

New Americans in Warren County

A Snapshot of the Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants in the County¹



State & Local

POPULATION GROWTH



Immigrant share of the population, 2016

Between 2011 and 2016, the overall population in the county grew by **15.4%**.

The immigrant population increased by **86.6%**.

Total population

104,792 → 120,978



Immigrant population

6,041 → 11,274



Share of total population growth in the county attributed to immigrants.

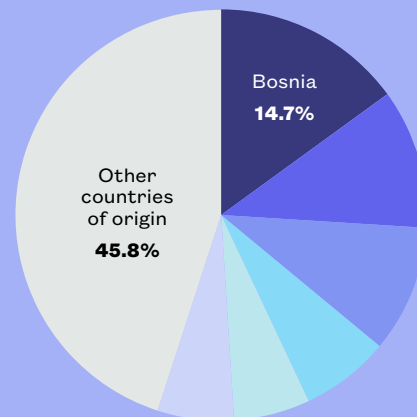
Number of immigrants living in Warren County, KY in 2016:

11,274

Top six countries/regions of origin for immigrants living in the county:


- 1 Bosnia 14.7%
- 2 Mexico 11.3%
- 3 Myanmar 10.3%
- 4 Sub-Saharan Africa* 6.8%
- 5 Iraq 5.6%
- 6 El Salvador 5.5%

* This includes Ghana, Zaire, and Kenya

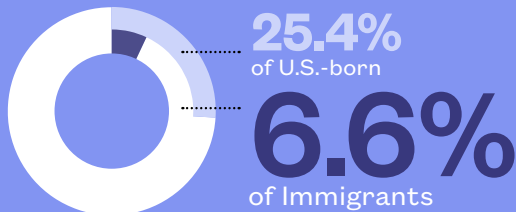


POPULATION GROWTH CONT.

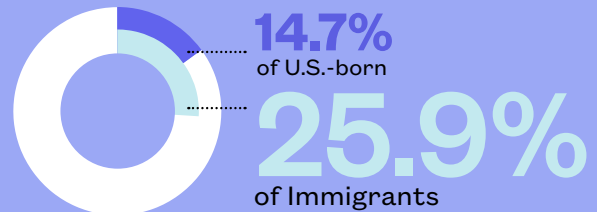
64,423 people worked in Warren County, either commuting into or within the county in 2016.

 **7.4%**, or **4,754** people, were foreign-born workers.

6.6% of the immigrants working in Warren County lived outside the county in 2016, compared with **25.4%** of the U.S.-born workers.



25.9% of the employed immigrants living in Warren County commuted outside the county for work in 2016, compared with **14.7%** of employed U.S.-born residents.



BARREN RIVER AREA DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

13,633

Number of immigrants living in the Barren River Area Development District, making up **4.6%** of the district's total population in 2016.²

Share of employed **immigrant** residents who commuted outside the district for work in 2016: **13.0%**

Share of employed **U.S.-born** residents who commuted outside the district for work in 2016: **10.6%**

6,568

Number of immigrants working in the Barren River Area Development District, making up **5.3%** of the district's workers in 2016.

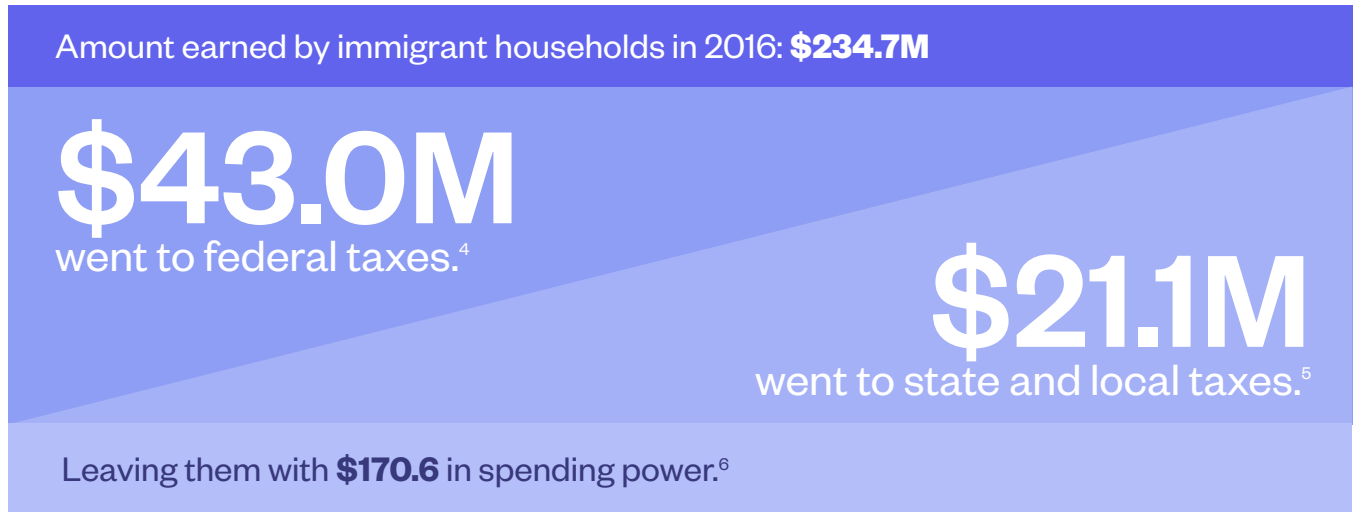
Share of these **immigrant** workers who lived outside the district in 2016: **3.5%**

