” codes.

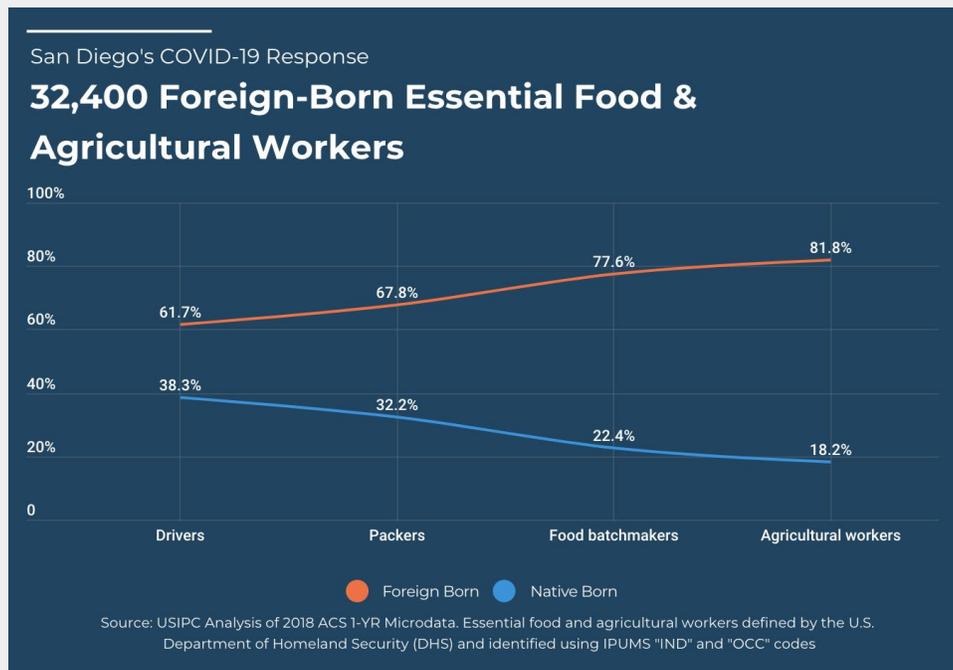
The City of San Diego's Foreign-Born Population on the Front Lines of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Essential Food and Agricultural Workers

Figure 9 shows just how much certain food and agricultural occupations depend on foreign-born workers in the City of San Diego, focusing on food production and transportation.¹²

The figure includes all food production and transportation occupations with at least 500 foreign-born workers and where foreign-born workers account for more than 27.1% in each respective occupation. As the figure shows, 43.4% of food and agricultural “driver/sales workers and truck drivers,” 67.8% of “hand packers and packagers, hand,” meaning workers who package food by hand, 77.6% of “food batchmakers,”¹³ and 81.8% of agricultural workers, which includes “graders and sorters, agricultural products” and all “other agricultural workers,” are foreign born.

Figure 9



¹² This excludes retail food occupations.

¹³ This includes bakers.

Tax Contributions

The foreign-born population in the City of San Diego earned a combined \$9.91 billion in pre-tax wages and salary income. This translates into an estimated \$2.68 billion in federal taxes¹⁴ and an estimated \$946.29 million in state and local taxes.¹⁵ Moreover, as Medicare and Social Security Contributions are fixed at 1.45 percent and 6.20 percent, respectively, this means that the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego contributed an estimated \$143.7 million to Medicare and an estimated \$614.4 million to Social Security.¹⁶

Figure 10



¹⁴ See Congressional Budget Office (CBO), <https://www.cbo.gov/system/files/2019-01/54911-MTRchartbook.pdf>

¹⁵ See Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (ITEP), <https://itep.org/whopays-map/>

