

# Greater Boston home to 180,000 undocumented immigrants, report finds

E-MAIL

FACEBOOK

TWITTER

GOOGLE

LINKEDIN

39



LANE TURNER/GLOBE STAFF

**Modelo's Market Cafe was closed to support "One Day without Immigrants."**

By [Matt Rocheleau](#)

GLOBE STAFF FEBRUARY 17, 2017

An estimated 180,000 residents of Greater Boston are in the country illegally, a population that ranks

as the 12th highest among metropolitan areas nationwide, according to a [new report](#) from the Pew Research Center.

The report, the center's first look at undocumented immigrant populations at the metro level, highlights areas that could see pronounced effects from President Trump's efforts to crack down on illegal immigration.

"Some of these areas could be affected by the Trump administration's promise to take action against localities that do not cooperate with federal officials in identifying unauthorized immigrants," the report said.

The report, based on figures for 2014, found that the United States' undocumented immigrant population — like the population of immigrants in the country legally — is highly concentrated in metropolitan centers, more so than the nation's overall population.



## Greater Boston home to 180,000 undocumented immigrants,

### Get Fast Forward in your inbox:

Forget yesterday's news. Get what you need today in this early-morning email.

Sign Up

The 20 areas with the most undocumented immigrants are home to a combined 6.8 million undocumented immigrants, or about 61 percent of the total number of undocumented immigrants nationwide.



## Are we fighting about immigration or assimilation?

If assimilation is a driving concern America is at a dangerous stage for the simple reason that many of the immigrants in America just haven't been here long enough.

Among immigrants in the country legally, 65 percent live in those same metro areas, the report said.

Yet those areas account for only about 36 percent of the country's total population.

Metropolitan areas around New York City and Los Angeles had by far the largest undocumented immigrant populations nationwide with estimates of 1.15 million and 1 million, respectively. The next-highest total was 575,000 in the Houston metro area.

Undocumented immigrants in metro Houston accounted for about 8.7 percent of the overall population, the highest such percentage of the top 20 metro areas. Next were Las Vegas (8 percent) and Los Angeles (7.5 percent).

Nationally, there are 11.1 million undocumented immigrants, who make up about 3.5 percent of the

**The box office  
in your inbox.**

Save on local events.

[Sign up](#)

**boston.com | TicketWatch**

total population, the report said.

The undocumented immigrant population in Greater Boston accounts for about 3.7 percent of the total population of more than 4.5 million people within the metropolitan area, which includes a wide swath of Eastern Massachusetts and parts of New Hampshire, the report found.

Greater Boston is the 10th largest metro area nationally and its undocumented immigrant population is the 12th largest, the report said.

The city of Boston alone is home to an estimated 35,000 undocumented immigrants, or about 5.5 percent of the city's total population, according to the report.

In his first days in office, President Trump [issued executive orders](#) to expand deportations of undocumented immigrants and to strip federal funding from so-called sanctuary cities.

The orders have faced significant resistance.

Mayors of some major sanctuary cities — including ones that are at the center of metro areas home to large numbers of undocumented immigrants — have vowed to not change their policies in the wake of Trump's orders to aggressively pursue undocumented immigrants.

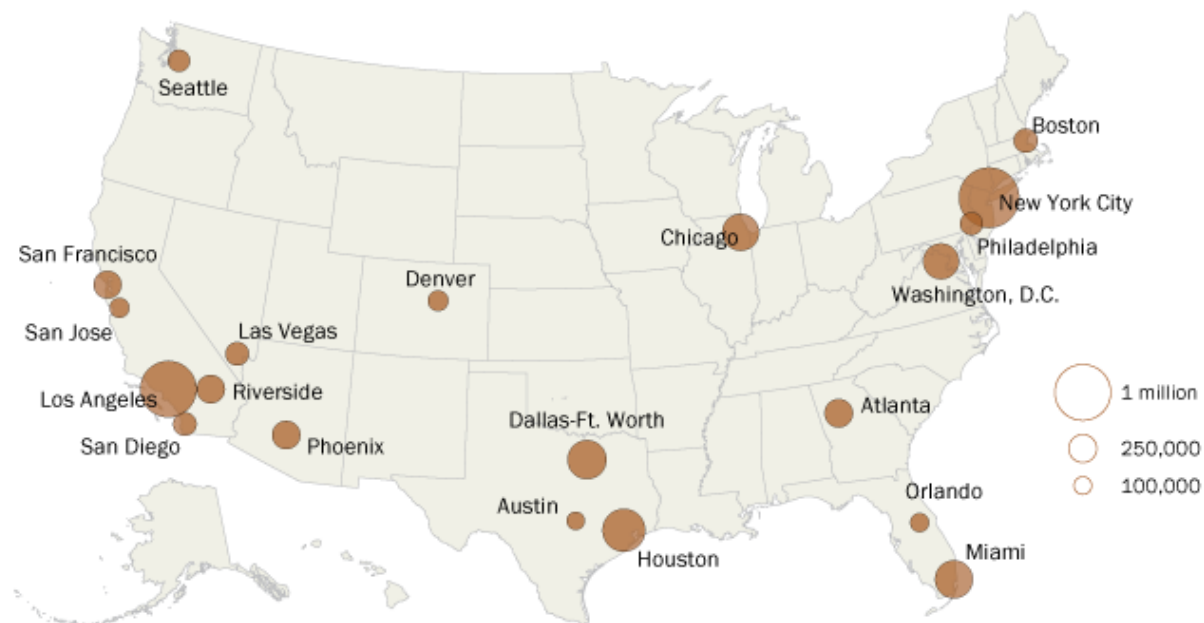
Such cities include [Boston](#), [New York City](#), [Los Angeles](#), [Chicago](#), [San Francisco](#), [Seattle](#), and [Austin, Texas](#).

