

Illinois' Undocumented Immigrant Population: A Summary of Recent Research by Rob Paral and Associates



By Fred Tsao
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
February 2014

This report is made possible through the generous support of the Polk Bros. Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Illinois Funders DACA Relief Initiative, and the Chicago Community Trust



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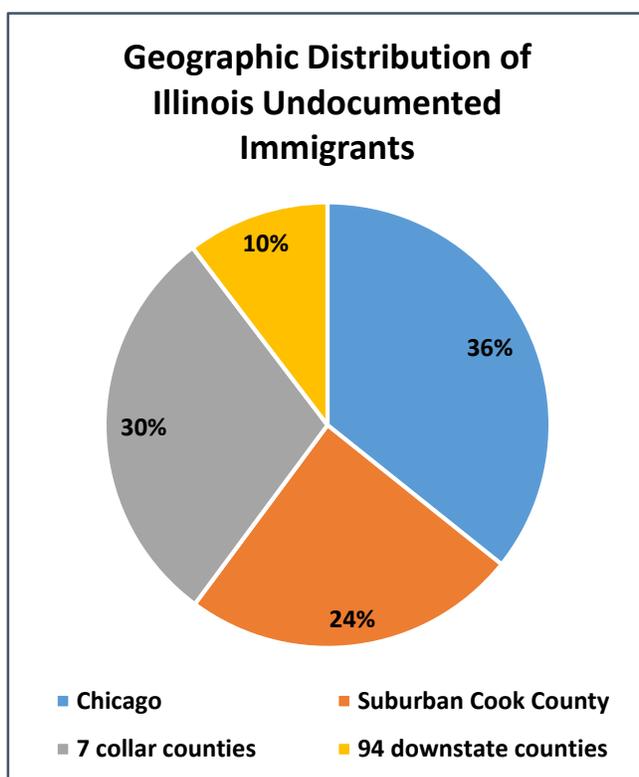
55 E. Jackson Blvd,
Suite 2075
Chicago, IL 60604
312 332-7360
www.icirr.org

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The numbers included in this report are based on estimates; the results should be used as a guide to understand the general characteristics of the community. Information regarding the methodology behind these figures is available at [this link](#). More detailed data is available from Rob Paral and Associates, rob@robparal.com.

More than half of Illinois' undocumented immigrants live in suburban Chicago

Roughly 511,000 undocumented immigrants live in the state of Illinois. While concentrated in metro Chicago, these immigrants live in counties throughout the state.