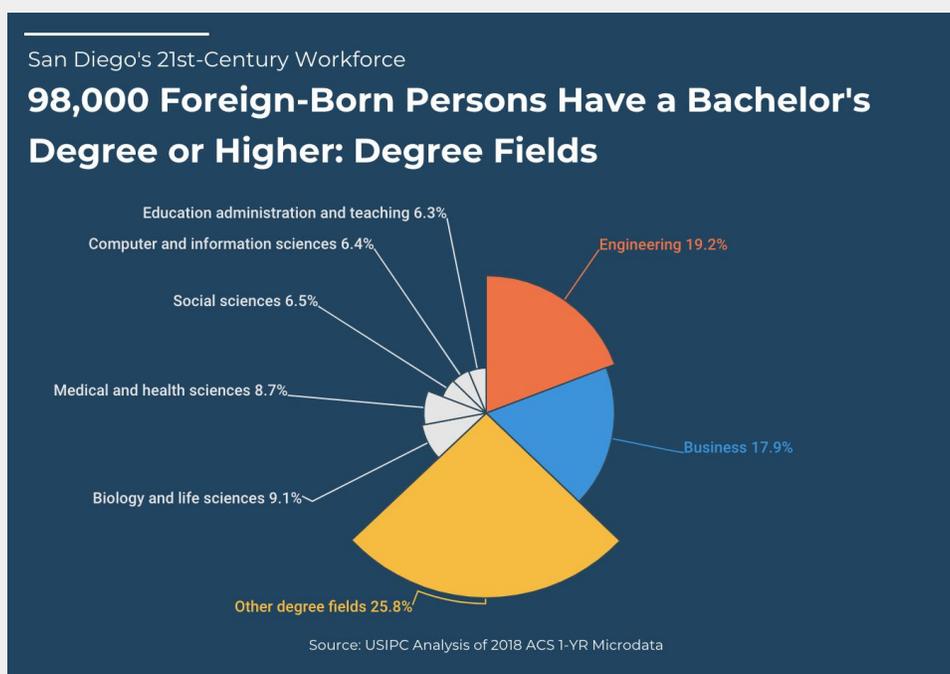
¹⁶ Of course, these estimates are subject to noise as it assumes employers are paying employees via payroll. This is most likely the case for foreign-born naturalized citizens, as well as noncitizens in certain occupations. This is less likely the case for undocumented workers who are paid "under the table." However, it is also important to note here that many undocumented workers are paid via payroll or otherwise pay taxes using an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN). See Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (ITEP).

Education and the 21st-Century Workforce

Approximately 98,000 foreign-born persons in the City of San Diego who are 25 years or older have a bachelor's degree or higher, which translates into a rate of 31.9%. The top five degree areas among those with a bachelor's degree or higher are engineering (19.2%), business (17.9%), biology and life sciences (9.1%), medical and health sciences (8.7%), and social sciences (6.5%).

The data also show that approximately 49,000 foreign-born persons are currently attending school in the City of San Diego. Among these students, approximately 32,000 are currently attending college or university. Indeed, if the City of San Diego can retain this talent, these students will surely figure prominently in the city's future economic growth and development. Approximately 15,700 foreign-born children are currently attending K-12 schools in the City of San Diego.