And all but three of the top 20 metro areas identified by the Pew report voted for Democrat Hillary Clinton in November's presidential election, and many voted for her by a wide margin, according to a review by the statistics-focused news website [FiveThirtyEight](#).

In recent days, [reports](#) have [swirled](#) that federal immigration authorities have been rounding up large numbers of people in communities around the country, [though](#) it was [unclear](#) how those efforts might be connected to Trump's call to step up immigration enforcement. The Associated Press [reported Friday](#) that the president is considering mobilizing as many as 100,000 National Guard troops to round up undocumented immigrants. The White House quickly denied the report.

## 20 metropolitan areas with the largest number of unauthorized immigrants

2014 estimates



Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented 2014 American Community Survey (IPUMS).

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

## Metro areas with the most unauthorized immigrants

2014 estimates

1. New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA	1,150,000
2. Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA	1,000,000
3. Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, TX	575,000
4. Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX	475,000
5. Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, FL	450,000
6. Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL-IN-WI	425,000
7. Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	400,000
8. Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA	250,000
9. Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA	250,000
10. Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, AZ	250,000
11. San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward, CA	240,000
12. Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH	180,000
13. San Diego-Carlsbad, CA	170,000
14. Las Vegas-Henderson-Paradise, NV	170,000
15. Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD	160,000
16. Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA	150,000
17. Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, CO	130,000
18. San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, CA	120,000
19. Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL	110,000
20. Austin-Round Rock, TX	100,000

Note: Rankings based on unrounded numbers. Many differences are not statistically significant; only New York, Los Angeles, Houston, Washington and San Francisco differ from the area ranked immediately below. Metro areas defined using the 2013 definitions for metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) from the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented 2014 American Community Survey (IPUMS).

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

The latest Pew analysis marked the first time it had released estimates of undocumented immigrants at the metro-level.