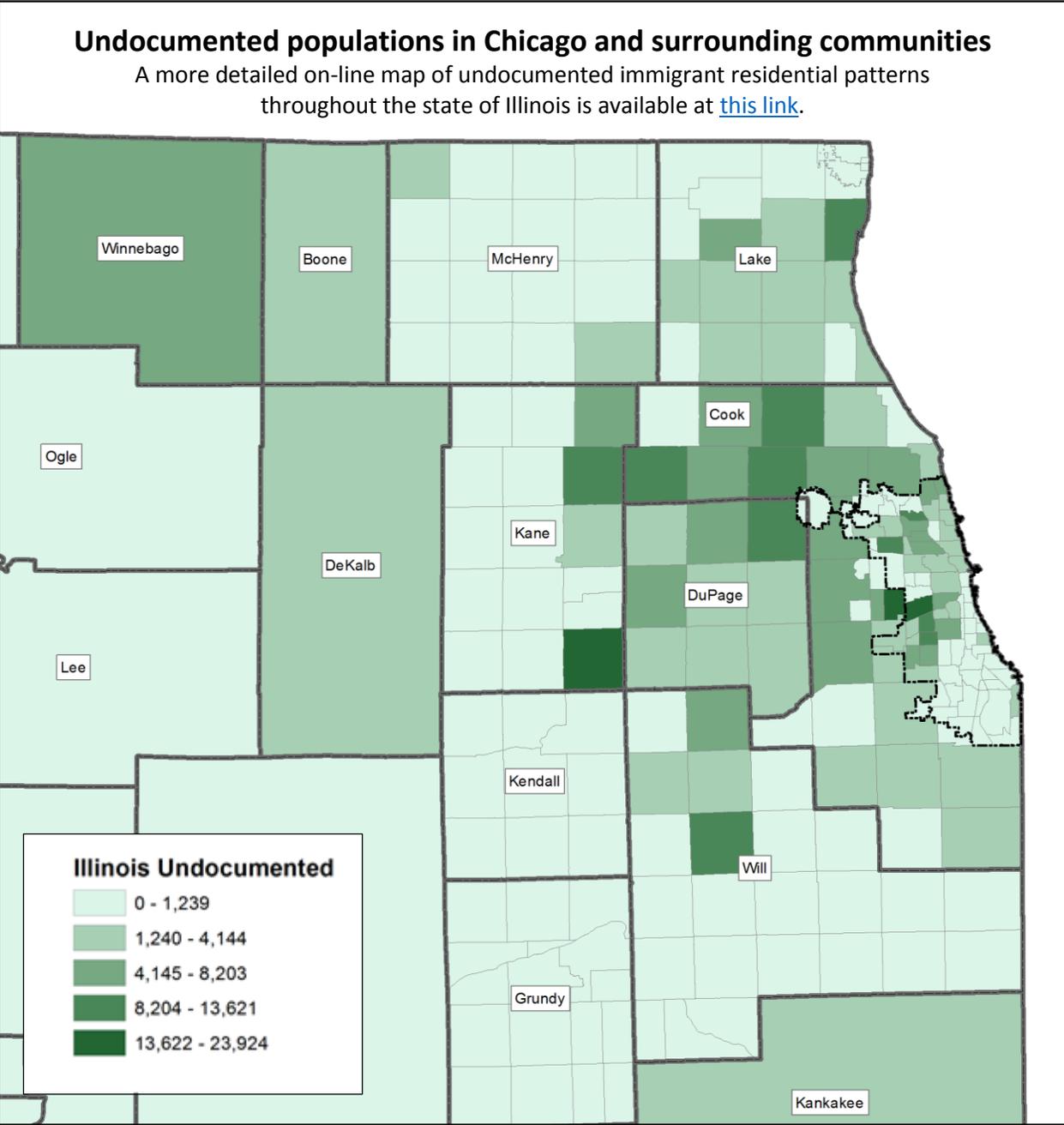


Suburban Chicago is home to about 54% percent of the state's undocumented population, compared to 36% who live in the city. DuPage, Kane, Lake, and Will Counties are each home to more than 10,000 undocumented residents, as are Aurora Township (Kane County), Waukegan Township (Lake), Elgin Township (Kane), and Cicero, Hanover, and Elk Grove Townships in Cook County.

In Chicago, South Lawndale (Little Village) is the community area with the largest number of undocumented immigrants (20,000). Recent movements of immigrants have created large undocumented populations in Belmont Cragin, Gage Park, Albany Park, and Brighton Park that now outnumber the undocumented in Pilsen (Lower West Side).

| Undocumented populations in selected Illinois regions | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| | Estimated undocumented population | Share of total population that is undocumented |
| Illinois | 511,000 | 4% |
| Chicago | 183,000 | 7% |
| Suburban Cook County | 125,000 | 5% |
| Collar counties (DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, Will) | 151,000 | 4.5% |
| Downstate (94 counties) | 53,000 | 1% |

| Undocumented populations in selected Illinois regions | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Selected Illinois counties | Estimated undocumented population |
| Kane County | 43,000 |
| Lake County | 39,000 |
| DuPage County | 36,000 |
| Will County | 22,000 |
| Champaign County | 11,000 |
| McHenry County | 8,000 |
| Winnebago County | 7,000 |



| Undocumented populations in selected Illinois regions | |
|--|--|
| Selected townships | Estimated undocumented population |
| Aurora (Kane County) | 23,000 |
| Cicero (Cook) | 18,000 |
| Waukegan (Lake) | 14,000 |
| Hanover (Cook) | 11,000 |
| Elgin (Kane) | 10,000 |
| Elk Grove (Cook) | 10,000 |
| Joliet (Will) | 9,000 |
| Addison (DuPage) | 9,000 |
| Wheeling (Cook) | 9,000 |
| Leyden (Cook) | 8,000 |
| Proviso (Cook) | 8,000 |
| Avon (DuPage) | 7,000 |
| Palatine (Cook) | 7,000 |
| Maine (Cook) | 7,000 |
| Winfield (DuPage) | 6,000 |
| Bloomington (DuPage) | 6,000 |
| Schaumburg (Cook) | 6,000 |
| Dundee (Kane) | 6,000 |
| Du Page (Will) | 5,000 |
| Lyons (Cook) | 5,000 |
| Berwyn (Cook) | 5,000 |

| Selected Chicago community areas | Estimated undocumented population |
|---|--|
| South Lawndale (Little Village) | 20,000 |
| Belmont Cragin | 12,000 |
| Gage Park | 11,000 |
| Albany Park | 10,000 |
| Brighton Park | 9,000 |
| Lower West Side (Pilsen) | 8,000 |
| Avondale | 7,000 |
| Logan Square | 7,000 |
| New City (Back of the Yards) | 7,000 |
| West Ridge | 6,000 |
| West Lawn | 6,000 |
| Chicago Lawn | 6,000 |
| Rogers Park | 5,000 |
| Irving Park | 5,000 |

