

Immigrants in Arlington County

Contributions¹ of Immigrants² in the County



In contrast to Arlington County government, the American Immigration Council (the Council) utilizes a combined 3-year sample of the ACS (from 2022 to 2024) to provide the estimates for the immigrant population in this report. In addition, the Council uses tabulations provided by Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) to generate estimates, which differ from the tabulations provided by the Census.³ For these reasons, estimates provided by the Council may differ from those reported by the Arlington County government.

Population

51,800

the number of immigrants living in Arlington County, Virginia, in 2024.⁴

Immigrants made up about



of the county's population in 2024. The total population of the county was 236,000.

From 2019 to 2024, Arlington County's total population stayed about the same.

Demographics



About 3 in 10 households had at least one immigrant in 2024. This is about 34,000 immigrant households of the 116,300 total households in Arlington County.

16,000

children in Arlington County had at least one immigrant parent in 2024.



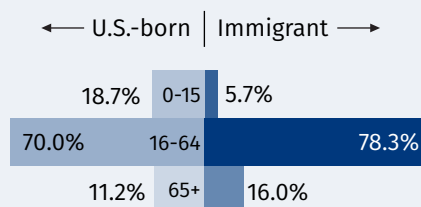
of immigrants in the county had resided in the United States for more than five years, enabling them to build deep roots in the community.

In the county, immigrants were

11.8%

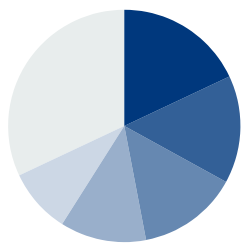
more likely to be of working age than their U.S.-born counterparts, allowing them to actively participate in the labor force and contribute to the economy as taxpayers and consumers.⁵

Shares of population by age:⁶

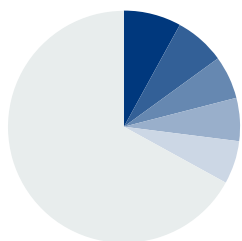
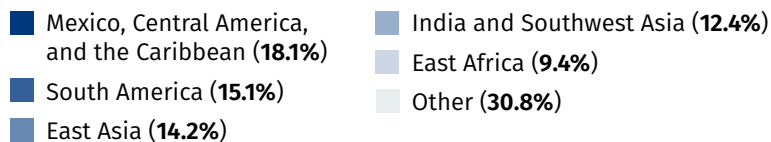


1. Unless otherwise specified, data comes from a pooled 3-year sample of the American Community Survey (ACS) released by the Census Bureau from 2022-2024 and figures refer to Arlington County, Virginia. The impact of major immigration policy changes that have been made since 2025 is not reflected in the data presented in this report.
2. The American Community Survey (ACS) historically under-samples the immigrant population, especially among lower income, more recently arrived, and less English-fluent immigrant populations. Therefore, estimates provided in this report may undercount the immigrant population.
3. To further understand the difference between population estimates provided by the Census and PUMS tabulations, please read more here: https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2021/acs/acs_pums_handbook_2021_ch01.pdf.
4. Immigrants in this report include naturalized citizens, green card holders, temporary visa holders, refugees, asylees, and undocumented immigrants, among others.
5. We define working age as 16-64 years of age.
6. Totals may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Demographics *(continued)*



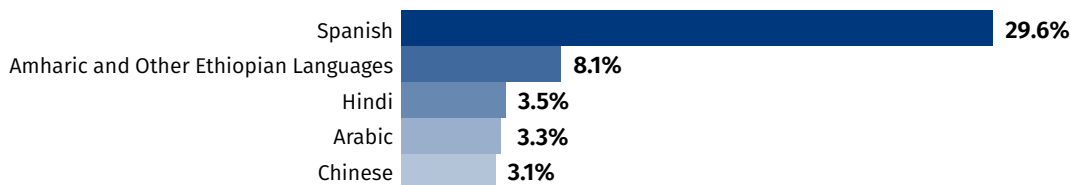
The top regions of origin for immigrants living in Arlington County:



The top countries of origin for immigrants living in Arlington County:



