

New Americans in Corpus Christi

A Snapshot of the Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants in the City¹

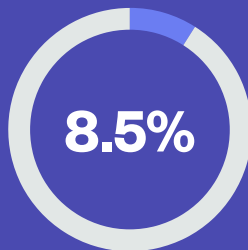


State & Local

POPULATION GROWTH

27,005

Number of immigrants living in the city of Corpus Christi in 2016.



Immigrant share of the city's total population in 2016.

Between 2011 and 2016, the population in the city grew 5.4%.

The immigrant population increased 16.1%.

Total population

302,584 → 318,781



Immigrant population

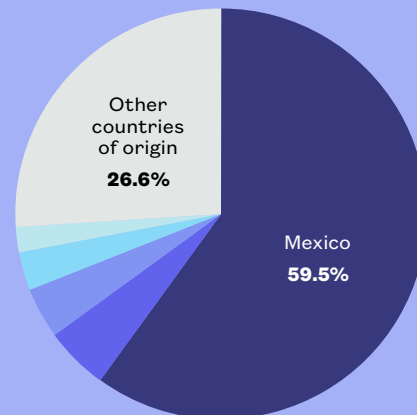
23,270 → 27,005



Share of overall population growth in the city attributed to immigrants.

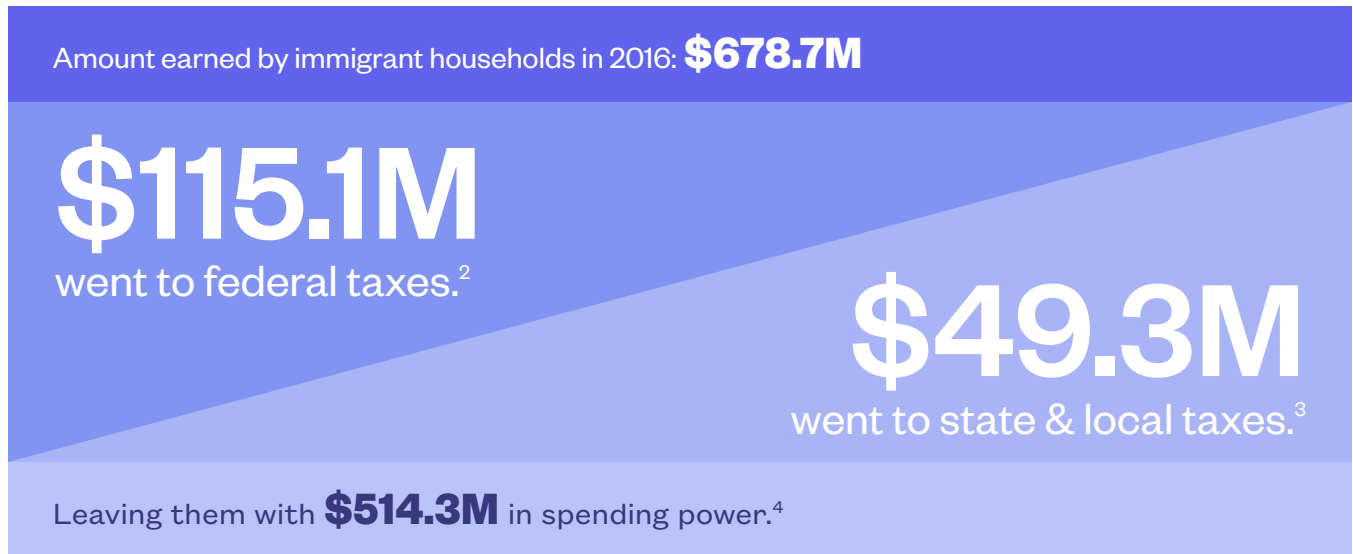
Top five countries of origin for immigrants living in the city:

- 1 Mexico 59.5%
- 2 Philippines5.4%
- 3 Vietnam 3.6%
- 4 India2.7%
- 5 China 2.2%



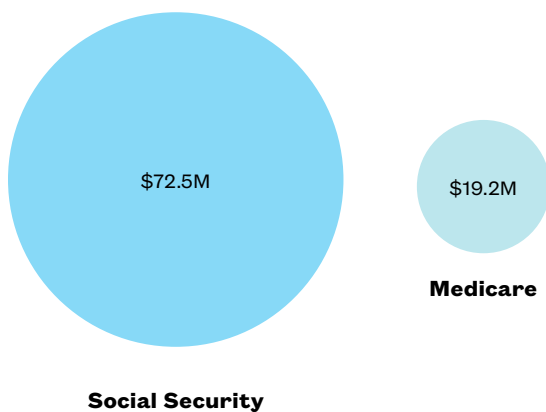
ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS

