

IMMIGRATION
SERIES

DOUBLE DISADVANTAGE

A Profile of Undocumented Women in the
United States

Executive Summary

About 5 million immigrant women who are undocumented live, work, and raise their families in the United States. They are college students and businesswomen, cooks and caregivers, field workers and lettuce packers. They are raising more than 5 million children who are American citizens.

Yet just as undocumented women are compelled by their immigration status to live in the shadows, their lives, labors, and aspirations remain largely invisible in a national immigration debate which tends to take male immigrants as the norm.

“Double Disadvantage,” by the [Gender Equity Policy Institute \(GEPI\)](#), presents key findings about undocumented women, their families, their work, and the challenges they face. The report is based on an analysis of Census and Department of Homeland Security data on immigrants in the United States as a whole and in the four states with the highest numbers of undocumented immigrants: California, Texas, Florida, and New York.¹

The data shows that undocumented women face significant barriers to economic opportunity, even as they make vital contributions to the U.S. economy. Undocumented women are paid less than every other major demographic group in the United States.² They have disproportionately high rates of poverty and are about 1.8 times more likely than U.S. women overall to lack health insurance.³

The immigration status of all undocumented workers limits their entry into many desirable jobs and exposes them to exploitation and low pay. But in this group, women are doubly disadvantaged. Undocumented working women are typically paid significantly less than undocumented men—even when they work in the same occupation. In fact, the gender pay gap between undocumented men and women is about the same as that between men and women in the overall U.S. population.⁴

America’s dysfunctional immigration system leaves millions of hard-working members of our

communities in a precarious economic, legal, and social condition. In recognition of undocumented immigrants’ critical role in the economy and their longstanding community ties, some states, like California and New York, have enacted policies to advance immigrants’ economic participation and health. Other states, most notably Texas, have instituted policies which exacerbate their hardships.⁵

The human consequences of these differing state policies are evident in GEPI’s findings. Undocumented women in California are the least likely to be poor. In New York, they have the highest incomes and experience the narrowest pay gaps. By contrast, undocumented women in Texas have the lowest incomes and are the most likely to live in poverty and lack health insurance.

KEY FINDINGS

- ▶ Undocumented women are paid just **57 cents** for every dollar paid to men and **52 cents** for every dollar paid to White men
- ▶ Undocumented women are paid **83 cents** for every dollar paid to undocumented men
- ▶ Undocumented women are **1.8 times more likely** than women overall to lack health insurance
- ▶ **21%** of undocumented women live below the poverty line
- ▶ California has the lowest poverty rate (**16%**) among undocumented women and Texas has the highest (**27%**)
- ▶ About **6 in 10** undocumented women in California and New York have health insurance, compared to only **3 in 10** in Texas

Undocumented Immigrants, by Gender, United States

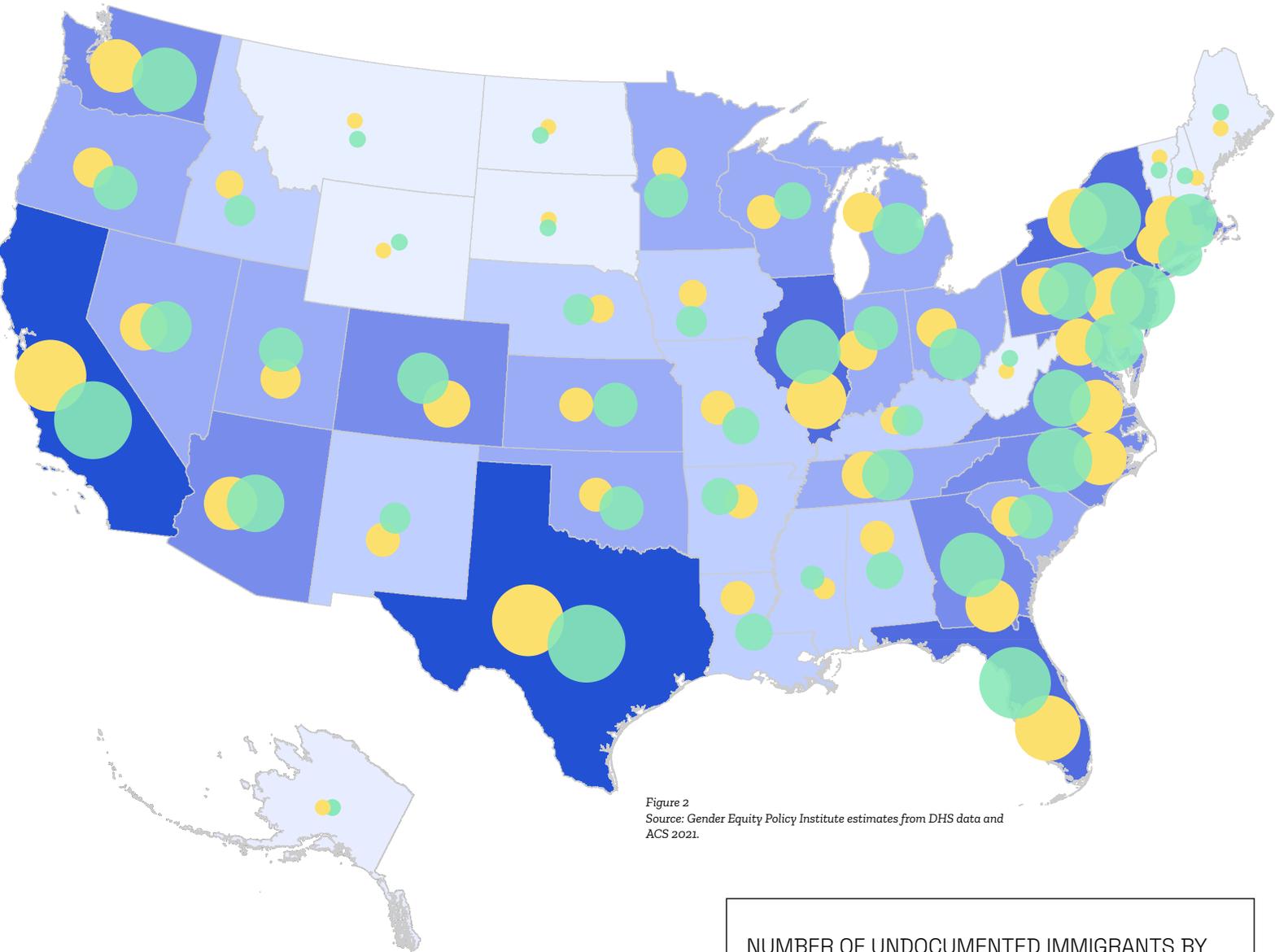


Figure 2
Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates from DHS data and ACS 2021.