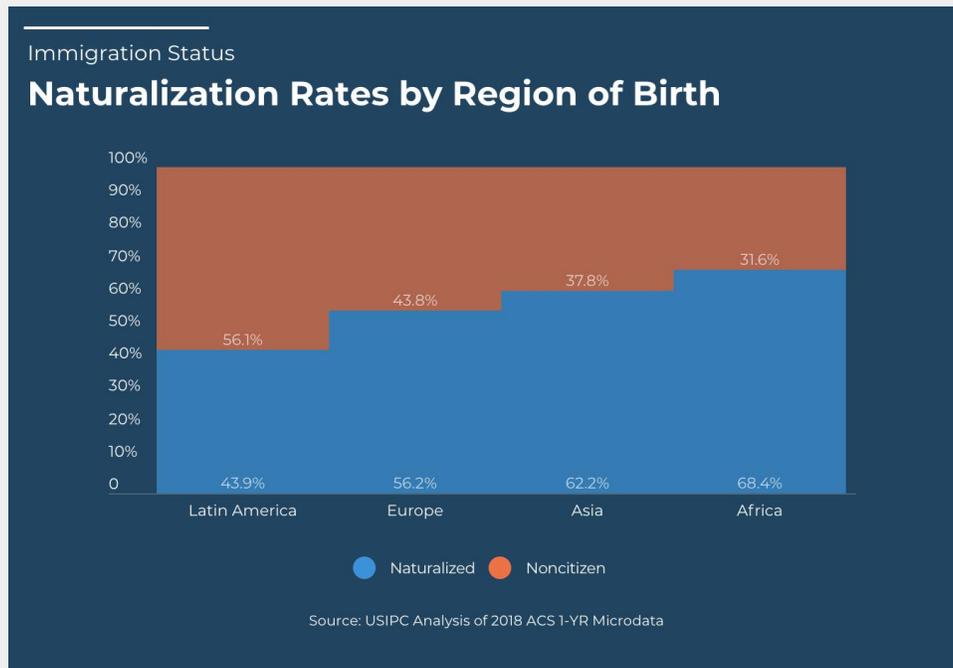
Figure 11



Citizenship and Immigration Status

A full 53.6% of the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego are naturalized citizens and 46.4% are noncitizens. Figure 12 shows the differential naturalization rates among the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego by region of birth. As the figure shows, whereas 43.9% of foreign-born persons from Latin America are naturalized citizens, 68.4% of foreign-born persons from the continent of Africa are naturalized citizens. The difference in naturalization rates between foreign-born persons from Latin America and foreign-born persons from the continent of Africa is explained mostly by larger numbers of undocumented immigrants among the former and larger numbers of resettled refugees among the latter.

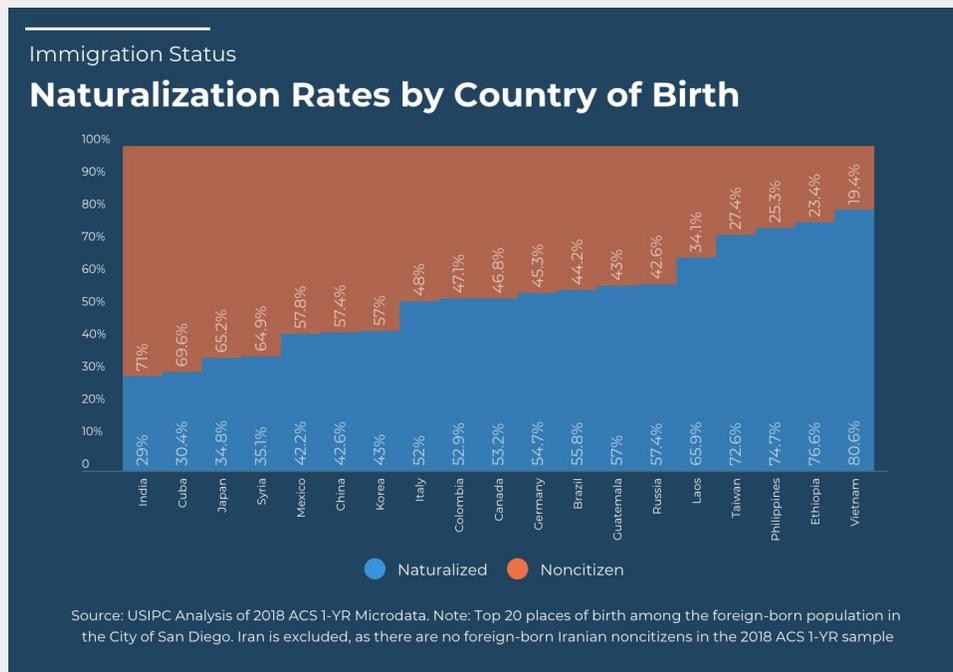
Figure 12



Citizenship and Immigration Status continued

Region of birth can obscure country-level differences, including differences within regions, which is why it is important to disaggregate the data even further. Figure 13 shows how significantly naturalization rates vary by country of origin for the top twenty countries and territories of birth among the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego. At the lower end of the spectrum, just 29.0% of foreign-born persons from India are naturalized citizens. On the higher end of the spectrum, 80.6% of foreign-born persons from Vietnam are naturalized citizens.