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



Foreign-born households held **8.8%** of all spending power in Corpus Christi, more than their share of the city's overall population.⁵

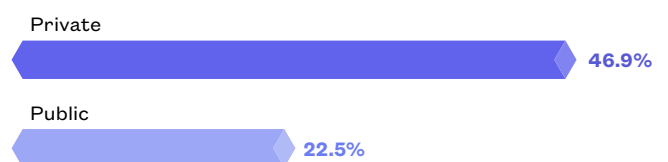
Immigrants in Corpus Christi also support federal social programs. In 2016, they contributed **\$72.5M** to Social Security and **\$19.2M** to Medicare.



In 2016, **21.7%** of immigrants in the city received Medicare or Medicaid, compared with **33.6%** of the U.S.-born residents.



About **46.9%** of immigrants had private healthcare coverage, while **22.5%** had public healthcare coverage.



LABOR FORCE GROWTH

While the foreign-born made up **8.5%** of the city's overall population, they represented **10.2%** of its working-age* population and **10.7%** of its employed labor force.

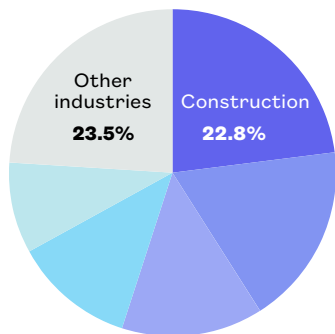
Immigrant shares of the...

Population	8.5%
Working-age population	10.2%
Employed labor force	10.7%

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

Immigrants play a critical role in several key **industries** in the city:

- 1 Construction 22.8%
- 2 General Services⁶ 18.4%
- 3 Hospitality & Recreation 14.3%
- 4 Manufacturing 11.5%
- 5 Healthcare 9.5%



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 region helped create or preserve

1,242
local manufacturing jobs
 that would have otherwise
 vanished or moved elsewhere.⁷

SPOTLIGHT ON

Lorena Parada-Valdes

Founder of FoxP2Go

Growing up under a dictatorial regime in Panama, Lorena Parada-Valdes longed to live in a democratic country. In 1979, she had her chance. That year, she was one of just four Panamanian college students to receive a merit-based scholarship to study in the United States.

After graduating from Bates College in Maine, Parada-Valdes traveled the world, teaching and studying languages. In 2003, she moved to Corpus Christi, Texas, drawn by the warm weather and beautiful coastline. "It was the closest thing to home, without being there," she says. Fluent in six languages, Parada-Valdes put her skills to work. She became a Federally Certified Court Interpreter and a Nationally Certified Judiciary Interpreter and Translator. In 2004, she opened The Language Bridge, a company that provided translation and interpretation services to the Federal court system.

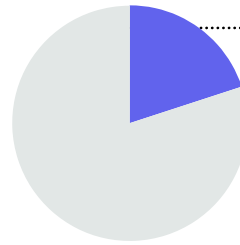
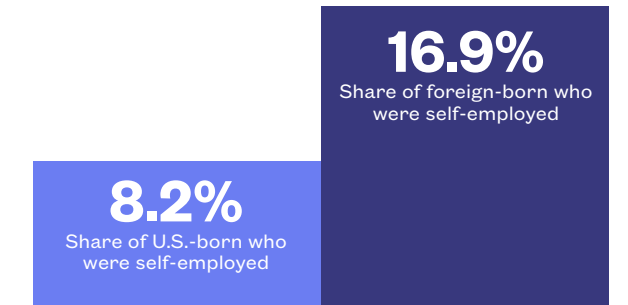
As Corpus Christi's business community grew, Parada-Valdes realized many industries could benefit from her expertise. "Educating people about diverse languages and cultures is essential to individual and organizational success," she says. She expanded her business to include foreign language education, ESL classes, and cross-cultural training. She called the new company FoxP2Go, after the human gene FoxP2 that regulates language and speech development.

Since 2014, Parada-Valdes has served numerous multinational businesses with offices in Corpus Christi. These include Voestalpine, an iron manufacturer headquartered in Austria; M&G Resins, a petro-chemical company headquartered in Italy; and TPCO a steel pipe manufacturer, headquartered in China. "We have worked with these companies providing Spanish and English as a Second Language instruction, technical translation in Italian and Portuguese, and cross-cultural training," says Parada-Valdes.

Today, FoxP2Go provides services in 11 different languages and has around a dozen contractors, several of whom are American-born. "We're very much in growth mode," says Parada-Valdes. "We're growing with the understanding that accessibility to language is key to the success of our community. I've often believed that the United States' greatest strength is that everyone is welcome here. It's a nation made up of immigrants. And that openness towards diversity has made all the difference: it's what sets us apart as a country, and as a power."