Share of the **U.S.-born** workers who lived outside the district in 2016: **6.7%**

SPENDING POWER & TAX CONTRIBUTIONS

In 2016, foreign-born residents in Warren County contributed **\$564.3M**, or **9.5%**, to the county's GDP directly through their wages and spending, but also indirectly through the additional economic activity created by their consumer behaviors.³

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



LABOR FORCE GROWTH

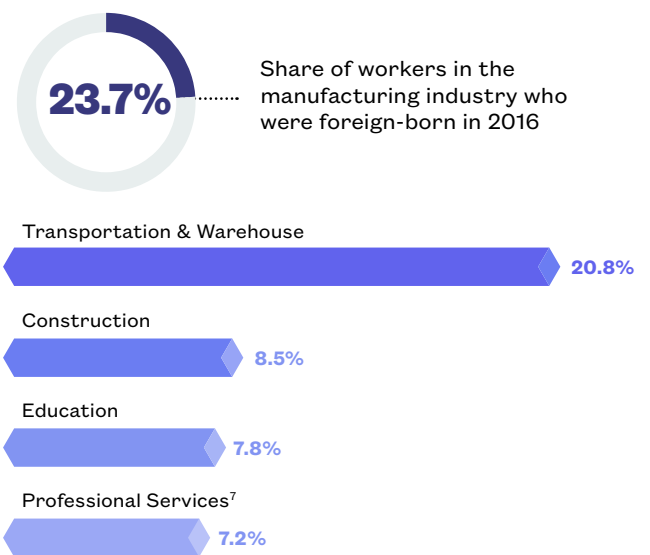
Although the foreign-born made up **9.3%** of the county's overall population, they represented **10.7%** of its working-age* population and **10.3%** of its employed labor force.

Immigrant shares of the...



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

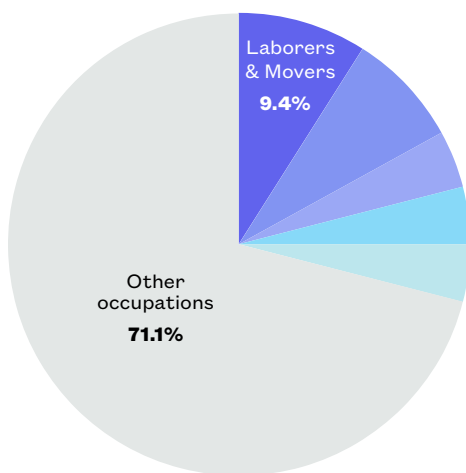
Immigrants made outside contributions to several **key industries** in the county. This includes:



LABOR FORCE GROWTH CONT.

Immigrants tended to concentrate in these **occupations** in the county in 2016:

- 1 Laborers & Movers9.4%
- 2 Inspectors, Testers, & Sorters... 8.0%
- 3 Assemblers & Fabricators 4.3%
- 4 Agricultural Workers3.7%
- 5 Production Workers3.5%



ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Immigrants represented **8.1%** of the entrepreneurs in Warren County in 2016.