NUMBER OF UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS BY GENDER IN EACH STATE

4K - 15K	MEN
20K - 70K	WOMEN
80K - 160K	
180K - 350K	
460K - 1M	
2M+	

MIN 1 ○ ———— ○ MAX 1.15 M

Undocumented Women Live in Every State and have Resided in the U.S., on Average, for 13 Years

Between 10.4 and 11 million undocumented immigrants live in the United States, and 45% of them are women and girls.⁶

California and Texas have the largest populations of undocumented immigrants, with about 2 million in each state. Florida has the third largest population, with 925,000 undocumented immigrants, followed by New York, with approximately 625,000.⁷

UNDOCUMENTED POPULATION: TOP 15 STATES

State	Population	Women	Men
California	2,050,000	900,000	1,150,000
Texas	2,000,000	950,000	1,050,000
Florida	925,000	425,000	500,000
New York	625,000	275,000	350,000
New Jersey	500,000	230,000	260,000
Illinois	450,000	210,000	250,000
Georgia	350,000	160,000	190,000
North Carolina	350,000	160,000	190,000
Washington	325,000	140,000	180,000
Virginia	275,000	120,000	150,000
Arizona	250,000	120,000	140,000
Maryland	240,000	110,000	130,000
Pennsylvania	210,000	95,000	110,000
Massachusetts	180,000	85,000	100,000

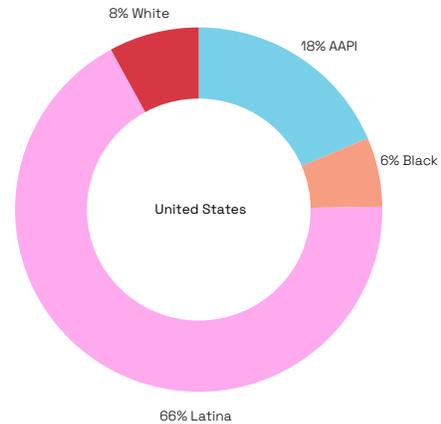
Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates from DHS data and ACS 2021.

An additional 20 states have undocumented populations larger than 100,000. By contrast, nine states have undocumented populations of fewer than 15,000 people. Of the 4.7 to 5 million undocumented immigrant women living in the United States, two in three are Latina. Fully four in ten of all undocumented women are from Mexico. (See Appendix 1, Tables 1 & 3.)

Another one in five undocumented women are Asian, with most hailing from India or China. About 6% are Black women, and about 8% are non-Hispanic White women.⁸

The racial and ethnic composition of undocumented immigrant women varies widely by state. Black women make up 12% of undocumented women in New York and 15% in Florida, but only 1% in California and 5% in Texas. Asian women make up close to a quarter of undocumented women in New York but only 7% in Florida. Latinas make up 81% of undocumented women immigrants in Texas and 69% in California, but less than half of all undocumented women in New York.⁹

Undocumented Women, by Race/Ethnicity, U.S.



Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates from DHS data and ACS 2021.

On average, undocumented women entered the U.S. at age 24 and have been in the country for 13 years, ranging from a low of 10 years in Florida to a high of 15 years in California. About two in three undocumented women between the ages of 16 and 65 are self-employed, in the labor force, or pursuing an education.¹⁰

Nearly half of undocumented women in the United States are mothers of school-age children. All told, undocumented parents are raising 6.3 million children under the age of 18, of whom at least 5.1 million were born in the U.S. and are American citizens.¹¹

Gender Creates Additional Barriers to Undocumented Women’s Economic Well-Being

Undocumented women in the U.S. workforce are disadvantaged not only by immigration status, but also by gender. GEPI’s gender analysis of incomes across racial and ethnic groups reveals striking disparities. Indeed, undocumented working women are paid less than any other group in the U.S.¹²

Full-time undocumented women workers earn a median annual income of \$34,000, which is \$18,000 below the national median.¹³ They earn 57% of what men earn, 71% of what women earn, and just 52% of what White men earn.

Because of their legal status, undocumented workers frequently encounter lower wages, precarious working conditions, and exploitation in the labor market. This is true for men and women—both have low incomes, as compared to the overall population.

But what is striking is that undocumented working women are typically paid just 83 cents for every dollar paid to undocumented men.¹⁴ In fact, the difference in earnings between undocumented working women and men is about the same as the gender pay gap in the overall U.S. population.¹⁵

Undocumented Women Are Paid Less Than Every Other Major Demographic Group in U.S.

Cents on the dollar paid to undocumented women compared to...

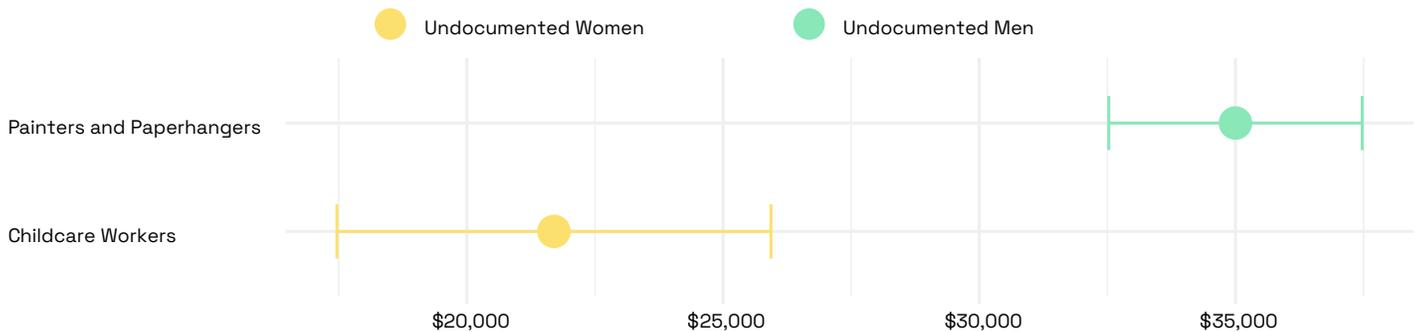
	Undocumented Men	All Women	All Men	White Men
United States	\$0.83	\$0.71	\$0.57	\$0.52
California	\$0.87	\$0.67	\$0.58	\$0.44
Florida	\$0.80	\$0.68	\$0.56	\$0.49
New York	\$1.09	\$0.85	\$0.76	\$0.66
Texas	\$0.74	\$0.85	\$0.49	\$0.39

Wage gap represents the difference in median annual income between undocumented women in each state as compared to the reference group. Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates from DHS data and ACS 2021.

The gender pay gaps experienced by undocumented women are driven by several factors. Working women in the United States, on average, are paid less than men. Gender disparities are often compounded by racial and ethnic bias and discrimination, and more than 9 in 10 undocumented women are non-White.

To be sure, the wage gap between undocumented women and U.S. men results in part from differences in formal education. Undocumented women have relatively low levels of college completion. Yet

Skilled undocumented women earn less than undocumented men with comparable skills, due to occupational gender-segregation in the U.S. economy



The skilled trade, painters and paperhangers, is the one of the 10 most common occupation among undocumented men. Childcare workers is one of the 10 most common occupations for undocumented women. Estimates represent annual median income for full-time undocumented workers in the U.S., 2021 dollars. Lines represent 95% confidence intervals. Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates from DHS data and ACS 2021.

undocumented women are also rarely found in the kinds of good jobs that employ men—including undocumented men—without college degrees, such as in transportation, construction, and the skilled trades.