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In Corpus Christi, immigrants were **twice as likely** to be entrepreneurs as their U.S.-born counterparts.



Despite making up **8.5%** of the overall population, immigrants represented **19.7%** of the entrepreneurs in the city of Corpus Christi in 2016.

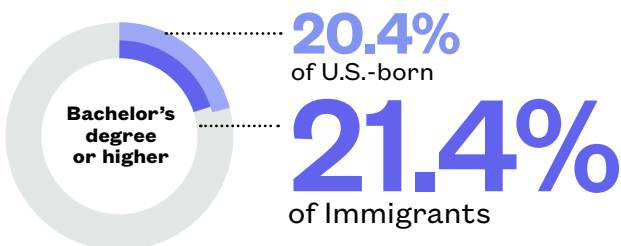
About **2,703** immigrants worked for their own businesses, generating **\$66.4M** in business income.

Corpus Christi Businesses, 2012	Sales Revenue, 2012	Number of Paid Employees, 2012 ^a
African American-owned	\$81.9M	234
Asian-owned	\$377.1M	4,665
Hispanic-owned	\$1.4B	13,144

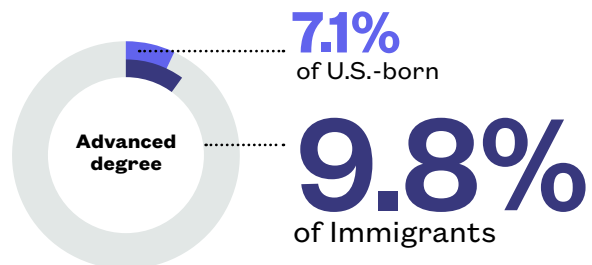
EDUCATION

Immigrants were more likely to have a bachelor's degree or higher in 2016.

Share of population over age 25 with **a bachelor's degree or higher:**



Share of population over age 25 with **an advanced degree:**



SPOTLIGHT ON

Kamlesh Bhikha

Co-owner of the Corpus Christi Rodeway Inn

Indian native Kamlesh Bhikha grew up in an entrepreneurial family. His grandfather was a sugarcane and cotton farmer and his father manufactured diamonds, selling the gems he'd fashioned from rough stones. Bhikha also aspired to be his own boss. "The harder you work, the more you reap," he says. "And that's how I ended up as the managing partner of Rodeway Inn."

After earning his bachelor's degree in accounting back in India, Bhikha went to work for his father. In 1987, on a business trip to Charlotte, North Carolina, he became enamored with America. He eventually settled in Maryland and landed a bookkeeping position with the Howard County Social Services department. "This is back when we only worked 35-hour weeks," he says. So he took a second job at a Howard Johnson, working his way up from desk clerk to general manager.

In the hotel business, Bhikha saw the opportunity he'd been waiting for. On Christmas day in 1992, his uncle, who had recently purchased a Rodeway Inn in Corpus Christi, invited Bhikha to become his partner. "That was my Christmas gift, and a very powerful opportunity," Bhikha says. In 1993, he became a United States citizen and moved to Texas.

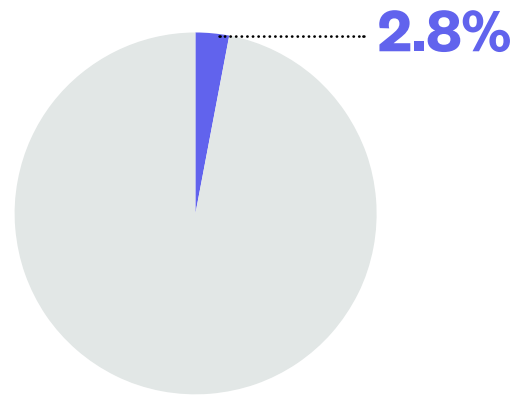
The Corpus Christi Rodeway employs around 20 people, all of whom are U.S.-born Americans, and it serves up to 5,000 guests each month. "I have a people personality," Bhikha says. "I'm always on the front line. I know every single employee's name. I shake hands with my guests. Interacting with so many people gives you different ways of thinking."

Bhikha's engagement also extends beyond the hotel. He's a member of Leadership Corpus Christi, a United Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce-led community-building initiative. He also serves on various boards, including the Westside Business Association, the Corpus Christi Convention & Visitors Bureau, the Early Scholars Academy, the Texas System of Education Service Centers, and the local YMCA—where he teaches yoga.