The top languages spoken at home other than English among immigrants:



Immigrants with Limited English Language Proficiency

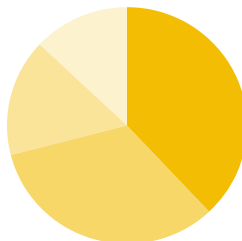
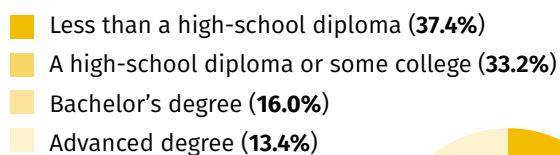
10,300

immigrants living in the county had limited English language proficiency, making up



of the immigrant population.⁷ Among those, the top language spoken at home was Spanish (55.6%).

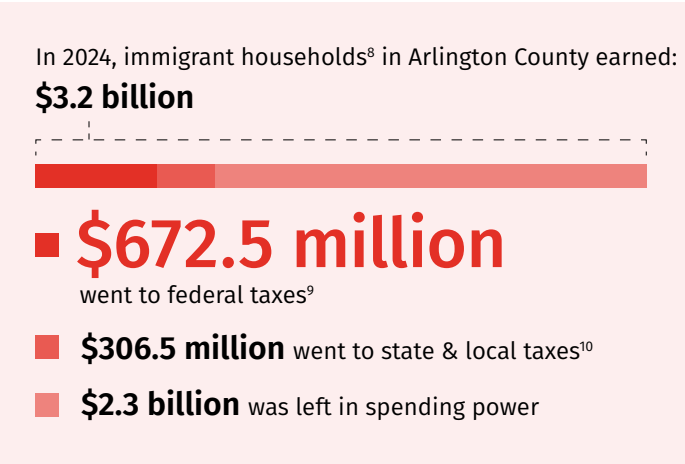
Educational attainment among immigrants with limited English proficiency was as follows:



7. For the purposes of this report, we define people with limited English language proficiency as those who do not speak English at all or do not speak English well.

Spending Power and Tax Contributions

Immigrants play a critical role in fueling economic growth, contributing significantly to federal, state, and local taxes. They pay a wide range of taxes, including property, sales, and excise taxes levied by state and local governments that help support public services and resources that benefit all residents in Arlington County.



This means that immigrant households held



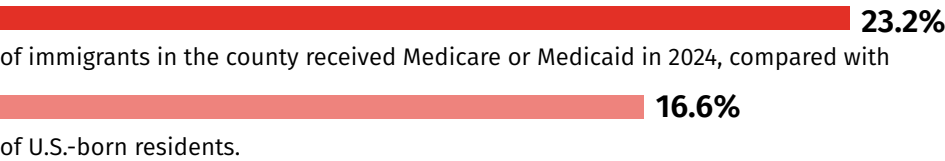
of all spending power in the county.

In 2024, immigrant residents in the county contributed

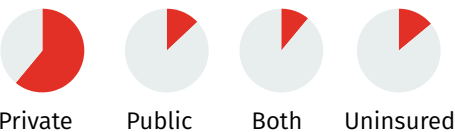


to the county's gross domestic product (GDP), or **16.9%** of total GDP for that year.¹¹

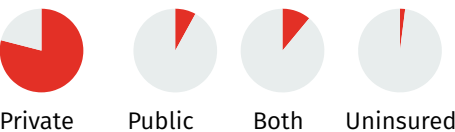
Immigrants in the county also supported federal social programs. In 2024, they contributed



About **61.4%** of immigrant residents had private health care coverage, while **13.3%** had public health care coverage. **11.2%** of immigrants residents had both private and public health care coverage, while **14.1%** were uninsured.



About **79.4%** of U.S.-born residents had private health care coverage, while **7.8%** had public health care coverage. **10.7%** of U.S.-born residents had both private and public health care coverage, while **2.2%** were uninsured.