Instead, undocumented women workers are concentrated in low-wage occupations where women form the vast majority of the workforce. The most common job for an undocumented woman is as a maid or housecleaner. Nine out of ten workers in this field are women. The median annual income for undocumented women in this job is just \$25,000, below the federal poverty threshold for a family of four. Undocumented women also commonly work as personal care aides and childcare workers, jobs that require hard physical labor and high interpersonal skills but are low paid.

Because of occupational gender segregation in the U.S. labor market, undocumented women are rarely hired for the relatively well-paid skilled and semi-skilled jobs which employ large numbers of undocumented men. Truck driving is the highest paid of the top occupations employing undocumented people; undocumented men are ten times more likely than undocumented women to hold this job. Construction laborer is the most common occupation for undocumented working men.

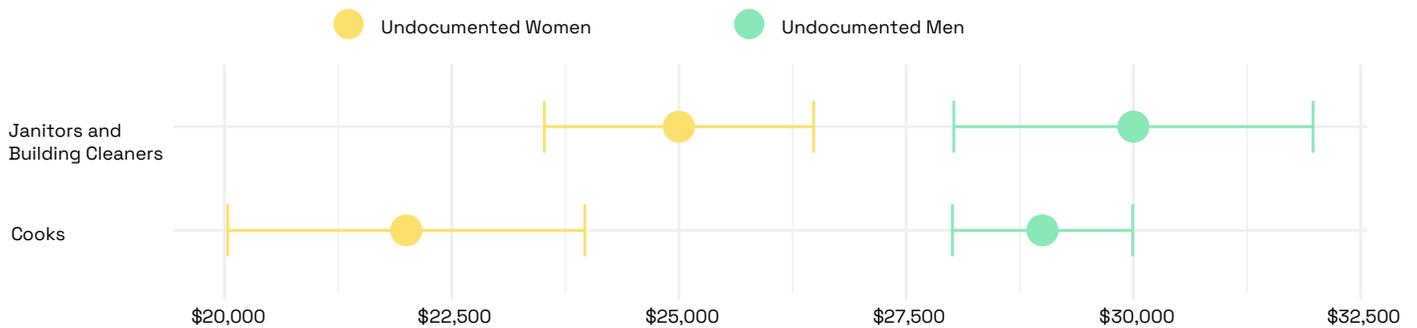
Undocumented men are 13 times more likely than undocumented women to hold this job. (See Appendix 1, Table 2.)¹⁶

A large proportion of undocumented women are self-employed, running small businesses, working as street vendors, and the like. In the U.S. overall, more than 350,000 undocumented women report being self-employed. An additional 375,000 are enrolled in postsecondary education.¹⁷

Even when undocumented men and women work in the same occupation, women typically have lower earnings than men. Both undocumented women and men are employed in large numbers as janitors and cooks, for example, but women are paid less.

In sum, undocumented women pay a penalty for their gender. They are employed in jobs which are often difficult and demanding, but they are largely excluded from good paying jobs and are dramatically over-represented in low-wage gender-segregated occupations.

Even in occupations that employ both women and men, women earn less



Estimates represent annual median income of undocumented Janitors and Building Cleaners and Cooks, by gender, 2021 dollars. Lines represent 95% confidence intervals. Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates from DHS data ACS 2021.

Undocumented Women Are More Likely to be Poor and Uninsured

Undocumented immigrant women have high labor force participation rates, but their low wages and exclusion from most social insurance and public support programs leave many economically insecure.

Undocumented women experience comparatively high rates of poverty. One in five (21.1%) undocumented women in the U.S. live below the poverty line, compared to 14.1% of women overall. More than a third (34.2%) live on incomes that fall below 150% of the federal poverty threshold.¹⁸ Undocumented women in the U.S. are also more likely than American women overall to lack health insurance. Nationally, 49% of undocumented women are uninsured, compared to only 7.6% of women overall.¹⁹

How well or poorly an undocumented woman fares is highly dependent on the state in which she lives.

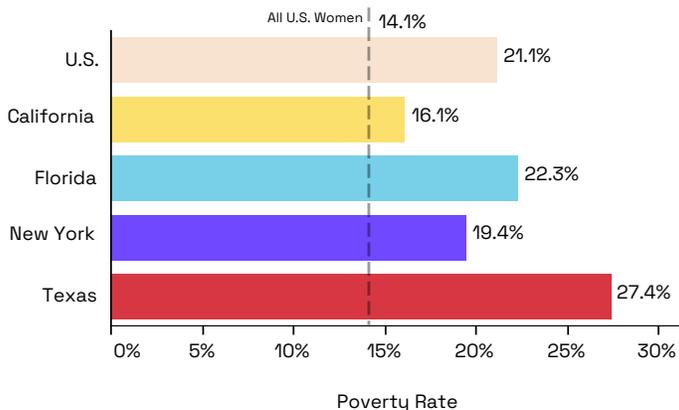
Incomes and pay disparities vary widely by state. Undocumented women in New York have the highest incomes and those in California have the second highest. Undocumented women earn the least in Florida and Texas. For example, median incomes for Florida's undocumented women are 43% lower than those of their counterparts in New York. Wage gaps are widest in Texas and narrower in California. New York is the only state in which undocumented women earn slightly more than undocumented men.²⁰

An undocumented woman is least likely to be poor in California, where the poverty rate for undocumented women (16.1%) is substantially below the national rate for undocumented women and more than 10 percentage points below that of undocumented women in Texas. Texas has the highest poverty rate for undocumented women, with 27.4% living below the poverty line and 42.5% living below the 150% poverty threshold.²¹

Texas also holds the distinction of having the highest proportion of undocumented women and girls without health insurance: Nearly two in three are uninsured. By comparison, in states such as New York and California that have opened access to public health insurance plans and provided state funding for some undocumented people, undocumented women and girls are less likely to be uninsured. New York has the lowest proportion of uninsured undocumented women and girls, with 1 in 3 lacking health insurance; California has the second lowest proportion of uninsured.²²

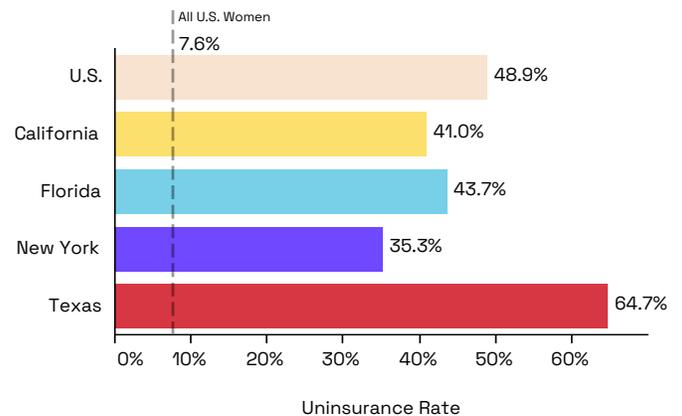
In California, 59% of undocumented women and girls had health insurance in 2021. Since that time, California has expanded eligibility for state-funded health insurance to all adults regardless of immigration status. As these new policies go into effect, we expect the percentage of uninsured undocumented people to decline.

Undocumented Women in Poverty (%), U.S. and Top 4 States



Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates compiled from ACS and DHS data.

