BAY AREA REGION (ALAMEDA, CONTRA COSTA, MARIN, NAPA, SANTA CLARA, SAN MATEO, SONOMA, SOLANO, AND SAN FRANCISCO COUNTIES):

DEMOGRAPHICS. According to the 2010-2012 American Community Survey, almost one-third (30%) of residents in the Bay Area region are immigrants. This amounts to more than 2.1 million immigrant residents in the region.1 Of those 2.1 million immigrants, over 430,000 are undocumented or about 20% of all immigrants.2

52% of immigrants in the Bay Area region are citizens.

CHILDREN AND MIXED-STATUS FAMILIES. Immigrants and their children make up 43% of the population in the Bay Area. Of all children in the region, 52% have at least one immigrant parent.3

More than two-thirds of non-citizens (69%) live in households that also have citizens. About 79% of non-citizen Latinos live in households with citizens and about 62% of Asian non-citizens live in mixed-status households.

WORKFORCE. Immigrants comprise more than a third of the labor force in the Bay Area region (37%). They figure prominently in the agriculture, manufacturing, and repair and personal services industries. The undocumented in particular comprise a large share of the labor force in these industries as they represent 7% of the total region’s workforce. The undocumented alone comprise 28% of the agriculture industry and 16% of the construction industry.

In terms of occupations, immigrants make up the majority of those involved in farming, fishing, and forestry (76%), grounds cleaning and maintenance (67%), production (57%), and food preparation and service (49%). Within these job sectors, several positions are held primarily by immigrants, many of them undocumented4.

Immigrants participate in the labor force at higher rates than non-immigrants, with 62% of immigrants and 59% of non-immigrants over age 16 employed in the Bay Area region. For Latino and Asian immigrant men, the difference is even greater. About 83% of all Latino and Asian immigrant men of working age (25-64) are employed, compared with 76% of U.S. born Latino and Asian men.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF NON-CONTINUOUS WORKERS. As the economic recovery continues, intermittent workers are an important – and vulnerable – sector of the workforce. There are over 18,000 undocumented intermittent workers in the region and more than 3,500 undocumented workers were laid off.5 It is important that both legislative proposals and executive action include this population, with a total earned income of almost $136 million. Millions of dollars and their multiplier effects are at stake.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP. In the Bay Area, immigrants are entrepreneurial and are more likely to create their own jobs (or be self-employed) than native born workers. For the working age population (age 25 to 64) Latino immigrants have a self-employment rate of 12%, which is twice the rate for non-immigrant Latinos (6%). A similar trend is seen among Asian immigrants, with 9% self-employed as compared to 6% of non-immigrant Asians.

Immigrant workers represent a source of untapped labor market potential. As a share of those over age 25 who are employed in the Bay Area region, immigrants are more likely to be over-skilled (20%) than native born workers (16%) — that is, holding a Bachelor’s degree or higher and working in an unskilled job.6

Immigrants account for 47% of all residents with a Ph.D degree.

ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS. Immigrant workers are important to the Bay Area region’s economy. They contribute about 36% of the region’s GDP or over $39 billion.7

Undocumented immigrants in the region alone contribute some $5.3 billion of the region’s GDP.

Immigrant households make up 30% of the total household income in the Bay Area region, and thus represent a substantial share of all spending power.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FARMING, FISHING, AND FORESTRY:</th>
<th>Graders and sorters, agricultural products (87%) Miscellaneous agricultural workers, including animal breeders (78%)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GROUNDS CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE:</td>
<td>Maids and housekeeping cleaners (84%) Grounds maintenance workers (63%) First-line supervisors of housekeeping and janitorial workers (61%) Janitors and building cleaners (59%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRODUCTION:</td>
<td>Sewing machine operators (83%) Electrical, electronics, and electromechanical assemblers (83%) Tailors, dressmakers, and sewers (81%) Food processing workers, all other (80%) Miscellaneous metal and plastic workers (77%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOOD PREPARATION AND SERVING:</td>
<td>Cooks (70%) Dishwashers (69%) Food servers, nonrestaurant (58%) Chefs and head cooks (54%)</td>
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</table>
CIVIC PARTICIPATION. There were over 356,000 immigrants who were eligible to naturalize in the Bay Area region as of 2010, and over 268,000 that would be able to naturalize within the following 5 years, together making up a substantial share of the current voting-eligible population (13%). This will add to the base of the voting-eligible population who are naturalized immigrants (24%).

In the Bay Area region, a full 17% of the voting-age population is non-citizen.

COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN. The top regions of origin for the Bay Area region’s immigrants are Asia (55%), Latin America (32%), and Europe (9%).

42% of the Bay Area region’s residents speak a language other than English at home. Throughout the region, immigrants speak more than 97 languages.

POSITIVE IMPACT OF LONG-TERM RESIDENCE. As immigrants remain in the Bay Area region, poverty rates decrease and homeownership rises. The poverty rate for immigrants drops by half to 7% when we consider only those who arrived before 1980, compared to 14% for those who arrived after 1990. Similarly, the homeownership rate for pre-1980 immigrant households (74%) is nearly twice as high as the rate for post-1990 immigrant households (42%). These upward mobility trends also apply to undocumented immigrants in the region.

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS. Lack of health insurance limits many immigrants from becoming fully engaged in their communities, especially restricting their labor market potential. Prior to the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, 19% of immigrants were without health insurance. While this figure has dropped significantly for immigrants with legal status, some 44% of the undocumented in the region are uninsured.

Moreover, recent deportations of the undocumented not only fragment families and neighborhoods but many productive industries in the region are deprived of much needed labor. In the last several years, the “Secure Communities” program has led to the deportation of over 12,000 immigrants from the region. Measures such as California’s TRUST Act - along with local policies which have entirely halted immigration holds in county jails throughout the area - have significantly reduced the number of deportations.

ENDNOTES