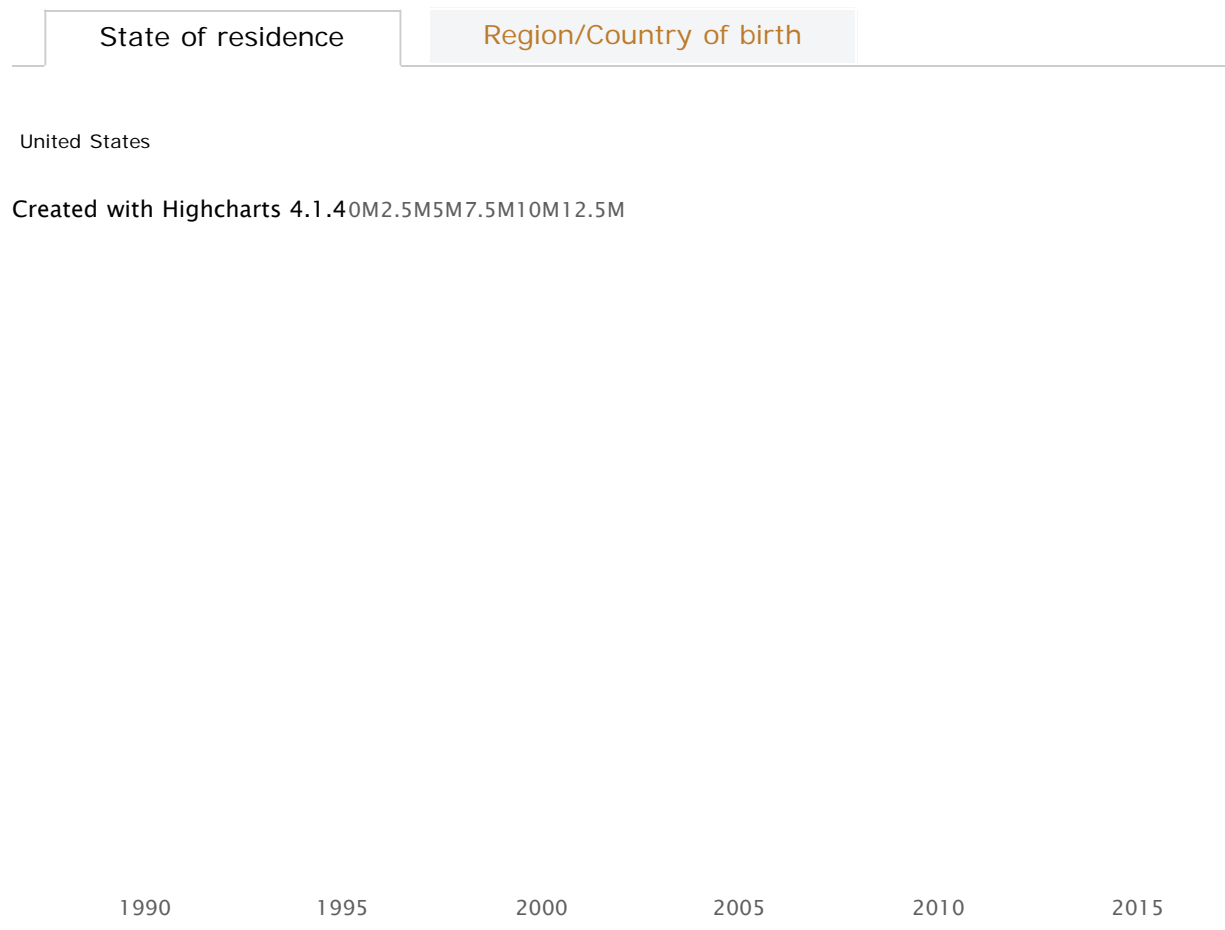
But the center had previously published [other estimates](#) of undocumented immigrants, including [state-level figures](#), which showed that an estimated 210,000 undocumented immigrants live in Massachusetts.

The table below shows more state-level estimates.

## Unauthorized immigrant population trends for states, birth countries and regions

Explore U.S. unauthorized immigrant population trends for states of residence, as well as for international regions and largest countries of birth, based on Pew Research Center estimates. In 2014, an estimated 11.1 million unauthorized immigrants lived in the U.S., unchanged since 2009

and down from a peak of 12.2 million in 2007. For more, see our report and tables: [Overall Number of U.S. Unauthorized Immigrants Holds Steady Since 2009](#). There is also more information in this related report: [Size of U.S. Unauthorized Immigrant Workforce Stable After the Great Recession](#)



Note: Shading surrounding lines indicates low and high points of the estimated 90% confidence interval. White data markers for 2014 indicate that change since 2009 is statistically significant. Trends are plotted from unrounded numbers; data labels are rounded independently and are not adjusted to sum to the total U.S. figure or other totals. See [Methodology](#) for details of rounding rules and definitions of regions and countries.

Source: Pew Research Center estimates for 2005-2014 based on augmented American Community Survey data from Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS); for 1995 and 2000 based on March supplements to Current Population Survey; for 1990 from [Warren and Warren \(2013\)](#) and [U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service \(2003\)](#).

EMBEDDED REPORT © PEW RESEARCH CENTER

### Related

- **‘It’s just panic, panic’: Raids, Trump orders have immigrants on edge**

*Matt Rocheleau can be reached at [matthew.rocheleau@globe.com](mailto:matthew.rocheleau@globe.com). Follow him on Twitter [@mrochele](#).*



SHOW 39 COMMENTS

Stay updated, right in your news feed.

## Top 10 Trending Articles

Most Viewed

Most Commented

Most Shared

Nick Cafardo: Which players may be available in trade after ...

Dick Albert, former Channel 5 weatherman, dies

What's it like be an NFL quarterback at 40? We asked Warr...

Trump forsakes scenic traditions to vacation in the land of s...

Trump administration advances religious researchers' birth ...

Trump increasingly isolated as disillusionment grows withi...  
**My Account**

There's one month left of summer. Here's what you can't mi...  
**Manage my Account**

Former Patriots QB Jim Plunkett: 'My life sucks'  
**Mobile Customer Service**

Danny Amendola never considered retiring or playing for a t...  
**Sign Up For Newsletters**

Storms could bring hail and severe winds Saturday  
**Contact**

Help

FAQs

Globe newsroom

Advertise

**Social**

Facebook

Twitter

Google+



**More**

[ePaper](#)

---

[News in Education](#)

---

[Archives](#)

---

[Privacy policy](#)

---

[Terms of service](#)

---

[Terms of purchase](#)

---

[Work at Boston Globe Media](#)

---

© 2017 Boston Globe Media Partners, LLC