Undocumented Women without Health Insurance (%), U.S. and Top 4 States



Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates compiled from ACS and DHS data.

Undocumented Women: California

California is home to the largest undocumented immigrant population in the United States. More than 2 million undocumented people, of whom 900,000 are women and girls, live in the state.²³

Undocumented women are longstanding members of California's communities and make vital economic contributions. On average, they have lived in the United States for 15 years. Two in three (67%) are in the labor force, self-employed, or pursuing an education. The industries in which they are concentrated, such as agriculture and tourism, are linchpins of California's economy—the world's fourth largest economy.

Yet undocumented women face significant barriers in accessing economic opportunity. Undocumented working women in California are paid less than every other major demographic group in the state.

Despite these disparities, California's undocumented women in recent years have seen some improvement in their well-being. Their income has increased significantly, with inflation-adjusted income in 2021 up 10% over 2019. Their poverty rate has dropped by almost 5 percentage points over the period from 2015 to 2021. The gender pay gap, relative to both men and undocumented men, has narrowed. Health insurance coverage rates have improved.²⁴

Nevertheless, California's high cost of living leaves undocumented working women in a disadvantaged position. While their median income (\$37,400) is above the national median for undocumented women, it is \$22,000 lower than California's state median. Compared to women in California overall, they are about 3 percentage points more likely to be poor and 45 percentage points less likely to be insured.

Compared to undocumented women in the U.S. overall, those in California are less likely to be poor and more likely to have health insurance. Compared to the states with the largest undocumented populations, California's undocumented working women earn significantly more than their counterparts in Texas and Florida.

State policies are in part responsible for undocumented women's lower poverty rates and better access to healthcare, relative to their counterparts in the U.S. overall. Over the years, California has gradually expanded access to health insurance to some undocumented people. The opening of Medi-Cal eligibility to all regardless of immigration status, effective in 2024, will further improve access to healthcare. Other policies, such as raising the minimum wage, removing barriers to unionization, and enhancing occupational health and safety regulations, are likely to improve undocumented women's economic security in the coming years.²⁵

Key Findings: California

- Undocumented women are paid just **58 cents** for every dollar paid to men and **44 cents** for every dollar paid to White men
- Undocumented women are paid **87 cents** for every dollar paid to undocumented men
- Inflation-adjusted 2021 income for undocumented women was up **10%** over 2019
- On average, undocumented women in California have incomes more than **\$9,000** higher than their counterparts in Texas and Florida
- **1 million children** of undocumented people are American citizens
- California has the lowest poverty rate among undocumented women, at **16%**, and Texas has the highest, at **27%**
- About **6 in 10** undocumented women in California have health insurance, compared to only **3 in 10** in Texas

Double Disadvantage: Gender Creates Additional Barriers to Undocumented Women’s Economic Stability

Undocumented working women in California are typically paid just 87 cents for every dollar paid to undocumented men in the state. As is the case throughout the U.S. and in the other top population states, undocumented women are largely excluded from relatively well-paid jobs in transportation, construction, and the trades. Instead, they are concentrated in gender-segregated low-wage jobs. Some of these, such as maids and housekeepers, require hard physical labor, but pay less than similar male-dominated jobs in construction (See Table below). Others, such as personal care aides and child-care workers, demand high levels of skill, but pay significantly less than male-dominated skilled occupations. The median income for undocumented

women who are personal care aides is \$30,200; for undocumented male truck drivers, it is \$44,000. Even when undocumented women and men work in the same occupation, for example as agricultural workers or cooks, men are paid more.²⁶

In addition to working in a wide range of occupations, undocumented women are businesswomen and college students. A large proportion in California are self-employed, running small businesses, providing a wide range of personal services, working as street vendors, and the like. Roughly 60,000 report being self-employed. An additional 60,000 are enrolled in postsecondary education.

Top 5 Occupations, Undocumented Immigrants by Gender, California

UNDOCUMENTED WOMEN

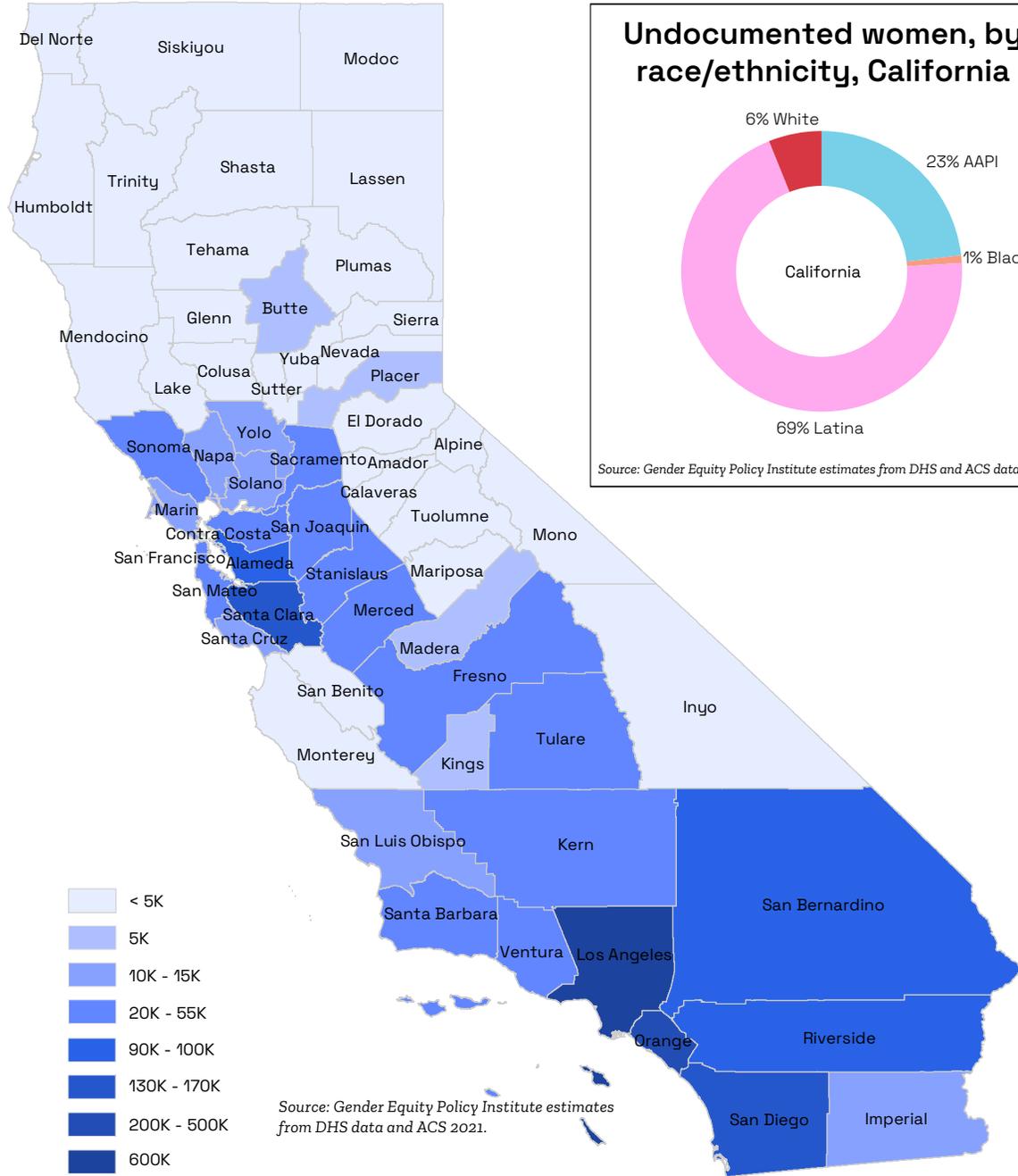
Occupation	Number	Percent	Median Income
Maids and housekeeping cleaners	47,422	8%	\$27,000
Other agricultural workers	33,058	6%	\$25,000
Janitors and building cleaners	23,247	4%	\$30,000
Cashiers	20,920	4%	\$26,000
Personal care aides	20,847	4%	\$30,200