"I'm interested in improving the quality of life for all citizens of Corpus Christi," Bhikha says. "With physical fitness and an education, you can do anything. So I give back to the community in all these ways."

And that openness towards diversity has made all the difference: it's what sets us apart as a country, and as a power."

EDUCATION CONT.



Immigrants make up

2.8%

of students under age 18
who attended public schools
in the city in 2016.

522 students who were
enrolled in colleges and universities
in the city during the fall of 2015 were
temporary residents.⁹ International
students supported...

220
local jobs...

And spent

\$18.7M

in the 2016-17 academic year.¹⁰

HOUSING WEALTH

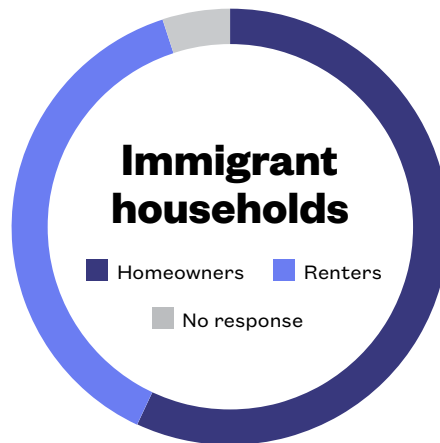
In 2016,

56.7%

of immigrants in the city owned their own homes, compared to **52.7%** of the U.S-born.

37.9%

of immigrants were renters.



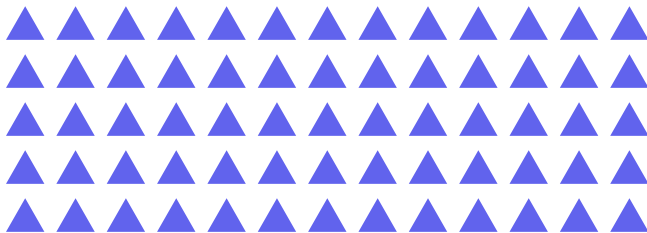
The total property value of immigrant households was

\$785.1M.

Their total annual rent was

\$36.2M.

In 2015, **65.5%** of immigrant households lived in houses...



▲ **65.5% in houses**

And **24.1%** lived in apartments.



24.1% in apartments



10.4% in other types of housing or no response

NATURALIZATION

41.8%
Naturalized

Share of immigrants who were naturalized citizens in 2016. This constitutes **11,290** immigrants.

34.7%
Potentially eligible

Share among the 15,715 who were not citizens but potentially eligible for naturalization. This constitutes **5,458** immigrants.

SPOTLIGHT ON

Monica Rocha Alcaráz

Restaurant Owner

Had she not come to America, Monica Rocha Alcaráz would have faced a life of extreme poverty in Guanajuato, Mexico. The youngest of 12 children, she often didn't have enough to eat. So when her older sister married a U.S. citizen and moved to Texas in 1986, Rocha—then four years old and undocumented—went with her.

At 11, Rocha began cleaning banks with her sister. Then, when her sister opened a restaurant in Corpus Christi, Rocha became a waitress. By high school, she was pulling double shifts, going in at 5 a.m. and then returning after classes let out. In 1999, less than a year before graduation, she dropped out. "Maybe I'm always going to be a waitress," Rocha thought. "I was scared to do more in the United States."

But in 2012, everything changed. While studying for her GED, Rocha heard about the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. Suddenly, she could live and work legally in the United States. "I always said if I had my papers I could get a better job," she says. "So thank god for DACA."

By this time, Rocha was married and had two American-born children. With DACA, she could get a driver's license and attend her sons' sporting events. She also received a business degree from Del Mar College and, in 2014, opened a restaurant. Monica's Authentic Mexican Restaurant serves both immigrant and American customers, many of whom are employed at nearby oil refineries and start lining up at 4:45 a.m. "My customers are like my second family," says Rocha, who just celebrated her fourth year in business and now employs six people, including four who are U.S. citizens.

Rocha dreams of becoming an American citizen. Back in 2001, an older brother sponsored her for a green card. But Rocha doesn't know if the paperwork will go through before her DACA protections expire. "The next step is buying a house," she says. "But I have to wait because I told my kids, 'I don't know what's going to happen right now.' I'm worried about DACA but I still always try to find a way, any kind of way, to be good here in the United States."

For more city, district, and state-level data, visit MapTheImpact.org and explore our interactive map.



- 1 Unless otherwise specified, data comes from 5-year samples of the American Community Survey from 2011 and 2016 and figures refer to the City of Corpus Christi.
- 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 are from the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 General services include personal services (e.g. laundry services, barber shops, and repair and maintenance), religious organizations, social services, and labor unions.
- 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 city 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.