8. Immigrant households refer to those with an immigrant as head of the unit.

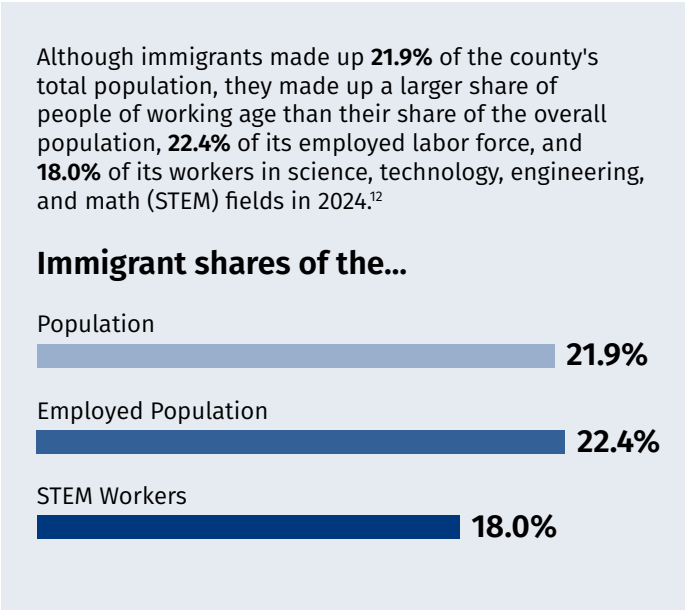
9. U.S. Congressional Budget Office, *The Distribution of Household Income, 2022* (Washington, DC: 2026), <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/62300>.

10. Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, *Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States* (Washington, DC: 2024), <https://itep.org/whopays>.

11. These figures derive from our calculations based on immigrants' share of wage income and self-employment income in the 3-year ACS sample from 2024 and the statistics of GDP from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Workforce

Immigrants bring a wealth of diverse talent, skills, and innovation, providing Arlington County's companies and businesses with a unique opportunity to drive economic growth.



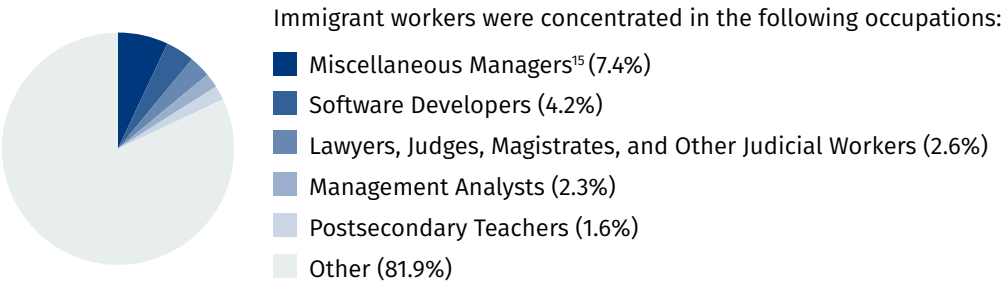
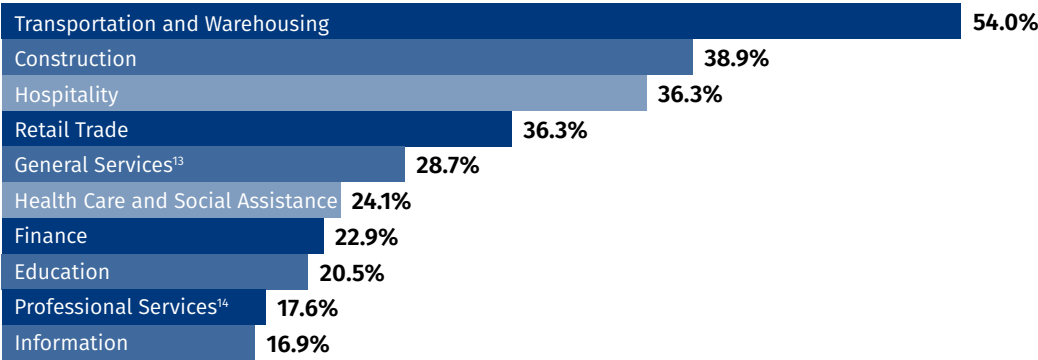
The immigrant working-age population was **50.6%** female and **49.4%** male.