UNDOCUMENTED MEN

Occupation	Men	Percent	Median Income
Construction laborers	76,151	8%	\$39,000
Other agricultural workers	67,379	7%	\$26,000
Landscaping and groundskeeping workers	52,217	6%	\$31,000
Driver/sales workers and truck drivers	40,538	4%	\$44,000
Cooks	40,173	4%	\$32,000

Percentages are relative to the total number of undocumented women and men working full time. Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates compiled from ACS and DHS data.

Undocumented Immigrants, by County, California



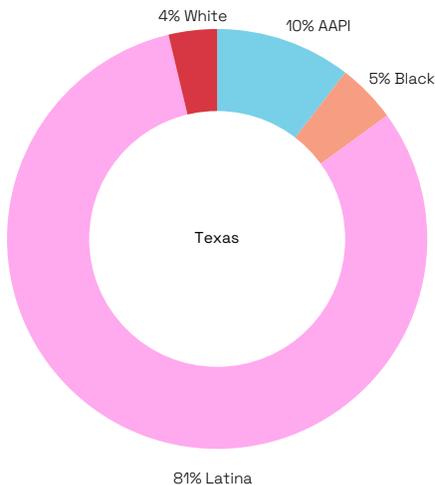
Undocumented Women: Texas

More undocumented women and girls live in Texas than in any other state, yet they are faring significantly worse than their peers in the nation overall and in the top population states. More live in poverty or near poverty. They are the least likely to have health insurance. They have the lowest incomes, both absolutely and comparatively.²⁷

Working undocumented women’s median income in Texas is low, just a couple thousand dollars above the poverty line for a family of four and significantly below the national median income for undocumented women overall. They are concentrated in low-wage jobs. Nearly 1 in 5 are maids, janitors, or housekeepers earning under \$22,000 a year. More than 1 in 10 are cooks or waitresses earning under \$20,000 a year.

Undocumented working women are paid less than every other major demographic group in Texas. They are paid less than half of what men are paid and just over a third of what White men are paid. They are paid less than undocumented men—74 cents to every dollar.

8 in 10 undocumented women in Texas are Latina



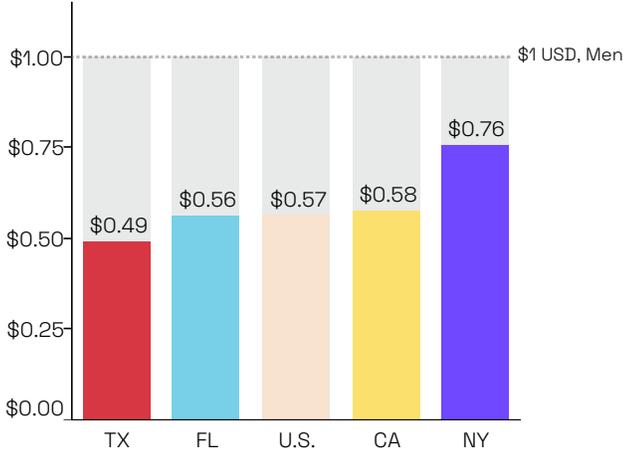
Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates from DHS data and ACS 2021.

Texas has the second largest population in the nation of undocumented immigrants (2 million). Forty-seven percent, or about 940,000, are women and girls. On average, undocumented women in Texas have lived in the U.S. for 13 years. Nearly 1.3 million children in the state live with an undocumented parent, of whom 1 million are U.S. citizens.

Key Findings: Texas

- Undocumented women are paid just **49 cents** for every dollar paid to men and **39 cents** for every dollar paid to White men
- Undocumented women are paid **74 cents** for every dollar paid to undocumented men
- Their median income is **\$27,000**, about \$23,000 lower than the state median income
- Only **35%** have health insurance, the lowest rate among the top population states.
- **58%** are in the labor force, self-employed, or pursuing an education
- More than **1 in 4 women** live below the poverty line and more than **4 in 10** have incomes below the 150% poverty threshold
- **1 million children** of undocumented parents in Texas are American citizens
- Undocumented women in Texas earn, on average, **\$10,000** less than they earn in California and **\$22,000** less than they earn in New York
- Only **3 in 10** undocumented women in Texas have health insurance, compared to **6 in 10** in California and New York

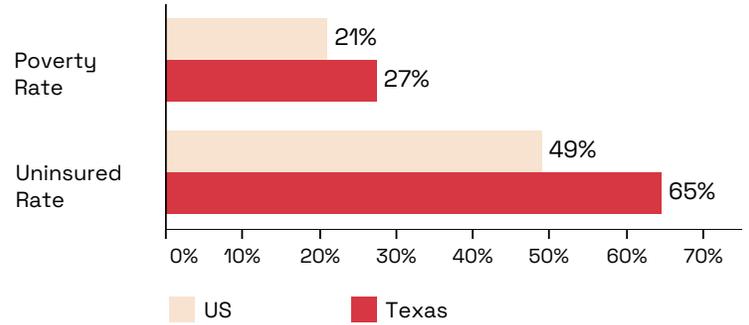
Undocumented women in Texas experience the worst gender pay gap among their peers



Wage gap represents the difference in median annual income between undocumented women and men in each state. Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates from DHS data and ACS 2021.

Undocumented women in Texas are the most likely to be poor or uninsured

Percentage of undocumented women in poverty and lacking health insurance, Texas compared to undocumented women in U.S. overall.



Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates from DHS data and ACS 2021.