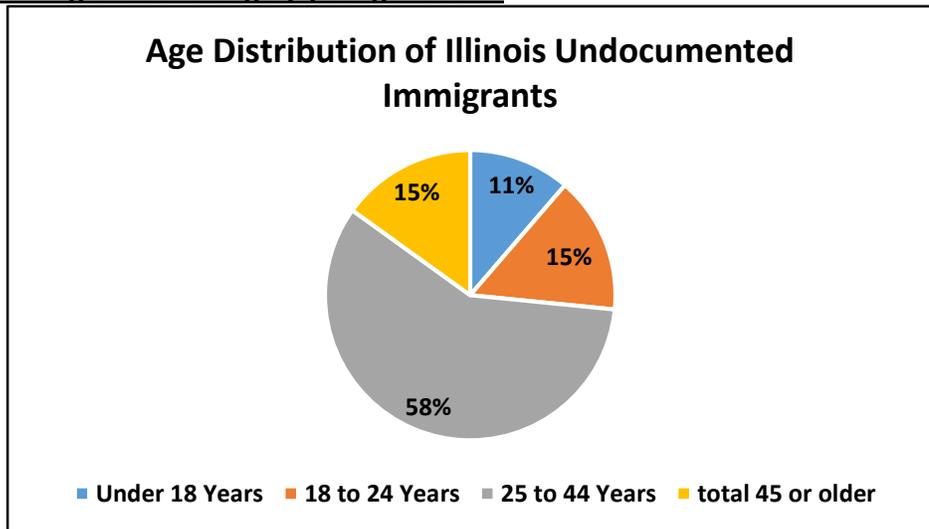
Illinois' undocumented are largely from Latin America, but immigrants from Asia and Europe make up significant portions

Latin American immigrants make up approximately 84% of Illinois' undocumented population. Mexicans alone account for 77%. Asians make up approximately 9% of the undocumented population in Illinois, but make up 12% of the undocumented population in the collar counties and 21% of the undocumented downstate. The most significant Asian countries of origin are the Philippines, India, Korea, and China. Another 5% are from Europe, mostly from Poland, the former Soviet Union, and elsewhere in Eastern Europe.

| Country/ region of origin of Illinois undocumented population | | | | |
|--|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| | Number (share) from Mexico | Number (share) from Latin America | Number (share) from Asia | Number (share) from Europe |
| Illinois | 392,000 (77%) | 430,000 (84%) | 48,000 (9%) | 25,000 (5%) |
| Chicago | 138,000 (75%) | 155,000 (85%) | 12,000 (7%) | 11,000 (6%) |
| Suburban Cook | 95,000 (76%) | 102,000 (82%) | 15,000 (12%) | 6,000 (5%) |
| Collar counties | 125,000 (83%) | 136,000 (90%) | 9,000 (6%) | 4,000 (3%) |
| Downstate 94 counties | 34,000 (64%) | 37,000 (70%) | 11,000 (21%) | 3,000 (5%) |

Illinois' undocumented immigrants are largely younger adults

Three out of every five undocumented immigrants in Illinois are between the ages of 25 and 44. The age distribution of the undocumented are consistent across the state, except that downstate the undocumented skew slightly younger.



| Age distribution of Illinois undocumented population | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Number (share) under 18 | Number (share) age 18-24 | Number (share) age 25-44 | Number (share) age 45 or older |
| Illinois | 58,000 (11%) | 78,000 (15%) | 298,000 (58%) | 77,000 (15%) |
| Chicago | 19,000 (10%) | 28,000 (16%) | 106,000 (58%) | 29,000 (16%) |
| Suburban Cook | 15,000 (12%) | 17,000 (14%) | 72,000 (58%) | 21,000 (17%) |
| Collar counties | 18,000 (12%) | 21,000 (14%) | 91,000 (61%) | 21,000 (14%) |
| Downstate 94 counties | 7,000 (13%) | 12,000 (23%) | 28,000 (53%) | 6,000 (11%) |

Illinois’ undocumented immigrants skew slightly more male than the overall population,

Compared to the general population of Illinois, which is split 49%-51% male-female, undocumented immigrants skew slightly more male, particularly in the collar counties and downstate. In suburban Cook, women outnumber men among the undocumented.

| Gender distribution of Illinois undocumented population | | |
|--|---------------------|-----------------------|
| | Number (share) male | Number (share) female |
| Illinois | 265,000 (52%) | 246,000 (48%) |
| Chicago | 95,000 (52%) | 87,000 (48%) |
| Suburban Cook | 62,000 (50%) | 63,000 (50%) |
| Collar counties | 79,000 (53%) | 71,000 (47%) |
| Downstate 94 counties | 28,000 (54%) | 24,000 (46%) |