Share of the foreign-born population that was self-employed in 2016:	5.2%
Share of the U.S.-born population that was self-employed in 2016:	6.8%

SPOTLIGHT ON

Amira Zukic

Co-Owner, *Taz Trucking*

Amira Zukic came to America with close to nothing, but after learning English and working hard, she and her husband now run one of Kentucky’s largest trucking companies, with \$17 million in annual revenues. The secret to their success? “A lot of work, a lot of work, a lot of work,” Zukic says.

Zukic grew up comfortably in Bosnia, but in 1992, at the age of 23, she left everything behind after war broke out. For eight years, she scraped together a living in Germany as a cafeteria worker and housecleaner. In 2000, she was granted refugee status and was resettled in Bowling Green with her husband and two young children. “Like everyone else, I wanted to follow my American dream,” she says.

Zukic’s husband found work in a factory, while Zukic cared for the children. But not wanting to rely on government assistance, Zukic and her husband soon took alternating shifts in the factory; one cared for the children while the other worked. Despite their struggle, the couple was optimistic. “In comparison with Bosnia or Germany, it felt like everyone was happy, and everyone had jobs,” she said.

Soon, Zukic started taking accounting courses and her husband got a commercial driver’s license. Four years after their arrival, they opened Taz Trucking out of their home. Zukic worked as dispatcher, and her husband drove the company’s only truck. Today, Taz Trucking has 100 trucks and 150 employees, almost all U.S. citizens, and is preparing for a \$10 million expansion.

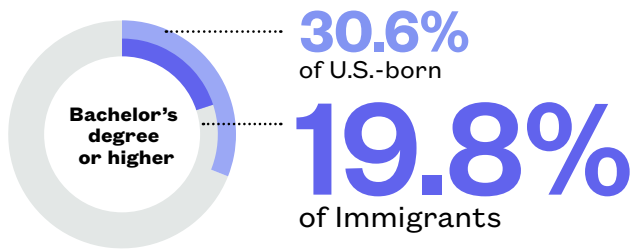
Zukic is grateful to Bowling Green for welcoming her family. She has tried repay that debt by supporting the local economy with her business and teaching her children to be hard-working and productive. “They have a good life, and I want them to be grateful for all the opportunities they have,” she says.

More than anything, Zukic wants to show her neighbors that while she may have come to Kentucky as a refugee, she is now a proud U.S. citizen and giving her all to Bowling Green. “All we want is to build a better life for ourselves and our families.”

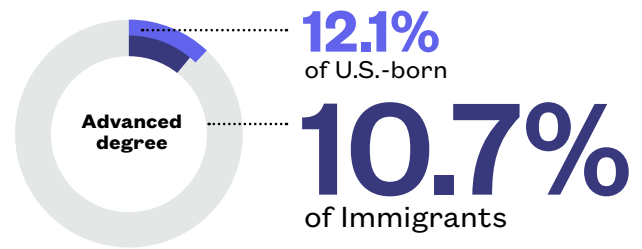
EDUCATION

In Warren County, immigrants were less likely than their U.S.-born counterparts to have a bachelor's degree or higher in 2016.

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



Share of the Warren County population over age 25 with an **advanced degree** in 2016:



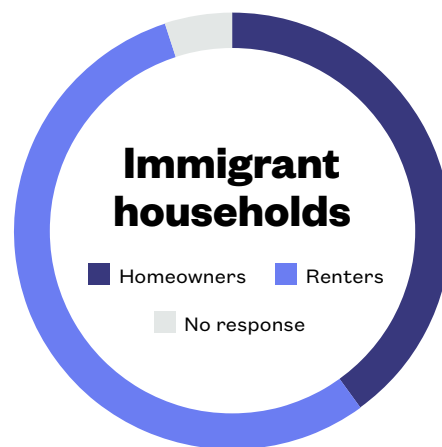
Immigrants made up **10.0%** of students under age 18 who attended public schools in the county in 2016.

1,356 students enrolled in colleges and universities in the county during the fall of 2015 were temporary residents.⁸

HOUSING WEALTH

In 2016, **40.3%** of immigrant households in the county owned their own homes, compared to **51.9%** of the U.S.-born.

54.9% of immigrant households were renters.



The total property value of immigrant households was **\$279.5M.**

Their total annual rent was **\$15.2M.**

SPOTLIGHT ON

Victor Puga

Owner, *Premiere Roofing*

At age 10, Victor Puga left his native Mexico for Kentucky. Since his father had been naturalized through the Reagan Amnesty of 1986, Puga arrived as a U.S. citizen. Still, his path wasn't easy. He became a father at a young age and dropped out of school to work for his dad's construction business. "I couldn't go to college, because I had to support my family," Puga says.

