

PRESS RELEASE
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New Report Shows Immigrants in Santa Fe County Paid Over \$122 Million in Taxes and Held Over \$365 Million in Spending Power in 2019
Immigrants in Santa Fe County contributed \$1.1 billion to the county's gross domestic product (GDP), or 12.3% in 2019

SANTA FE, NM--A new report, [New Americans in Santa Fe County](#), released today by the [American Immigration Council](#), in partnership with the [City of Santa Fe's Office of Economic Development](#) and [Somos Un Pueblo Unido](#), emphasizes the crucial role immigrants play in the county's labor force, business creation, and consumer spending power.

In 2019, more than 16,000 immigrants lived in Santa Fe County, representing 11.1% of the total population. In 2019 alone, immigrants in the county held \$365.9 million in spending power, paid \$78.8 million in federal taxes, and paid \$43.8 million in state and local taxes. Despite making up 11.1% of the county's overall population, immigrants represented 15.2% percent of its working age population and 15% percent of its employed labor force.

The new report was awarded to the City of Santa Fe's Office of Economic Development and Somos Un Pueblo Unido as part of the [Gateways for Growth Challenge](#), a competitive opportunity for localities to receive research support and/or technical assistance from the [American Immigration Council](#) and [Welcoming America](#) to improve immigrant inclusion in their communities. The City and Somos convened a working group of community, education, and business stakeholders to create a strategic plan that will provide immigrant workers with more economic and workforce development opportunities. The plan will be finalized and presented to the City Council in February 2024.

"Immigrants play an integral role in contributing to the City's vibrancy as neighbors, family members, entrepreneurs, professionals, health service, and beyond; their economic contributions cannot be overvalued. We are grateful to work with and support organizations and partners like Somos who are working hard to create equitable pathways to economic opportunity in our community," said **Johanna Nelson, director, Office of Economic Development**.

"Immigrant workers are vital to the local economy and should have access to workforce development opportunities and pathways to quality jobs," said **Marcela Díaz, executive director of Somos Un Pueblo Unido**. "While Santa Fe has always been ahead of the curve when it comes to sensible and just immigration policies, more can be done to fully integrate immigrants into our city's economic and workforce development plans. The Gateways for Growth project is helping us identify strategies needed to build a stronger and more inclusive economy."

"Knowing Santa Fe is a sanctuary city I feel more protected, but it is expensive to live here and I have to work two jobs. In Santa Fe I feel welcome. It would be good if there were more opportunities for economic mobility for us immigrants. This report is important so that our community knows about immigrant workers' contributions to our city's economy," said Verónica Velázquez, originally from Michoacán, who has lived in Santa Fe for 18 years and has primarily worked in the restaurant industry.

“This new report reinforces why Santa Fe’s efforts to welcome immigrants are a crucial component of its economic growth,” said **Asma Easa, policy manager, state and local initiatives at the American Immigration Council**. “From boosting local business corridors, to growing the city’s tax base, sharing diverse cultural contributions, and helping address workforce shortages, immigrants are integral members across the community.”

The new research report, **New Americans in Santa Fe County**, finds:

- **Immigrants are helping the county meet its labor force demands.** Immigrants played a critical role in several key industries, representing 28.6% of construction workers, 27.1% of hospitality workers, 14.8% of professional services workers, 14.5% of general services workers, and 8.7% of STEM workers in 2019.
- **Immigrants actively participate in the labor force.** In 2019, immigrants in Santa Fe County were 42.9% more likely to be of working age than their U.S.-born counterparts, positioning them to actively contribute to the economy as taxpayers and consumers.
- **Immigrants play a significant role in the county as entrepreneurs.** Immigrants represented 15.2% of business owners in Santa Fe County in 2019. About 1,800 immigrant entrepreneurs generated \$35.6 million in business income, which can be reinvested back into the local and state economies.
- **Immigrants support the federal safety net.** In 2019, immigrants in Santa Fe County contributed \$49.7 million to Social Security and \$13.2 million to Medicare.

[Read the full research brief to learn more.](#)

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About the City of Santa Fe’s Office of Economic Development

The City of Santa Fe’s Office of Economic Development’s mission is to achieve long-term sustainable and focused economic growth by building a diverse, innovative economy with high-wage, high impact jobs that provide equitable opportunity and prosperity for the City’s residents, businesses and entrepreneurs.

About Somos Un Pueblo Unido

Somos is a statewide grassroots organization that is committed to building power among the working immigrant community and to advocating for social and economic justice in New Mexico. The organization has spearheaded several local and statewide laws and has won dozens of awards for its crucial work in the state.

About the American Immigration Council

The American Immigration Council works to strengthen America by shaping how America thinks about and acts towards immigrants and immigration and by working toward a more fair and just immigration system that opens its doors to those in need of protection and unleashes the energy and skills that immigrants bring. The Council brings together problem solvers and employs four coordinated approaches to advance change—litigation, research, legislative and administrative advocacy, and communications. In January 2022, the Council and New American Economy merged to combine a broad suite of advocacy tools to better expand and protect the rights of immigrants, more fully ensure immigrants’ ability to succeed economically, and help make the communities they settle in more welcoming. Follow the latest Council news and information on ImmigrationImpact.com and Twitter [@immcouncil](https://twitter.com/immcouncil).

About Welcoming America

Welcoming America is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that leads a movement of inclusive communities becoming more prosperous by ensuring everyone belongs. We believe that all people, including immigrants, are valued contributors and vital to the success of our communities and shared future. Through the Welcoming Network, we work to change systems and culture by providing communities the roadmap they need to create welcoming policies and share new approaches to inclusion to create an environment where everyone can truly thrive. Learn more at welcomingamerica.org.