Top 5 Occupations, Undocumented Immigrants by Gender, Texas

UNDOCUMENTED WOMEN

Occupation	Number	Percent	Median Income
Maids and housekeeping cleaners	63,753	11.8%	\$20,000
Cooks	36,884	6.8%	\$20,000
Janitors and building cleaners	34,214	6.3%	\$22,000
Waiters and waitresses	22,134	4.1%	\$18,000
Cashiers	21,656	4.0%	\$22,400

UNDOCUMENTED MEN

Occupation	Number	Percent	Median Income
Construction laborers	105,189	12.0%	\$30,000
Landscaping and groundskeeping workers	58,543	6.7%	\$25,000
Carpenters	51,306	5.9%	\$32,000
Painters and paperhangers	32,068	3.7%	\$30,000
Cooks	26,221	3.0%	\$25,000

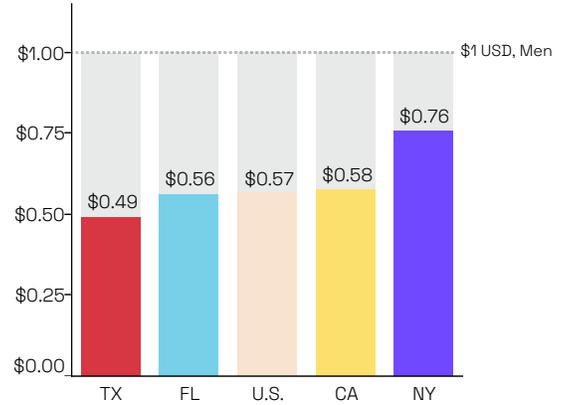
Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates from DHS data and ACS 2021.

Undocumented Women: Florida

Undocumented women in Florida are faring worse on key measures of well-being relative to their counterparts in other states with large undocumented populations. They have lower rates of health insurance coverage, higher rates of poverty, and significantly lower income and wider pay gaps than their counterparts in either California or New York.²⁸

Overall, Florida has the third largest undocumented population in the country. Nearly 435,000 undocumented women and girls live in Florida. They have been in the U.S., on average, for 10 years.

Undocumented Women in Florida experience the second worst pay gap among their peers

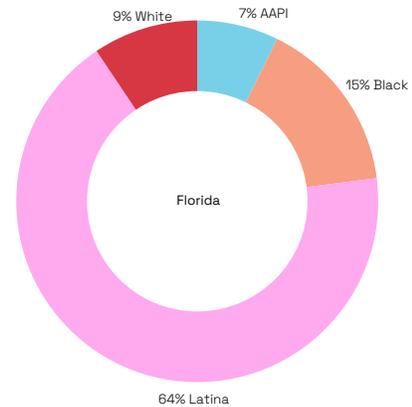


Wage gap represents the difference in median annual income between undocumented women and men in each state. Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates from DHS data and ACS 2021.

Key Findings: Florida

- Undocumented women are paid **56 cents** for every dollar paid to men, **49 cents** for every dollar paid to White men, and **80 cents** for every dollar paid to undocumented men
- Their median income is **\$28,100**
- **72%** are in the labor force, self-employed, or pursuing an education
- **56%** have health insurance
- **22%** of undocumented women are poor
- **300,000** children of undocumented people are American citizens
- Undocumented women in Florida earn, on average, **\$21,000** less than they earn in New York

Undocumented women, by race/ethnicity, Florida



Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates from DHS data and ACS 2021.

Top 5 Occupations, Undocumented Immigrants by Gender, Florida

UNDOCUMENTED WOMEN				UNDOCUMENTED MEN			
Occupation	Women	Percent	Median Income	Occupation	Men	Percent	Median Income
Maids and housekeeping cleaners	30,739	11%	\$20,800	Construction laborers	33,101	9%	\$35,000
Cashiers	13,655	5%	\$20,000	Landscaping and groundskeeping workers	29,889	8%	\$24,000
Janitors and building cleaners	12,920	5%	\$20,000	Carpenters	17,986	5%	\$31,200
Waiters and waitresses	8,370	3%	\$22,500	Driver/sales workers and truck drivers	11,542	3%	\$31,500
Nursing assistants	7,966	3%	\$29,000	Janitors and building cleaners	9,575	3%	\$25,000

Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates from DHS data and ACS 2021.

Undocumented Women: New York

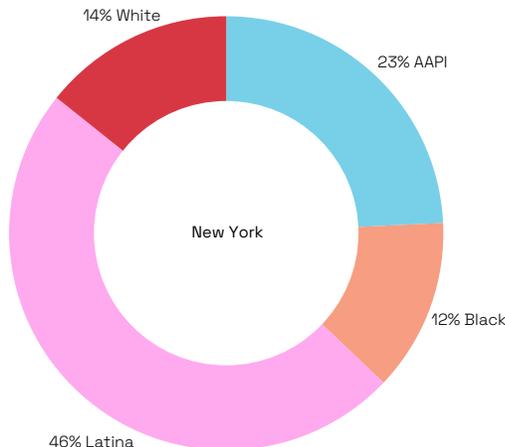
Undocumented women in New York are faring better than their peers in other states with large undocumented populations.²⁹

New York is the only one of the top population states in which undocumented women earn roughly equal pay with undocumented men. In addition, their median income (\$49,000) is significantly higher than the national median for undocumented women. They are more likely to be employed in higher paid occupations. In jobs typically held by undocumented women, they earn higher wages.

New York also stands out among the top population states for having the highest rate of health insurance coverage and the highest level of participation in the economy.

Nevertheless, given the high cost of living in New York, undocumented women's incomes are low and the pay gap with women and men overall in the state is wide. They are paid 76 cents for every dollar paid to men and 85 cents for every dollar paid to women.

New York has the highest proportion of Black undocumented women and the lowest proportion of Latina undocumented women among the top states



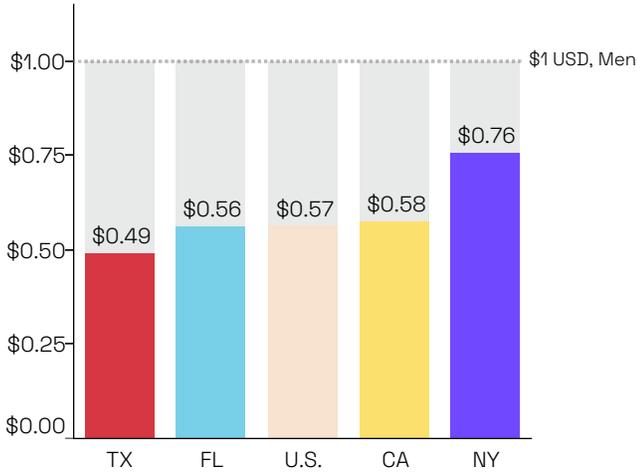
Note: Undocumented women, by race/ethnicity, New York. Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates from DHS data and ACS 2021.

Overall, New York has the fourth largest undocumented population in the nation. About 270,000 undocumented women and girls live in New York. They have been in the U.S., on average, for 12 years.