For 10 years, he worked long hours for little pay. But he dreamed of running his own company and studied up on the business of construction. "My dad always told me, 'Money doesn't come to you while you're sitting on your couch, you've got to work for it,'" Puga says.

In 2014, at age 30, Puga struck out on his own. He opened Premiere Roofing, which oversees commercial roofing projects in Kentucky, Indiana, Texas, and Alabama. Today, he employs around 50 people, the majority of whom are U.S.-born, and boasts annual revenues of \$2 million.

"Immigrants aren't here to take people's jobs," he says. "We're just trying to build a successful local business, and to do quality work helping people build their homes."

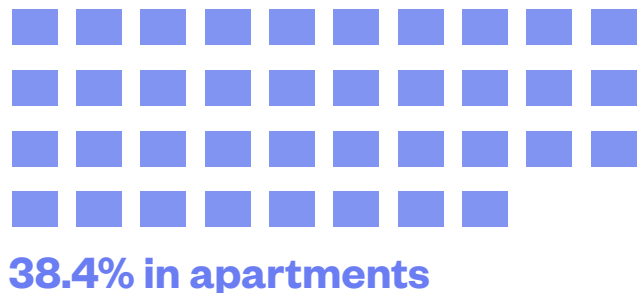
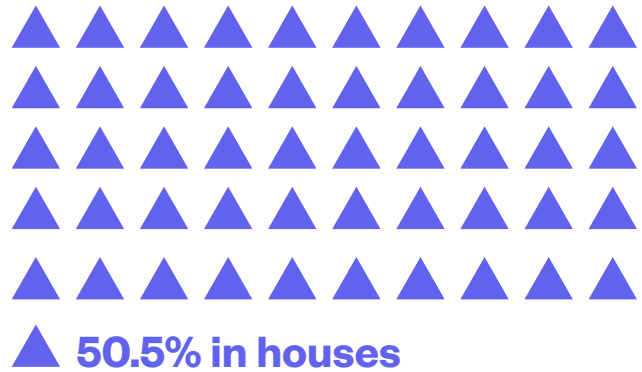
Sometimes this means serving the community for free. He recently donated \$1,600 worth of repairs to fix the roof of Bowling Green's Real Life Church. "The landlord didn't want to pay for it, so I did as much as I could," Puga says. In addition, Premiere Roofing has sponsored numerous charity golf tournaments and donated thousands of dollars to local autism charities.

Puga's company does business across the country, but he's proud to call Bowling Green home. "People respect and trust one another," he says. "Bowling Green has been the best city to raise my family."

Puga now has three sons, and he likes to remind them that Bowling Green is also a great place to start a business. He is raising them to be hard workers who, as second-generation Americans, must strive to prove themselves. "The opportunities are there—for immigrants, for American people, for everybody," he says. "You just have to make the most of them."

HOUSING WEALTH CONT.

In 2016, **50.5%** of immigrant households lived in houses and **38.4%** lived in apartments.



NATURALIZATION

33.4%
Naturalized

Share of immigrants who were naturalized citizens in 2016. This constitutes **3,761** immigrants.

18.8%
Potentially Eligible

Share among the 7,513 non-citizens who were potentially eligible for naturalization. This constitutes **1,409** immigrants.

REFUGEES

32.7%
Likely Refugees

Share of the immigrant population in the county who were likely refugees in 2016.⁹ This constitutes **3,689** immigrants.

39.3%
Naturalized

Share of refugees who were naturalized citizens.

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 Warren County, Kentucky.
- 2 The Barren River Area Development District includes Allen, Barren, Butler, Edmonson, Hart, Logan, Metcalfe, Monroe, Simpson, and Warren counties.
- 3 These figures derive from our calculations based on immigrants' share of wage income and self-employment income in the 5-year ACS sample from 2016 and the statistics of GDP from the National Association of Counties.
- 4 U.S. Congressional Budget Office. 2016. "The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2013."
- 5 Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. 2015. "Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States."
- 6 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.
- 7 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.
- 8 Data on total student enrollment in the county 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.
- 9 New American Economy. 2017. "From Struggle to Resilience: The Economic Impact of Refugees in America."