Illinois’ undocumented immigrants live overwhelmingly in families, many of which are mixed-status families that include U.S. citizen spouses and children

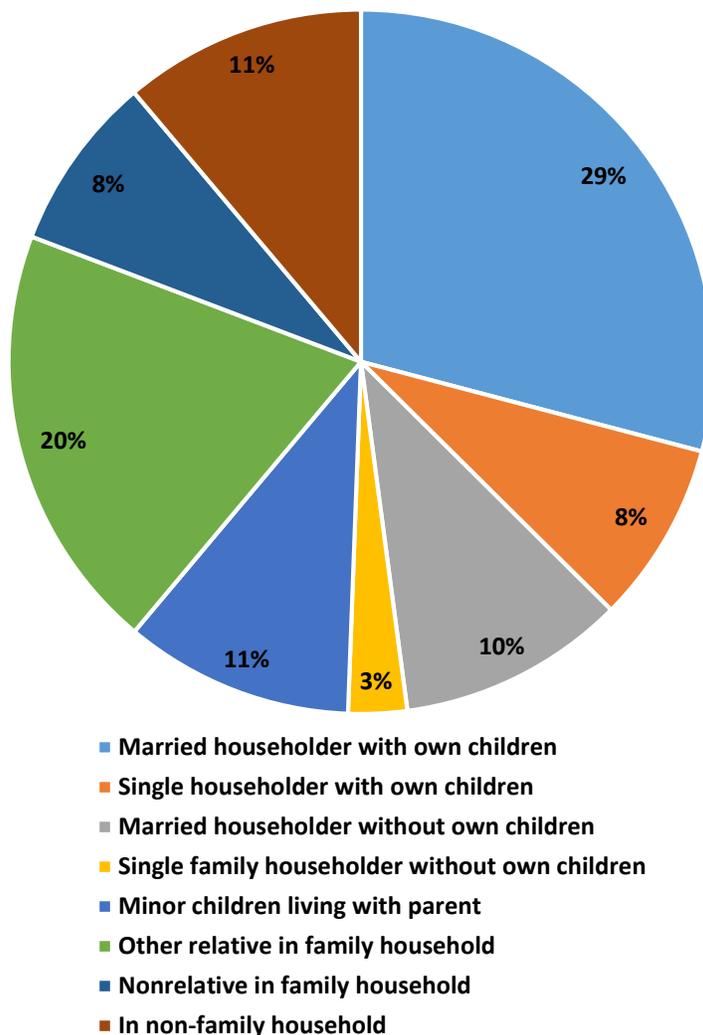
Undocumented immigrants in Illinois live overwhelmingly in family households. Throughout the Chicago area, roughly nine in ten undocumented immigrants live in family households.

| Illinois undocumented immigrants living in family households | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
| | Total undocumented population | Undocumented immigrants living in family households | Share of undocumented immigrants who live in family households |
| Illinois | 511,000 | 454,000 | 89% |
| Chicago | 183,000 | 160,000 | 88% |
| Suburban Cook | 125,000 | 114,000 | 91% |
| 7 collar counties | 151,000 | 140,000 | 93% |
| Downstate 94 counties | 53,000 | 40,000 | 75% |

Among the undocumented immigrants in Illinois, nearly half are heads of households that include their spouse or minor children:

- 29% are married and living with their own minor children
- 10% are married with no children
- 8% are single parents living with their own minor children.
- 3% are single heads of households who do not live with their own children, but who live with other relatives.
- 11% are the undocumented minor children living with a parent.
- 20% live in family households as relatives of the head of the household; these individuals include adult children, parents, siblings, and other individuals who are related to the heads of household by birth, marriage, or adoption.
- 8% live in family households but are unrelated to the head of household. These persons include boarders, roommates, unmarried partners, and unrelated foster children.
- 11% of undocumented immigrants do not live in family households—that is, they do not live in a household in which any members are related to the head of the household.