Key Findings: New York

- Undocumented women are paid just **76 cents** for every dollar paid to men and **66 cents** for every dollar paid to White men
- Undocumented women are paid **\$1.09** for every dollar paid to undocumented men
- **65%** have health insurance
- **76%** are in the labor force, self-employed, or pursuing an education
- **19%** of undocumented women live below the poverty line
- **217,000 children** of undocumented people are American citizens
- More than **6 in 10** undocumented women in New York have health insurance, compared to only **3 in 10** in Texas
- On average, undocumented women in New York have incomes more than **\$20,000** higher than those of their counterparts in Florida

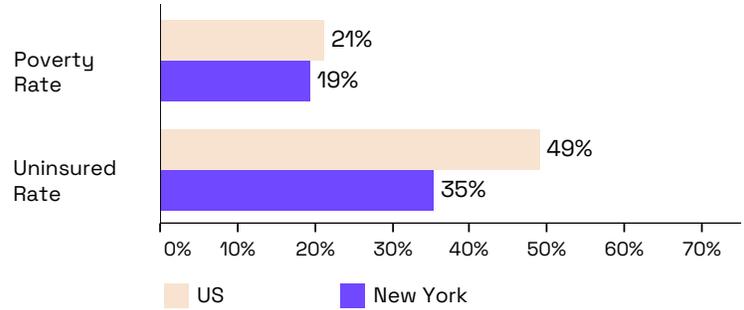
Undocumented women in New York experience the narrowest gender pay gap among their peers



Wage gap represents the difference in median annual income between undocumented women and men in each state. Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates from DHS data and ACS 2021.

Undocumented women in New York are the most likely to have health insurance

Percentage of undocumented women in poverty and lacking health insurance, New York compared to undocumented women in U.S. overall



Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates from DHS data and ACS 2021.

Top 5 Occupations, Undocumented Immigrants by Gender, New York

UNDOCUMENTED WOMEN

Occupation	Number	Percent	Median Income
Maids and housekeeping cleaners	20,745	10%	NA
Home health aides	15,392	8%	\$36,000
Janitors and building cleaners	9,961	5%	\$30,000
Cashiers	8,002	4%	\$28,000
Childcare workers	5,373	3%	NA

UNDOCUMENTED MEN

Occupation	Number	Percent	Median Income
Construction laborers	35,750	12%	\$40,000
Driver/sales workers and truck drivers	13,905	5%	\$35,000
Janitors and building cleaners	11,822	4%	\$45,000
Cooks	9,431	3%	NA
Carpenters	7,666	3%	\$45,700

Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates from DHS data and ACS 2021.

Appendix 1: Tables

**TABLE 1
UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN**

Country of Origin	Population	Women	Men
Mexico	4,650,000	2,050,000	2,600,000
India	750,000	325,000	425,000
El Salvador	650,000	300,000	350,000
Guatemala	625,000	230,000	400,000
Honduras	500,000	230,000	275,000
China	350,000	170,000	180,000
Venezuela	275,000	140,000	140,000
Brazil	180,000	90,000	90,000
Korea	170,000	85,000	85,000
Philippines	150,000	85,000	70,000
Dominican Republic	160,000	75,000	80,000
Haiti	160,000	70,000	85,000
Colombia	140,000	70,000	65,000
Ecuador	130,000	55,000	75,000

Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates from DHS data and ACS 2021.

**TABLE 2
TOP 10 OCCUPATIONS, UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS
BY GENDER, U.S.**

UNDOCUMENTED WOMEN

Occupation	Number	Percent	Median Income
Maids and housekeeping cleaners	298,421	9.4%	\$25,000
Janitors and building cleaners	166,056	5.2%	\$25,000
Cooks	131,710	4.1%	\$22,000
Cashiers	111,355	3.5%	\$24,000
Waiters and waitresses	82,810	2.6%	\$22,000
Packers and packagers, hand	75,826	2.4%	\$25,000
Other agricultural workers	66,373	2.1%	\$24,000
Personal care aides	66,167	2.1%	\$30,000
Retail salespersons	60,763	1.9%	\$25,000
Childcare workers	58,492	1.8%	\$21,700

UNDOCUMENTED MEN

Occupation	Number	Percent	Median Income
Construction laborers	456,907	9.2%	\$35,000
Landscaping and groundskeeping workers	253,158	5.1%	\$28,800
Carpenters	221,878	4.5%	\$35,600
Cooks	167,148	3.4%	\$29,000
Driver/sales workers and truck drivers	165,637	3.3%	\$41,000
Other agricultural workers	164,975	3.3%	\$30,000
Painters and paperhangers	145,713	2.9%	\$35,000
Laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand	127,488	2.6%	\$34,000
Janitors and building cleaners	122,392	2.5%	\$30,000
Roofers	83,789	1.7%	\$35,000

Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates from DHS data and ACS 2021.

TABLE 3
UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS BY STATE OF RESIDENCE

State	Population	Men	Women
California	2,050,000	1,150,000	900,000
Texas	2,000,000	1,050,000	950,000
Florida	925,000	500,000	425,000
New York	625,000	350,000	275,000
New Jersey	500,000	275,000	230,000
Illinois	450,000	250,000	210,000
Georgia	350,000	190,000	160,000
North Carolina	350,000	190,000	160,000
Washington	325,000	180,000	140,000
Virginia	275,000	150,000	120,000
Arizona	250,000	140,000	120,000
Maryland	240,000	130,000	110,000
Pennsylvania	210,000	110,000	95,000
Colorado	180,000	95,000	80,000
Massachusetts	180,000	100,000	85,000
Nevada	160,000	80,000	75,000
Tennessee	160,000	90,000	70,000
Michigan	130,000	75,000	55,000
Ohio	130,000	75,000	55,000
Connecticut	115,000	65,000	50,000
Indiana	120,000	70,000	50,000
South Carolina	110,000	60,000	50,000
Utah	110,000	60,000	50,000
Oregon	100,000	55,000	45,000
Minnesota	90,000	50,000	40,000
Kansas	85,000	50,000	35,000
Oklahoma	90,000	50,000	40,000
Wisconsin	85,000	45,000	40,000
Alabama	70,000	40,000	30,000
Arkansas	70,000	40,000	30,000
Louisiana	70,000	45,000	30,000
Missouri	70,000	35,000	35,000
New Mexico	60,000	30,000	30,000
Kentucky	55,000	30,000	20,000
Iowa	45,000	25,000	20,000
Nebraska	50,000	25,000	25,000
Idaho	40,000	25,000	20,000
Delaware	25,000	15,000	10,000
Mississippi	25,000	15,000	10,000
Rhode Island	25,000	15,000	10,000
District of Columbia	20,000	10,000	10,000
Hawaii	25,000	10,000	10,000
New Hampshire	15,000	10,000	6,000
North Dakota	10,000	5,000	5,000

Source: Gender Equity Policy Institute estimates from DHS data and ACS 2021.

South Dakota	15,000	10,000	5,000
Alaska	5,000	<5,000	<5,000
West Virginia	5,000	<5,000	<5,000
Wyoming	5,000	<5,000	<5,000
Maine	<5,000	<5,000	<5,000
Montana	<5,000	<5,000	<5,000
Vermont	<5,000	<5,000	<5,000

Appendix 2: Methodology

The Gender Equity Policy Institute’s primary objective in this report is to provide an in-depth profile of undocumented immigrant women. We employed a frequently used demographic estimation technique, the residual method, to arrive at an estimate of the number of undocumented immigrants in the U.S. and the states with the largest populations of undocumented people. The residual method estimates the number of undocumented immigrants by taking the difference between the total foreign-born population and the sum of legal permanent residents, refugees, and foreign born individuals with legal authorization to work or reside in the U.S. The residual method technique is described in detail in the full methodology available [online](#).