The immigrant employed population was **44.2%** female and **55.8%** male.



Immigrants played a critical role in several key industries across the county. The immigrant share of workers, who live in the county, was highest in the following industries:



12. STEM refers to occupations that require background or expertise in science, technology, engineering, or math.

13. General services include personal services (e.g. laundry services, barber shops, and repair and maintenance), religious organizations, social services, and labor unions.

14. 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.

15. Miscellaneous managers include a range of managerial positions not captured in specific categories in Census occupation data.

Workforce (continued)

Top occupation with the largest number of immigrant female workers:	
Other Managers.....	6.9%
Top occupations with the largest number of immigrant male workers:	
Other Managers.....	7.8%
Software Developers.....	5.8%

SPOTLIGHT Job Demand in Arlington County in 2025

A larger share of the immigrant population is of prime working age compared to their U.S.-born counterparts, enabling them to play a vital role in fueling Arlington County’s economy and help meet the demands of its fastest-growing and most in-demand fields.¹⁶

The top industries in the county, by the number of unique job postings were:

1. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services - 18,000	2. Administrative and Support Services - 7,500	3. Sporting Goods, Hobby, Musical Instrument, Book and Miscellaneous Retailers - 6,500
4. Ambulatory Health Care Services - 2,500	5. Food Services and Drinking Places - 1,500	

The top industries in the county, by the county’s concentration of job postings relative to the national average, were:

- 1. Administration of Environmental Quality Programs: 16.1x the national average
- 2. Sporting Goods, Hobby, Musical Instrument, Book and Miscellaneous Retailers: 9.5x
- 3. National Security and International Affairs: 7.2x
- 4. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services: 3.6x
- 5. Broadcasting and Content Providers: 3.5x

The top industries in the county, by the county’s concentration of employed workers compared to the national average, were:

- 1. Air Transportation: 13.7x the national average
- 2. Federal Government: 6.4x
- 3. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services: 3.5x
- 4. Broadcasting and Content Providers: 2.8x
- 5. Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations: 2.5x

16. Data is obtained from Lightcast Technologies for the time period between January 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025, accessed on May 5, 2026 and is reflective of online job postings. Read more on the methodology here: <https://kb.lightcast.io/en/articles/6957446-job-posting-analytics-jpa-methodology>.

SPOTLIGHT**Job Demand in Arlington County in 2025 (continued)**

The top occupations in the county, by the number of unique job postings were:

1. Computer Occupations, All Other - 3,400	2. Software Developers - 3,200	3. Registered Nurses - 1,900
4. Managers, All Other - 1,600	5. Data Scientists - 1,500	

The top requested skills or qualifications listed for these jobs were:

1. Communication
2. Management
3. Computer Science
4. Operations

The top occupations in the county, by the county's concentration of job postings relative to the national average, were:

1. Political Scientists: 19.6x the national average
2. Detectives and Criminal Investigators: 12.1x
3. Military-only Occupations: 11.6x
4. Budget Analysts: 11.1x
5. Information Security Analysts: 9.2x

The top occupations in the county, by the county's concentration of employed workers compared to the national average, were:

1. Social Scientists and Related Workers, All Other: 15.5x the national average
2. Airline Pilots, Copilots, and Flight Engineers: 14.3x
3. Flight Attendants: 13.4x
4. Legal Support Workers, All Other: 12.2x
5. Political Scientists: 11.5x

The top occupations in the county, by average monthly hires, were:

1. Fast Food and Counter Workers: 450
2. Software Developers: 260
3. Waiters and Waitresses: 250
4. Management Analysts: 230
5. Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners: 170

SPOTLIGHT

Job Demand In Arlington County In 2025 (continued)

Immigrants play a crucial role in filling high-demand positions, particularly as the need for bilingual and culturally competent skillsets continues to grow.

The top five industries with the highest demand for bilingual workers, by number of job postings, were:¹⁷

1. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services: 300
2. Health Care and Social Assistance: 120
3. Retail Trade: 120
4. Other Services (Except Public Administration): 120
5. Public Administration: 100

The top in-demand jobs for bilingual workers in the county, by number of open job postings, were:

1. Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education: 110
2. Interpreters and Translators: 60

17. Data is obtained from Lightcast Technologies for the time period between January 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025, accessed on May 5, 2026.

