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Immigrants Contribute nearly \$60 Billion to Northern Virginia's Economy, New Report Shows

Northern Virginia Regional Commission, Community Foundation for Northern Virginia and New American Economy Release first One Region Report on Economic Impact of Immigrants on Northern Virginia

OAKTON, VA – Immigrants are major contributors to Northern Virginia's economy. A new report from the Northern Virginia Regional Commission and Community Foundation for Northern Virginia, in partnership with the New American Economy, finds that immigrants in Northern Virginia contributed \$57.7 billion to the local economy in 2017 or 25.7 percent of the region's \$224.9 billion GDP.

The ***One Region Report***, released today at the [2020 Shape of Region Conference](#), is a comprehensive picture of new Americans in Northern Virginia. It highlights the size and rapid growth in the immigrant population in the region and their impact on the local economy including injecting more money into local businesses, property markets, and municipal budgets as consumers, homebuyers, and taxpayers.

"Immigrants are a vital part of the economic and social fabric of Northern Virginia. Their success is our success, and we must continue to be a welcoming community for all to ensure our long-term prosperity," said **P. David Tarter, Chairman of the Northern Virginia Regional Commission and Mayor of the City of Falls Church**.

Immigrants widen and deepen the labor market with a vast array of skills and levels of expertise. They help businesses, farms, and factories fill workforce gaps at all levels of the labor market, allowing companies to meet market demands and expand their operations, which leads to more job creation.

"As we see the Northern Virginia region continue to grow, the need for workers in industries like STEM and construction will continue to increase," said **Mo Kantner, Associate Director of State and Local Initiatives at New American Economy**. "By recognizing the unique range of skills that foreign-born residents bring, the region is making an important investment in its future."

Northern Virginia's immigrant population is diverse, growing in number, and is a major contributor to the region's economy. They emigrate from El Salvador, India, Korea, Vietnam, Ethiopia, Mexico and other countries seeking a better life for themselves and their families.

"America offered me all these different opportunities. I stand on shoulders of great mentors. Americans are very generous," **said Zuzana Steen, Academic and Community Relations Director, Micron Technology, Inc.**

As Northern Virginia's economy continues to expand, immigrants living in the region are an important part of the region's economy and future.

"We're excited to show, with data, the invaluable contribution immigrants make to the Northern Virginia region," **said Bernard Mustafa, Chairman of the Board of the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia.** "Immigrants help build vibrant and culturally diverse communities and are major contributors to our economic success at all levels, as workers, business owners, taxpayers and consumers."

Key findings:

- **Immigrants who settle in Northern Virginia are well educated and bring with them varying levels of work and educational experience.** In 2013 – 2017, **44.5 percent** of immigrants in Northern Virginia age 25 and older had at least a bachelor's degree and 20.9 percent had an advanced degree, either a master's, professional or doctoral degree. This is much higher than the proportion of immigrants with a bachelor's degree or higher in the U.S. at 31.2 percent.
- **Immigrants are job creators.** In Northern Virginia, immigrant entrepreneurs – those who work for their own businesses, incorporated or not – are making their mark locally. In total, there were 47,837 immigrant entrepreneurs or **42.5 percent** of all entrepreneurs in the region.
- **Northern Virginia's immigrant population is well-suited to maintaining and expanding the region's labor force.** In Northern Virginia, less than two-thirds, or 61.6 percent of the U.S.-born population are of working age—between 16 and 64 years old, the range considered to be working age by the Department of Labor. Meanwhile, more than four out of five, or **83.9 percent** of the immigrant population in the region are of working age. While immigrants make up 27.4 percent of the overall population, they make up 34.0 percent of the region's working-age population.
- **Immigrants are driving population growth in Northern Virginia.** Of the 238,000 people who settled in Northern Virginia between 2008 - 2012 and 2013-2017, almost 109,000 were immigrants. The number of immigrants grew from **561,285** in 2008 - 2012 to **670,272** in 2013-2017, an increase of 19.4 percent, accounting for **27.4 percent** of the overall population.
- **Immigrants in Northern Virginia have above average rates of naturalization.** More than half, or 51.3 percent, of all immigrants in the region have earned their U.S. citizenship, a rate higher than the national average of 48 percent.

The full report, *One Region: Welcoming New Americans to Northern Virginia* is available [here](#):

Sample Tweet: Latest @CFNova data: #ImmigrantsNoVA contributed nearly \$60 billion & more to Northern Virginia's economy #OneRegionReport

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About Northern Virginia Regional Commission

NVRC is a regional council of thirteen local governments in the Northern Virginia suburbs of Washington, D.C. NVRC has provided services to its local government members and citizens for more than 50 years in a wide variety of areas including environmental, health, demography, workforce, community/military relations and energy. Northern Virginia is the economic engine of the Commonwealth of Virginia generating nearly 40% of State GDP. Visit www.novaregion.org to learn more.

About Community Foundation for Northern Virginia

The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia grows philanthropy to respond to critical need, seed innovation and lead and convene the community. Comprised of donor advised funds, permanent funds, giving circles, and other charitable endowments, the Community Foundation connects donors to community and promotes a more equitable and inclusive prosperity that marries our economic strength with the full breadth of our diverse community. In 2019 the Community Foundation awarded more than \$5.4 million in grants and scholarships and reported more than \$72 million in managed philanthropic assets. For more information please visit us at www.cfnova.org to learn more.

About New American Economy

New American Economy (NAE) is a bipartisan research and advocacy organization founded to educate, empower and support policymakers, influencers, and citizens across the country that see the economic and social benefits of a smart approach to immigration reform. NAE has created a coalition of civic, business, and cultural leaders who span the political spectrum and represent all 50 states. NAE makes the case for smart immigration reform in four ways: 1) we use [powerful research](#) to demonstrate how immigration impacts our economy, 2) we [organize champions](#) at the grassroots and influencer levels to build support for immigration, 3) we [partner with state and local leaders](#) to advocate for policies that recognize the value immigrants add locally, and 4) we show [immigrant contributions to American culture](#) through film, food, art, sports, comedy, and more. Visit www.newamericaneconomy.org to learn more.