Relationship and household type among Illinois undocumented immigrants



Relationship and household type among Illinois undocumented immigrants

| | Married householder with own minor children | Single householder with own minor children | Married householder without own children | Single family householder without own minor children |
|-----------------------|---|--|--|--|
| Illinois | 149,000 | 43,000 | 53,000 | 14,000 |
| Chicago | 48,000 | 15,000 | 19,000 | 6,000 |
| Suburban Cook | 38,000 | 11,000 | 15,000 | 4,000 |
| 7 collar counties | 50,000 | 13,000 | 14,000 | 3,000 |
| Downstate 94 counties | 13,000 | 4,000 | 6,000 | 1,000 |

| Relationship and household type among Illinois undocumented immigrants | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| | Minor children living with parent | Other relatives living in family household | Nonrelatives living in family household | In non-family household or group quarters |
| Illinois | 54,000 | 100,000 | 41,000 | 57,000 |
| Chicago | 18,000 | 41,000 | 13,000 | 23,000 |
| Suburban Cook | 14,000 | 25,000 | 8,000 | 11,000 |
| 7 collar counties | 16,000 | 29,000 | 16,000 | 10,000 |
| Downstate 94 counties | 6,000 | 6,000 | 5,000 | 13,000 |

Roughly 5% of all Illinois households, and 6% of family households, include at least one undocumented immigrant. In Chicago alone, more than 8% of total households and more than 12% of family households include at least one undocumented immigrant.

| Illinois households that include undocumented immigrants | | | |
|---|------------------|--|--|
| | Total households | Households with at least one undocumented member | Share of total households that have at least one undocumented member |
| Illinois | 4,745,000 | 237,000 | 5% |
| Chicago | 1,015,000 | 85,000 | 8% |
| Suburban Cook | 904,000 | 59,000 | 6% |
| 7 collar counties | 1,130,000 | 69,000 | 6% |
| Downstate 94 counties | 1,696,000 | 25,000 | 1% |

| Illinois family households that include undocumented immigrants | | | |
|--|-------------------------|---|---|
| | Total family households | Family households with at least one undocumented member | Share of total family households that have at least one undocumented member |
| Illinois | 3,121,000 | 198,000 | 6% |
| Chicago | 559,000 | 68,000 | 12% |
| Suburban Cook | 619,000 | 51,000 | 8% |
| 7 collar counties | 839,000 | 61,000 | 7% |
| Downstate 94 counties | 1,104,000 | 18,000 | 2% |

Of those Illinois family households that include at least one undocumented immigrant, 87% are mixed-status--that is, they also include at least one U.S. citizen or immigrant with lawful status--and 74% include a native-born U.S. citizen. In the collar counties surrounding Chicago, 90% of family households are mixed-status, and 79% include at least one native-born U.S. citizen.

| Illinois family households that include both undocumented immigrants and U.S. citizens | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| | Family households that include at least one undocumented immigrant | Number (share) of such households that also include a legal immigrant or a U.S. citizen | Number (share) of such households that also include a native-born U.S. citizen |
| Illinois | 198,000 | 172,000 (87%) | 146,000 (74%) |
| Chicago | 68,000 | 57,000 (84%) | 47,000 (70%) |
| Suburban Cook | 51,000 | 46,000 (89%) | 38,000 (74%) |
| 7 collar counties | 61,000 | 55,000 (90%) | 48,000 (79%) |
| Downstate 94 counties | 18,000 | 15,000 (83%) | 13,000 (70%) |

Approximately 886,000 Illinois residents live with relatives in family households that include at least one undocumented immigrant. (This count includes the immigrants themselves and all other relatives in the family household, regardless of the status of those relatives.) Of these residents, roughly 799,000 (90%) live in mixed-status households that also include a family member who is a U.S. citizen or has lawful immigration status. Roughly 711,000 (80%) live in a household with at least one native-born U.S. citizen and one undocumented immigrant.

| Related persons in Illinois living in family households that include at least one undocumented immigrant | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Related persons in family households that include at least one undocumented immigrant | Number (share) of these individuals in households that also a legal immigrant or a U.S. citizen | Number (share) of these individuals in households that also include a native-born citizen |
| Illinois | 886,000 | 799,000 (90%) | 711,000 (80%) |
| Chicago | 301,000 | 266,000 (88%) | 233,000 (77%) |
| Suburban Cook | 238,000 | 217,000 (91%) | 190,000 (80%) |
| 7 collar counties | 273,000 | 252,000 (92%) | 230,000 (84%) |
| Downstate 94 counties | 74,000 | 65,000 (88%) | 58,000 (78%) |

About 145,000 Illinois families with children include at least one undocumented parent, making up 36% of all immigrant families with children. Among these families, 126,000 (88%) include at least one native-born child, and 107,000 (74%) include **only** native-born children.

| Illinois family households with undocumented parents and U.S.-born children | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| | Families with children that include at least one undocumented parent | Number (share) of these families with at least one U.S.-born child | Number (share) of these families with only U.S.-born children |
| Illinois | 145,000 | 126,000 (87%) | 107,000 (74%) |
| Chicago | 48,000 | 42,000 (87%) | 35,000 (74%) |
| Suburban Cook | 38,000 | 33,000 (86%) | 29,000 (76%) |
| 7 collar counties | 46,000 | 41,000 (88%) | 34,000 (73%) |
| Downstate 94 counties | 13,000 | 11,000 (84%) | 9,000 (72%) |