SPOTLIGHT

Josue Bastidas

External Relations Manager, Columbia Pike Partnership

Josue Bastidas was born in New Jersey and grew up in Queens, New York, but he quickly learned about the sacrifice often required of immigrants at an early age. His father who moved to the United States from Colombia at age 17, worked the early morning shift as a city bus driver. In order for Bastidas and his two younger brothers to get a ride to school, they had to accommodate his schedule by waking at 5 a.m. He remembers his mother, an immigrant from Mexico who worked as a home health aide, packing up the entire family in the pre-dawn hours. “We were all part of that struggle,” he says. “But I developed a deep respect for my parents’ resilience at a young age.”

Bastidas also developed a deep respect for the power of community and how it and his family could offer protection during difficult times. Nearly five years ago after moving with his wife to Arlington, he immediately sought out ways to get involved locally and put down roots. After volunteering with civic organizations and helping out with elections, Bastidas eventually got a job at the Arlington Chamber of Commerce in 2023, where he discovered the joy of walking around the neighborhood and meeting business owners face to face. “This is how true connections are created and how you develop trust,” he says.

Two years ago, Bastidas was hired as the external relations manager for the Columbia Pike Partnership, an economic development nonprofit that assists more than 300 businesses—many of which are immigrant-owned. He continued his practice of walking to meet business owners along the 3.5-mile Arlington throughfare that runs between the Pentagon and the Fairfax County border and learned about the unique stresses they were facing. He heard stories about how a years-long utility and street reconstruction project snarled traffic and blocked storefronts. He also heard about the impact of mass layoffs of federal workers and an intense increase in federal immigration enforcement. These events kept many shoppers at home, including ex-federal employees who were cutting back on spending and many immigrants who were afraid to leave home. Nearly 30 percent of the area’s residents were born in another country, including large communities from Ethiopia, El Salvador, Bolivia, Peru and Ukraine.

The Columbia Pike Partnership has worked hard to keep the corridor thriving. They host business development classes and loan workshops. And they sponsor three annual festivals, including a new multicultural festival and monthly movie nights with Spanish subtitles. There are also lunch clubs, happy hours and a weekly farmer’s market. “Small businesses are an engine of the local economy,” he says. “A small restaurant might employ 20 people who live in the community and pay local taxes. Together we can unlock many resources to help keep small businesses thriving.”

Yet it’s through his personal conversations when Bastidas learns how people are keeping their businesses and dreams alive. “So many of our business owners are taking risks and finding creative ways to survive,” he says. For example, one owner of a struggling Mexican restaurant started a food truck; another expanded delivery services to home-bound customers. After one restaurant owner told him that workers were nervous about immigration enforcement, Bastidas connected him to a Latino liaison group that works with local police. He also helps laid-off workers find new jobs. “Everyone knows me, and I love the hands-on aspect of helping people survive,” he says. “I’m inspired by their resilience every day.”

Entrepreneurship

3,100
immigrant entrepreneurs
generated
\$112.5
million
in business income in
Arlington County.

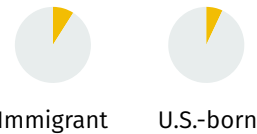
Immigrant entrepreneurs
self-identified as **42.9%**
female and **57.1%** male.



Immigrants represented
29.0%
of the business owners in
the county in 2024 despite
making up **21.9%** of the
population.

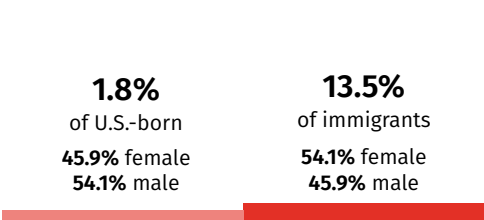
Immigrants were
41.7%
more likely to be an
entrepreneur than their U.S.
counterparts.