Figure 13

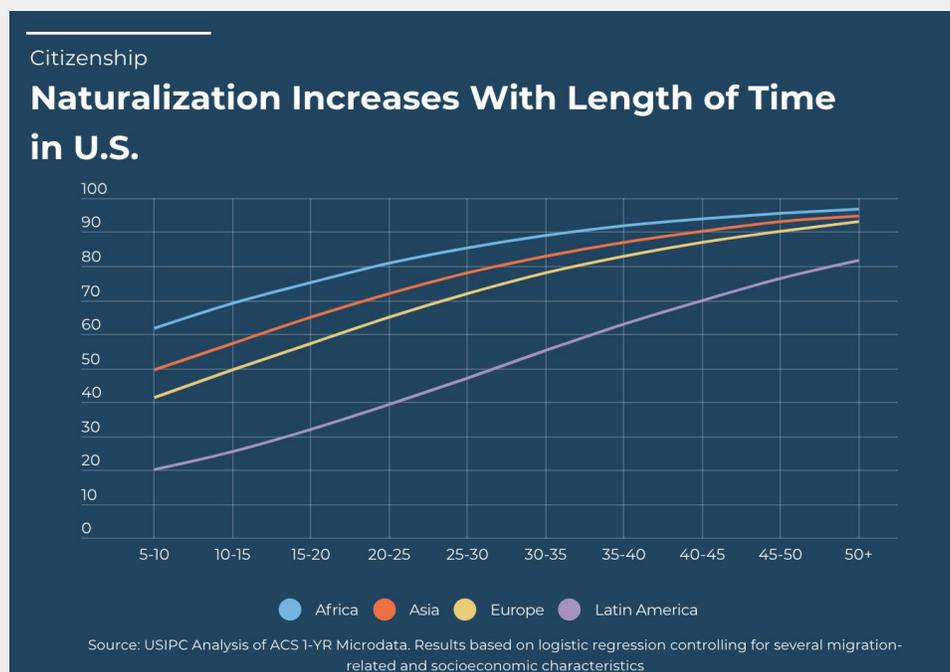


Citizenship and Immigration Status continued

We also modeled the determinants of naturalization among the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego.¹⁷ After controlling for several immigration-specific factors and socioeconomic characteristics, the analysis shows that the likelihood of being naturalized increases with the number of years a person has been in the U.S. However, as Figure 14 shows, the trend lines differ depending on country and territory of birth.

For example, the likelihood of being naturalized among foreign-born persons from Vietnam has a higher baseline with an estimated 84.3% naturalization rate after five to ten years in the U.S. In contrast, the likelihood of being naturalized among foreign-born persons from India has a significantly lower baseline with an estimated 14.3% naturalization rate after five to ten years in the U.S. In addition to uncovering naturalization gaps between different countries and territories of birth, the analysis further shows that those who are limited English proficient are 50.2% less likely to be naturalized compared to those who are not LEP. The analysis also shows that lower-income persons are statistically significantly less likely to be naturalized, which makes vivid the class dynamics at play.

Figure 14



¹⁷ We ran a series of logistic regression models that controlled for the migratory histories and the socioeconomic characteristics of foreign-born persons in the City of San Diego. The covariates included: number of years in the U.S., age at immigrating to the U.S., country of origin, limited English proficiency, income, employment, educational attainment, age, and sex.

Citizenship and Immigration Status continued

The Undocumented Population in the City of San Diego

There are an estimated 67,900 undocumented immigrants in the City of San Diego.¹⁸ This represents 19.7% of the foreign-born population and 42.5% of the foreign-born noncitizen population in the City of San Diego. This also represents 43.6% of the estimated 156,000 undocumented immigrants in San Diego County. Approximately 154,000 San Diegans live in mixed-immigration status households.

The undocumented population in the City of San Diego is also deeply rooted in the community, as the average number of years spent in the U.S. is nearly sixteen years. An estimated 64.5% are from Latin America and 29.5% are from Asia. In other words, over 9 out of every 10 undocumented persons in the City of San Diego are from Latin America or Asia.

With respect to country and territory of birth, the undocumented population in the City of San Diego comes from at least 45 countries and territories. Approximately 60.2% of the undocumented population in the City of San Diego was born in Mexico, 8.0% was born in India, 6.3% was born in China, including Hong Kong, and 5.6% was born in the Philippines.