In 55% of all Illinois married couples with at least one undocumented spouse, the other spouse is lawfully present (either native-born, naturalized, or lawful permanent resident). In 37% of these couples, the other spouse is a U.S. citizen.

| Illinois married couples with at least one undocumented spouse | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Married couples with at least one undocumented spouse | Number (share) of these couples in which one spouse is lawfully present | Number (share) of these couples in which one spouse is a US citizen |
| Illinois | 141,000 | 78,000 (55%) | 53,000 (37%) |
| Chicago | 46,000 | 25,000 (54%) | 17,000 (38%) |
| Suburban Cook | 38,000 | 23,000 (61%) | 15,000 (38%) |
| 7 collar counties | 44,000 | 23,000 (53%) | 16,000 (37%) |
| Downstate 94 counties | 13,000 | 7,000 (54%) | 5,000 (36%) |

Illinois’ undocumented immigrants largely speak Spanish, but significant numbers speak Asian/Pacific languages

More than four-fifths of Illinois’ undocumented immigrants speak Spanish. Roughly 20% of undocumented immigrants in downstate Illinois speak an Asian or Pacific Island language—a figure that corresponds to the 21% share of downstate undocumented immigrants who came to the U.S. from Asia.

| Languages spoken by Illinois undocumented immigrants | | | |
|---|---|----------------------------------|--|
| | Undocumented persons 5 years old or older | Number (share) who speak Spanish | Number (share) who speak an Asian/Pacific language |
| Illinois | 505,000 | 415,000 (82%) | 44,000 (9%) |
| Chicago | 181,000 | 151,000 (83%) | 10,000 (5%) |
| Suburban Cook | 123,000 | 99,000 (81%) | 15,000 (12%) |
| 7 collar counties | 150,000 | 131,000 (88%) | 9,000 (6%) |
| Downstate 94 counties | 52,000 | 34,000 (66%) | 11,000 (20%) |

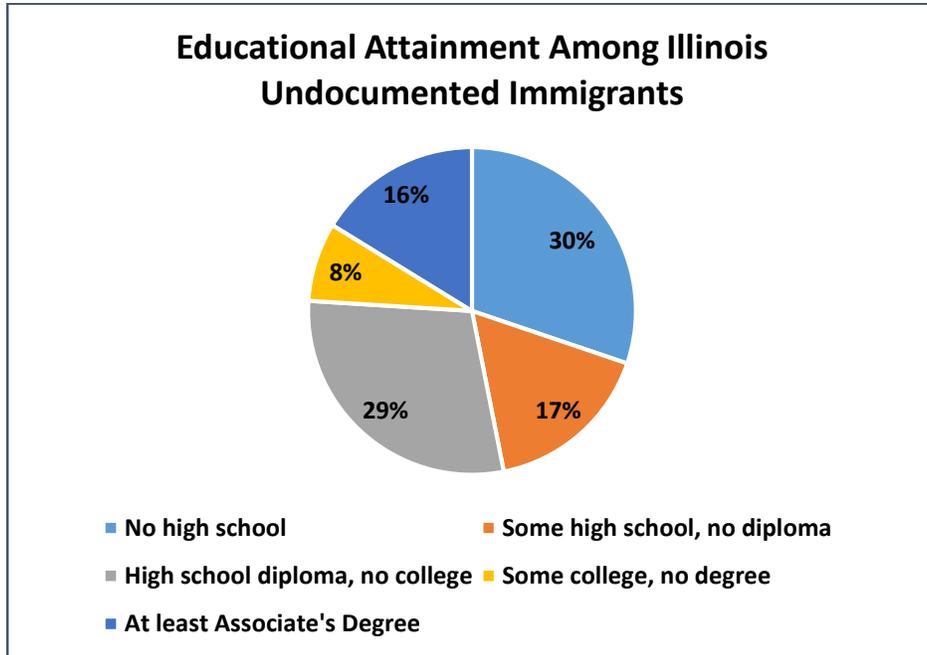
Roughly half of Illinois’ undocumented immigrants have limited English proficiency

Half of Illinois’ undocumented immigrants (254,000) have difficulty with English; 93,000 speak no English. About 57% of the undocumented in Chicago have limited English proficiency.