9.3% of immigrants worked
for their own businesses,
while **6.6%** of the U.S.-
born population were
entrepreneurs.¹⁸

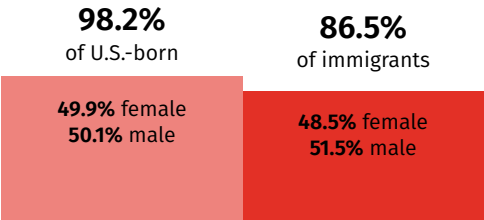


Education

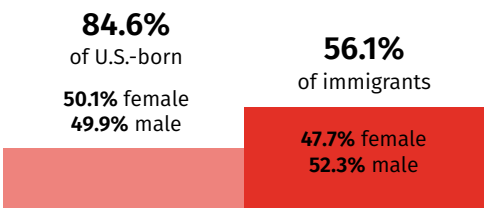
Share of the county's population aged 25
or above that had **less than a high school
education** in 2024:



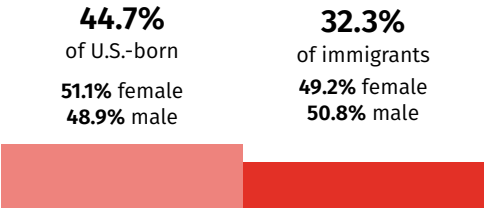
Share of the county's population aged 25
or above that had **at least a high school
education or some college** in 2024:



Share of the county's population aged 25
or above that held **a bachelor's degree or
higher** in 2024:



Share of the county's population aged 25
or above that held **an advanced degree** in 2024:



18. Data obtained from the ACS
may not capture those who
work in informal jobs and
businesses, and as a result
may not capture immigrants'
full entrepreneurial
contributions within the
county.

SPOTLIGHT University Population

In fall 2024,

361

students¹⁹ enrolled in colleges and universities in Arlington County were international students.²⁰



The breakdown of international students is as follows:

- Undergraduate students (234)
- Graduate students (127)

The university with the largest international student population was **Marymount University** (312 international students).

In the 2023-2024 academic year,

65

degrees were awarded to international students with a primary major in a STEM field.

International students supported

132

jobs in the county and these students contributed

\$15.6M

to the economy in the 2024-2025 academic year.²¹

Families & Housing

Immigrants are an important part of Arlington County. They help revitalize neighborhoods and generate housing wealth as homeowners and renters.

The average household size for immigrants in Arlington County was **2.3 individuals** compared to **1.9** for U.S.-born residents.



Immigrant households



U.S.-born households

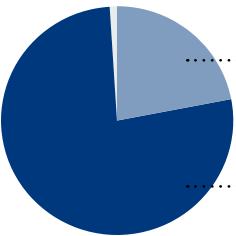
In 2024, **29.1%** of immigrant households in Arlington County owned their own homes, compared with **43.6%** of U.S.-born households.



Immigrant



U.S.-born



5,600 immigrant households, or **22.0%** of immigrant households in the county, lived in houses.

19,700 immigrant households, or **77.8%**, lived in apartments.

Total property value of immigrant households was

\$6.0B

85.2% of immigrant households in the county had access to broadband connection in their place of residence compared with **92.1%** of U.S.-born households that did in 2024.²²



Immigrant



U.S.-born

19. 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, accessed on May 5, 2026.

20. An international student is a temporary U.S. resident and refers to people who are not U.S. citizens and are in this country on a non-immigrant visa or temporary basis.

21. Economic data is derived from the International Student Economic Value Tool maintained by NAFSA: Association of International Educators, accessed on May 5, 2026.

22. This data point reports whether the respondent or any member of their household subscribed to the internet using broadband (high speed) internet service such as cable, fiber optic, or DSL.

Naturalization



- 50.2% Naturalized²³ citizens (26,000)
- 15.0% Likely eligible to naturalize (7,800)



Nationally, **49.5%** of immigrants are naturalized citizens, **16.4%** are likely eligible to naturalize.

When immigrants become U.S. citizens, their income increases by **+8.9%**²⁴ on average. Becoming a U.S. citizen opens economic and civic doors for Arlington County residents and their families.