The method relies upon two public datasets. The first is the American Community Survey (ACS), conducted annually by the U.S. Census Bureau. With this dataset, researchers can estimate the total foreign-born population by country of origin currently residing in the U.S. The second is Department of Homeland Security data on the number of immigrants entering the country per year, by country of origin, since 1986. By accounting for mortality rates, emigration rates, undercount rates, and the number of current temporary workers in the U.S., we estimate the number of legal permanent residents, refugees, and foreign-born individuals with legal authorization to reside or work in the U.S. The difference between the total foreign-born population and the sum of immigrants with authorization results in the residual estimates of the number of undocumented immigrants by country of origin.

The method independently then takes ACS and applies a series of logical edits to arrive at an individual level dataset of the foreign born who are most likely to be undocumented. Multiple steps were taken to confirm the ACS totals and DHS estimates matched.

Sources

1. To estimate the undocumented population living in the U.S., the Institute employed a frequently used demographic calculation technique, the residual method. (See Appendix 2 for a detailed explanation of our methodology.) U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS) data was accessed through IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org. DHS data was compiled from "Yearbook of Immigration Statistics," Department of Homeland Security. <https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics>. ACS data is for the year 2021, the most recent year for which full data is available. All estimates contained in this report were calculated by GEPI, unless otherwise noted. (Hereafter, GEPI Estimates.)
2. Undocumented women are paid less than any major identifiable combination of race, ethnicity, and gender in ACS (2021), according to estimates by GEPI.
3. Ninety-three percent of U.S. women have health insurance coverage. (GEPI Estimates.)
4. Undocumented women earn 83% of what undocumented men earn. In the U.S. overall, women earn 80% of what men earn.
5. Policies applicable to all people, such as raising the minimum wage above the federal minimum, result in wage gains that benefit undocumented people also. Other policies have been specifically adopted by states to address federal exclusions. The most notable area for state innovation has been in health insurance coverage. GEPI's analysis focuses on the states with the largest populations, but our internal analysis shows that other states that have expanded health insurance, such as Illinois, see similar improvements for undocumented immigrants.
6. DACA recipients, known as Dreamers, are included in these numbers. Undocumented immigrants are undercounted in the Census and other government data sources. (Ron Jarmin, "Counting Everyone Once, Only Once and in the Right Place," United States Census Bureau, Director's Blog, November 5, 2018. https://www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/director/2018/11/counting_everyoneon.html.) Research institutes and government agencies employ various estimation strategies to correct for the undercount. For more on our approach, see Appendix 2: Methodology.
7. The estimated range of undocumented immigrants in New York is 575,000-625,000. (GEPI Estimates.)
8. The remaining women identify as multiracial, other race, or Native American (American Indian or Alaska Native) in ACS (2021). Note that the ACS category of "Latino/Hispanic" for Latin Americans generally excludes Brazilians. Only 1% of Brazilians identify as "Hispanic," and thus most Brazilians are accounted for in the non-Hispanic race/ethnicity category. Nearly 8 in 10 Brazilians identify as multiracial or other

- race. White is the next largest category for undocumented Brazilians, with 20% identifying as White. (GEPI Estimates.)
9. GEPI Estimates.
 10. Estimated from the ACS for individuals ages 16-65, reporting to be employed, self-employed, or in school. (GEPI Estimates.)
 11. To estimate the number of children and their citizenship status, GEPI first identified the population of undocumented individuals using ACS and DHS data as described in Appendix 2. Households in which one or more undocumented adults were either the first or second individual of record were then identified, and individuals under the age of 18 in those households counted based on their individual weights. Accompanying ACS variables that track individual citizenship were used to further parse this population of minors into citizens and non-citizens. (GEPI Estimates.)
 12. Comparisons are to every major racial or ethnic group, disaggregated by gender, reported in ACS (2021). (GEPI Estimates.)
 13. Median incomes are calculated for full-time, year-round workers, defined as those working 35 or more hours per week, 50 or more weeks per year. The national median income for full-time workers in 2021 was \$52,000. (GEPI Estimates.)
 14. Wage gaps are calculated for full-time, year-round workers, defined as those working 35 or more hours per week, 50 or more weeks per year. (GEPI Estimates.)
 15. In 2021, women were paid 80 cents for every dollar paid to men.
 16. GEPI Estimates.
 17. [more detail on the US] GEPI estimates.
 18. The poverty threshold in 2021 for a family of three was \$21,559 and for a family of four it was \$27,740. (U.S. Census Bureau, September 2022).
 19. Undocumented immigrants are excluded by law from accessing national health insurance programs like those made available under the Affordable Care Act, Medicaid, and CHIP. In addition, they tend to work in industries and occupations where employers do not provide health insurance and other benefits. For more information about immigrants' insurance eligibility and coverage, see Kaiser Family Foundation, "Health Coverage of Immigrants," April 6, 2022. <https://www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/fact-sheet/health-coverage-of-immigrants/>. (GEPI Estimates.)
 20. GEPI Estimates.
 21. GEPI Estimates.

Sources

22. GEPI Estimates.

23. All ACS is for the year 2021, the most recent year for which full public data is available. All estimates about the undocumented population in California contained in this report were calculated by GEPI, unless otherwise noted. (Hereafter, GEPI Estimates.)

24. All comparisons were calculated by GEPI based on data collected and reported in Vega Varela et. al., "Undocumented and Essential: A Profile of Undocumented Women in California," Gender Equity Policy Institute, Feb. 2022.

25. In 2022, California became the first state to provide Medi-Cal (Medicaid) eligibility to all undocumented people. The law goes into effect in January 2024. Previously, California had opened eligibility to all children, young adults, and those aged 50 and older. California enacted a \$15 minimum wage law in 2016, with wage increases gradually phased in to reach \$15 per hour wage in 2022.

26. The occupational code title is "other agricultural workers." See Table on p.9 for income differences between undocumented women and men.

27. All ACS is for the year 2021, the most recent year for which full public data is available. All estimates about the undocumented population in Texas contained in this report were calculated by GEPI, unless otherwise noted. (Hereafter, GEPI Estimates.)

28. All ACS is for the year 2021, the most recent year for which full public data is available. All estimates about the undocumented population in Florida contained in this report were calculated by GEPI, unless otherwise noted. (Hereafter, GEPI Estimates.)

29. All ACS is for the year 2021, the most recent year for which full public data is available. All estimates about the undocumented population in New York contained in this report were calculated by GEPI, unless otherwise noted. (Hereafter, GEPI Estimates.)

About Gender Equity Policy Institute

Our Mission

[Gender Equity Policy Institute](#) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing opportunity, fairness, and well-being for all people through research and education exposing the gender impacts of the policies, processes, and practices of government and business.

Our Work

We conduct and publish research on the best practices for accelerating gender equity. We analyze and rate public policies and business practices to identify the effects on people of all genders, with particular attention to the impacts on groups, such as women, people of color, and LGBTQ+ people, who have been systematically disadvantaged by discrimination, bias, and structural inequality. By educating policymakers, business leaders, and advocates about the inequities embedded in seemingly neutral economic and political processes, we provide the tools and knowledge that leaders need to rebalance systems, guarantee equal benefits and opportunities, and secure a just and sustainable future for all people.

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