| English proficiency among Illinois undocumented immigrants | | | |
|---|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| | Undocumented persons 5 years old or older | Number (share) who speak English not well | Number (share) who speak no English |
| Illinois | 505,000 | 161,000 (32%) | 93,000 (19%) |
| Chicago | 181,000 | 63,000 (35%) | 41,000 (23%) |
| Suburban Cook | 123,000 | 38,000 (31%) | 22,000 (18%) |
| 7 collar counties | 150,000 | 45,000 (30%) | 25,000 (17%) |
| Downstate 94 counties | 52,000 | 15,000 (28%) | 6,000 (11%) |

Nearly half of Illinois' undocumented immigrants have not completed high school, though a significant share have earned a college degree

Approximately 47% of Illinois' undocumented population (176,000) have not earned a high school diploma. About 30% (113,000) have never attended high school. On the other hand, 29% (109,000) have a high school diploma but never attended college, 8% (29,000) have attended college but have not earned a degree, and 16% (61,000) have earned at least an associate's degree. In downstate Illinois, 20% of undocumented immigrants have earned at least a bachelor's degree.



| Educational attainment among Illinois undocumented immigrants | | | | | | |
|---|--|----------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | Undocumented persons 25 years old or older | Did not attend high school | Attended high school, no diploma | Completed high school, no college | Attended college, no degree | Completed at least associate's degree |
| Illinois | 375,000 | 113,000 | 63,000 | 109,000 | 29,000 | 61,000 |
| Chicago | 135,000 | 43,000 | 21,000 | 41,000 | 10,000 | 21,000 |
| Suburban Cook | 93,000 | 27,000 | 13,000 | 29,000 | 8,000 | 17,000 |
| 7 collar counties | 112,000 | 35,000 | 22,000 | 30,000 | 9,000 | 16,000 |
| Downstate 94 counties | 34,000 | 9,000 | 6,000 | 9,000 | 3,000 | 7,000 |

Roughly one-third of Illinois' undocumented immigrants live below the federal poverty line

Approximately 29% of Illinois' undocumented immigrants (146,000) live below 100% of the federal poverty level (\$23,550 for a household of four). Another 34% (171,000) are between 100% and 200% of the poverty line. In Chicago alone, 33% (60,000) are below 100% of the federal poverty level, and 67% (122,000) are below 200% of the poverty line.

| Income among Illinois undocumented immigrants | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | Undocumented persons for whom poverty status is determined | Number (share) with income below 200% of federal poverty level | Number (share) with income below 100% of federal poverty level |
| Illinois | 503,000 | 316,000 (63%) | 146,000 (29%) |
| Chicago | 181,000 | 122,000 (67%) | 60,000 (33%) |
| Suburban Cook | 124,000 | 70,000 (57%) | 30,000 (24%) |
| 7 collar counties | 149,000 | 89,000 (60%) | 38,000 (25%) |
| Downstate 94 counties | 48,000 | 35,000 (72%) | 18,000 (37%) |

Under the Senate immigration reform bill, legalizing immigrants must either maintain regular employment or average income of at least 100% of the federal poverty level to renew their provisional status. To gain lawful permanent resident (green card) status, they must maintain regular employment or income of average income of at least 125% of the poverty line.

Illinois’ undocumented immigrants participate in the state labor force at high rates, working in a broad range of industries and occupations

Roughly 68% of undocumented immigrants participate in the Illinois labor force—a slightly higher participation rate than that of the general population (66%). The labor force participation rate is particularly high in the collar counties (75%).

| Labor force participation among Illinois undocumented immigrants | | | | |
|---|--|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | Undocumented persons 16 years old or older | Number (share) civilian employed | Number (share) civilian unemployed | Number (share) not in the labor force |
| Illinois | 465,000 | 286,000 (62%) | 33,000 (7%) | 145,000 (31%) |
| Chicago | 168,000 | 99,000 (59%) | 14,000 (9%) | 54,000 (32%) |
| Suburban Cook | 112,000 | 69,000 (61%) | 7,000 (6%) | 37,000 (33%) |
| 7 collar counties | 138,000 | 93,000 (68%) | 10,000 (7%) | 35,000 (25%) |
| Downstate 94 counties | 47,000 | 25,000 (53%) | 3,000 (6%) | 19,000 (41%) |

Roughly one-fifth of Illinois’ undocumented immigrants work in manufacturing, while another one-fifth work in accommodations and food services. Approximately 11% work in administrative and support services (including waste management), and another 10% work in construction.