Refugees

3,100

immigrants, or **6.1%** of the immigrant population in Arlington County, were likely refugees²⁵ in 2024.²⁶

In 2024, refugee households²⁷ in the county earned: **\$234.1 million**

■ **\$53.2 million** went to federal taxes²⁸

■ **\$21.4 million** went to state & local taxes²⁹

■ **\$159.5 million** was left in spending power

23. Naturalization is the process through which one can become a U.S. citizen, dependent on certain eligibility requirements. We identify immigrants who are potentially eligible for naturalization based on a set of criteria of eligibility identified by the USCIS, such as immigration status, age, English language proficiency, and length of stay in the United States. Learn more here: <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/fact-sheet/how-united-states-immigration-system-works-fact-sheet/>.

24. Maria E. Enchautegui and Linda Giannarelli, *The Economic Impact of Naturalization on Immigrants and Cities*, Urban Institute, 2015, <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/economic-impact-naturalization-immigrants-and-cities>.

25. Refugees are admitted to the United States based upon an inability to return to their home countries because of a “well-founded fear of persecution” due to their race, membership in a particular social group, political opinion, religion, or national origin. Learn more here: <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/how-united-states-immigration-system-works>.

26. To identify cases in microdata from the ACS that are likely to be refugees, we use an imputation method based on each foreign-born respondent’s country of birth and their year of arrival, similar to the work of Kallick and Mathema in “Refugee Integration in the United States,” <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/refugee-integration-in-the-united-states/>, as well as Capps et al in “The Integration Outcomes of U.S. Refugees: Successes and Challenges,” <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/integration-outcomes-us-refugees-successes-and-challenges>.

27. Refugee households refer to those with a refugee as head of the unit.

28. U.S. Congressional Budget Office, *The Distribution of Household Income and 2022* (Washington, DC: 2022) <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/62300>.

29. Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, *Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States* (Washington, DC: 2024), <https://itep.org/whopays/>.

H-1B and H-2B Visas

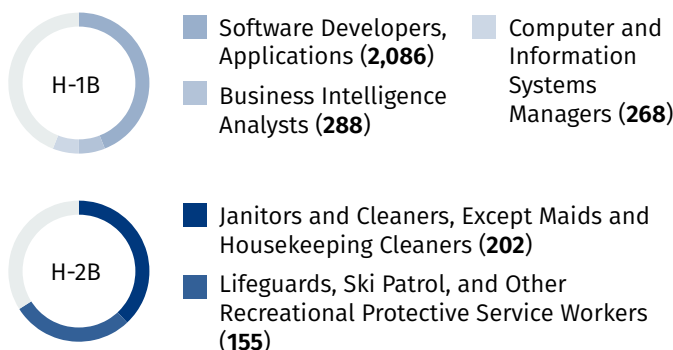
4,692

H-1B visas were certified³⁰ in Arlington County during Fiscal Year 2025.

537

H-2B visas were certified³¹ in Arlington County during Fiscal Year 2025.

The top occupations among certified H-1B and H-2B visa applications, by number of certifications, were:



30. Before an employer can file a petition with United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to hire an employee using an H-1B visa, the employer must take steps to ensure that hiring the foreign worker will not adversely affect U.S. workers. To do this, employers file a labor condition application (LCA) to be certified by the Department of Labor (DOL), which ensures that employment of the H-1B worker will not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of similarly employed U.S. workers. The number of certified H-1B visas is therefore a good indication of the demand for foreign-born workers of a given occupation in a given region. More information on the H-1B process can be found here: <https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/h-1b-specialty-occupations>.
31. Similar to the H-1B process, in order for an employer to obtain an H-2B certification, the DOL must determine that there are not enough U.S. workers available to do the temporary job being petitioned for, and that employing H-2B workers will not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of similar workers. Additionally, the need for the worker must be temporary. Certified jobs are not necessarily the jobs filled, though they do indicate a level of demand for temporary foreign-born workers in a particular occupation. More information on the H-2B process can be found here: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/foreign-labor/programs/h-2b>.