Undocumented persons in the City of San Diego are significantly younger than the rest of the foreign-born population. The average age of undocumented persons in the City of San Diego is 38.9 years old, which is nearly ten years younger when compared to the average age of the rest of the foreign-born population (48.6 years old). Whereas the foreign-born population in the City of San Diego is majority female, the majority of undocumented persons are male (52.7%).

Undocumented persons in the City of San Diego are significantly more likely to be in the labor force than the rest of the foreign-born population, 73.7% and 59.0%, respectively. Approximately 92.7% of undocumented persons are employed. Using U.S. Census Bureau occupation codes, the data show that the top five occupations among undocumented workers in the City of San Diego are “cooks,” “janitors and building cleaners,” “maids and housekeeping cleaners,” “landscaping and groundskeeping workers,” and “software developers.” The large number of undocumented software developers may surprise some, but this is consistent with temporary H-1B tech workers who overstay their visas. Using U.S. Census Bureau occupation codes, the data show that the top five industries among undocumented workers in the City

¹⁸ Undocumented status is estimated using the Warren (2015) method.

Citizenship and Immigration Status continued

of San Diego are “restaurants and other food services,” “construction,” “services to buildings and dwellings (except cleaning during construction and immediately after construction),” “landscaping services,” and “private households.” Approximately 4,200 essential health workers and approximately 12,200 essential food and agricultural workers in the City of San Diego are undocumented.

Methodology

All estimates were derived from the 2018 Census American Community Survey (ACS) 1-YR microdata. The ACS is an annual survey conducted by the Census of 1% of the total population in the U.S. More specifically, it is a 1-in-100 random weighted sample of the entire U.S. population.

Respondents from the City of San Diego are identified using Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs). The ACS distinguishes between native-born and foreign-born persons. In order to categorize foreign-born persons by region of birth, we use United Nations region classifications, which can be found here: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49/>. Note: in addition to region (continent of Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Europe, Latin America, North America, and Oceania), this also gives us the ability to repeat the analyses by sub-region.

The ACS provides data on race and ethnicity. Our categories include those who identify ethnically as Hispanic, which can include persons of all races, and then non-Hispanic API, non-Hispanic Black/African-American, and non-Hispanic White so as to not include overlapping categories.

We identify persons as being limited English proficient (LEP) if they do not speak English at all or if they speak English, but not “very well.” We defined English-speaking country using the University of Sheffield’s list of majority English-speaking countries, which can be found here: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/international/english-speaking-countries>. For Figure 4, we ran a series of logistic regression models that controlled for the migratory histories and the socioeconomic characteristics of foreign-born persons in the City of San Diego. The covariates included: number of years in the U.S., age at immigrating to the U.S., whether the person was born in an English-speaking country, the language the person speaks, income, employment, educational attainment, age, and sex.

We also note here that in analyzing the foreign-born percentage share of workers in specific occupations and industries, we tabulated only the counts of those who were currently employed. We thus underestimate the number of foreign-born persons by occupation and industry so as not to “stack the deck.” Essential health workers are defined by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and identified using IPUMS “IND” and “OCC” codes. The DHS guidelines can be found here: <https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/CISA-Guidance-on-Essential-Critical-Infrastructure-Workers-1-20-508c.pdf>

Methodology continued

Regarding tax contributions, our estimates are subject to noise, as all similar estimates are, because we assume employers are paying employees via payroll. This is most likely the case for foreign-born naturalized citizens, as well as noncitizens in certain occupations. This is less likely the case for undocumented workers who are paid “under the table.” However, it is also important to note that many undocumented workers are paid via payroll or otherwise pay taxes using an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN). See Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (ITEP).

To analyze the determinants of naturalization, we ran a series of logistic regression models that controlled for the migratory histories and the socioeconomic characteristics of foreign-born persons in the City of San Diego. The covariates included: number of years in the U.S., age at immigrating to the U.S., country of origin, limited English proficiency, income, employment, educational attainment, age, and sex.

In estimating the undocumented population in the City of San Diego, undocumented status is estimated using the Warren (2015) method.

All data are available for replication purposes upon request.



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