

# Immigrant Workers are Critical to Colorado's Economy

Colorado immigrants are a crucial – and growing – part of the state's economy, with many industries relying on their labor. In addition, many immigrants are entrepreneurs, bringing new businesses and jobs to Colorado.



## Immigrants are a Growing Share of Colorado's Population

Foreign-born Coloradans are often overlooked by policymakers despite being a growing proportion of our state's population.

- In 2015, 9.8 percent of Coloradans were foreign-born.
- From 2000 to 2015, Colorado's immigrant population grew by 45.1 percent compared to 39 percent in the United States.
- Colorado's population grew by 1.2 million people from 2000 to 2015, and 14.5 percent of that population growth can be attributed to the foreign-born Coloradan.



## Work Force Participation

Colorado's immigrant population participates widely in the workforce at rates similar to their native-born counterparts.

- The share of foreign-born Coloradans who participate in the work force is the same as native-born Coloradans.
- While only one in 10 Coloradans is foreign-born, immigrants make up 12 percent of the total labor force.
- In 2015, 3.2 percent of immigrants were unemployed compared to 3.5 percent of native-born Coloradans.



## Immigrants Make a Critical Contribution to the Economy

- Immigrants paid \$3.3 billion in state, local and federal taxes and had the spending power of nearly \$10 billion.<sup>1</sup>
- Undocumented immigrants contribute significantly as well. In 2014, undocumented immigrants contributed nearly 140 million in local and state taxes alone.<sup>2</sup>

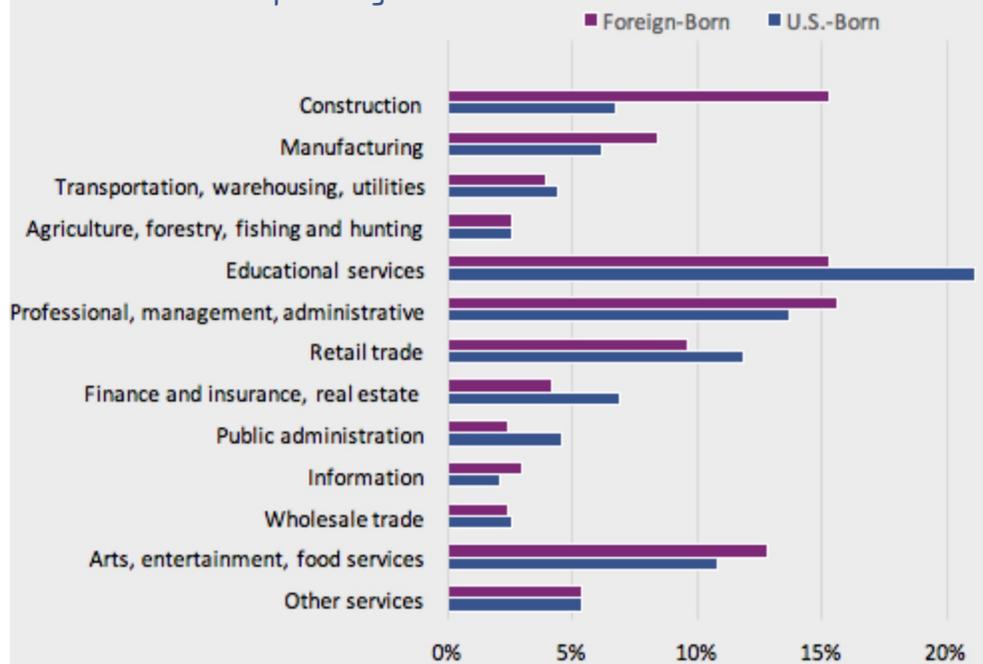


## A Growing Share of Colorado's Entrepreneurship Comes from Immigrants

Immigrants also contribute to Colorado's economy by establishing businesses at similar rates as U.S.-born Coloradans.

- In 2015, 11.7 percent of all entrepreneurs in Colorado were immigrants.
- In 2015, the majority of immigrant businesses were in the professional, scientific, administrative and waste management service industries. Businesses in this industry perform routine support activities for the day-to-day operations of other organizations.

## Share of Foreign-born Workers Across Industries



## Businesses Created by Immigrants, by Industry

	Foreign-Born
Share of immigrant population that is self-employed	10.9%
Construction	17.2%
Manufacturing	3.7%
Transportation and warehousing and utilities	5.2%
Agriculture, forestry, mining and fishing and hunting	1.3%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	6.1%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative and waste management services	20.8%
Retail trade	10.1%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	3.8%
Information	1.0%
Wholesale trade	1.9%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	10.5%
Other services (except public administration)	1.4%
Share of US born that is self employed	13%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey PUMS



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(1) New American Economy, 2014 analysis  
(2) Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, March 2017