| Common industries of employment among Illinois undocumented immigrants | | | | |
|---|---------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| | Manufacturing | Accommodations and food services | Administrative and support services | Construction |
| Illinois | 63,000 (22%) | 59,000 (21%) | 31,000 (11%) | 28,000 (10%) |
| Chicago | 22,000 (23%) | 21,000 (21%) | 8,000 (8%) | 12,000 (12%) |
| Suburban Cook | 13,000 (19%) | 12,000 (18%) | 8,000 (12%) | 8,000 (12%) |
| Collar counties | 21,000 (22%) | 22,000 (23%) | 12,000 (13%) | 6,000 (7%) |
| Downstate 94 counties | 7,000 (27%) | 5,000 (19%) | 2,000 (7%) | 1,000 (5%) |

The most common occupations among Illinois' undocumented immigrants are in production and in food preparation and service. Other common occupations involve sales and office work; transportation and material moving; building and grounds cleaning and maintenance; management, business, science, and arts professional work, and construction.

| Common occupations among Illinois undocumented immigrants | | | | | |
|---|--|--------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|
| | Civilian employed undocumented persons 16 years old or older | Production | Food preparation and serving related | Sales and office | Transportation and material moving |
| Illinois | 286,000 | 52,000 (18%) | 50,000 (18%) | 38,000 (13%) | 36,000 (13%) |
| Chicago | 99,000 | 18,000 (18%) | 18,000 (18%) | 13,000 (13%) | 13,000 (13%) |
| Suburban Cook | 69,000 | 12,000 (17%) | 11,000 (16%) | 10,000 (14%) | 8,000 (12%) |
| Collar counties | 93,000 | 18,000 (19%) | 17,000 (19%) | 12,000 (13%) | 12,000 (13%) |
| Downstate 94 counties | 25,000 | 5,000 (19%) | 4,000 (15%) | 3,000 (12%) | 3,000 (11%) |

| Common occupations among Illinois undocumented immigrants (continued) | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|--------------|
| | Civilian employed undocumented persons 16 years old or older | Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance | Management, business, science, and arts professional | Construction |
| Illinois | 286,000 | 33,000 (12%) | 28,000 (10%) | 26,000 (9%) |
| Chicago | 99,000 | 10,000 (10%) | 8,000 (9%) | 11,000 (11%) |
| Suburban Cook | 69,000 | 7,000 (11%) | 7,000 (10%) | 8,000 (11%) |
| Collar counties | 93,000 | 13,000 (14%) | 8,000 (8%) | 7,000 (7%) |
| Downstate 94 counties | 25,000 | 3,000 (10%) | 5,000 (20%) | 1,000 (4%) |

Implications for immigration reform

The characteristics of Illinois' undocumented immigrants bear several significant implications for any potential reform of our immigration system, such as that outlined in the Senate immigration bill.

Undocumented immigrants are **increasingly present in the Chicago suburbs**, with more than half living there compared to 36% in the city. Immigration service infrastructure in the suburbs, however, is still limited compared to that which serves immigrants living in the city of Chicago. Should immigration reform legislation that includes legalization win passage, this **suburban infrastructure will need significant additional investment** in order to adequately serve all those suburban immigrants who seek legalization.

Since Illinois' undocumented population overwhelmingly hails from Latin America and speaks Spanish, **any effective outreach to the undocumented must therefore be conducted primarily in Spanish**. However, significant undocumented populations hail from Asia (the Philippines, India, Korea, and China) and from Eastern Europe. **Organizations that serve Asian and Eastern**

European communities must therefore be included in any informational outreach and direct service should immigration reform win enactment.

Illinois' undocumented immigrants live predominantly in **mixed-status families**, often with a U.S. citizen spouse or child. This finding is contrary to the common image of undocumented immigrants as single and unattached. On the contrary, undocumented immigrants have strong equities in this country, a fact that provides a **powerful argument against enforcement policies that separate these immigrants from their lawfully present spouses and children**. Indeed, the fact that 78,000 undocumented immigrants in Illinois are married to a U.S. citizen or lawfully present immigrant spouse further suggests that **any immigration reform legislation should fix the unlawful presence bars and other obstacles that currently block the undocumented spouses from gaining lawful status** through sponsorship of the lawfully present spouses. Such fixes would remove the threat of deportation and separation for these couples, and offer a simpler and quicker alternative to legalization, which, if the Senate bill offers any indication, would involve a long and rigorous process.

Undocumented immigrants will also **need significant assistance to meet any educational, language, and work requirements** that legalization might impose. Half of the state's undocumented immigrants have difficulty with English, and roughly half have not earned a high school diploma. And while the undocumented have strong rates of labor force participation, nearly two-thirds have incomes below 200% of the federal poverty level. To have a fair opportunity to gain lawful status through a legalization program, our state's undocumented immigrants will need to have available to them English language and vocational training programs that would enable them to enhance their education and job skills. Such programming would enable legalizing immigrants to not only meet the requirements of legalization but also to contribute even more to our state's economic and civic life.