Young Children under 6 in Virginia

Among the 593,000 young children in Virginia overall, 61 percent are white, 22 percent are black, 11 percent are Hispanic, and 7 percent are Asian. The top languages spoken in young children's homes are English only (75 percent), followed by Spanish (12 percent) and Arabic, French, or Vietnamese (1 percent each). Young children of immigrants constitute 23 percent of all children ages 5 and under in the state. The young child population's ethnic, racial, and linguistic diversity calls attention to the need for increased cultural and linguistic competence in the early childhood workforce in order to effectively serve these children and their families.

ECEC Workforce

The early childhood education and care (ECEC) workforce in Virginia grew by 50 percent between 1990 and 2011-13. Today, immigrants make up 26 percent of the overall ECEC workforce, and the foreign-born ECEC workforce alone has grown by 286 percent in the past two decades. The average age of ECEC workers is 38, and an overwhelming majority (95 percent) is female.

Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

The ECEC workforce in Virginia is diverse, with approximately 55 percent identifying as white, 21 percent as black, 17 percent as Hispanic, and 7 percent as Asian. The languages spoken by ECEC workers reasonably reflect the languages represented in the young child population. Seventy-three percent speak only English, 15 percent speak Spanish, and 1 percent speak Tagalog, German, or Urdu (each).

Immigrants provide much of the ethnic and language diversity present in the workforce and are therefore an important contributor of cultural and linguistic competence and skills in Virginia.

Education, English Proficiency, and Professional Standing

Forty percent of Virginia's ECEC workers overall have an associate's or higher degree. Ten percent are low educated, with less than a high school diploma. Immigrant ECEC workers are significantly more likely than their native counterparts to be low educated: 22 percent have attained less than a high school diploma, compared with only 6 percent of natives. On the other hand, a significant proportion of immigrant ECEC workers (40 percent) hold an associate's or higher degree.

Immigrants tend to be concentrated in lower-paying sectors of the workforce, with 21 percent of all immigrant workers employed as family-based care workers and 24 percent as private home-based child-care workers (versus 20 percent and 11 percent of natives, respectively). Conversely, only 18 percent of immigrant workers are employed as preschool teachers (compared with 28 percent of natives) and 2 percent as program directors (compared with 6 percent of natives). These data raise concerns about potential barriers to advancement for immigrant workers.

One such barrier to advancement may be the issue of limited English proficiency: 14 percent of the ECEC workforce overall, and 51 percent of immigrant ECEC workers, are classified as LEP.

Wages and Income

The average annual income for ECEC workers in Virginia overall is $28,000, which is only $5,000 higher than the $23,000 federal poverty level for a family of four. Overall, 17 percent of ECEC workers live in poverty in Virginia. Immigrant ECEC workers are more likely to live in poverty than their native counterparts, at 21 percent compared with 16 percent of natives.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Virginia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children under 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>593,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant share (%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top 5 Languages Spoken at Home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language 1</td>
<td>English only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share language 1 (%)</td>
<td>75.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language 2</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share language 2 (%)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language 3</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share language 3 (%)</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language 4</td>
<td>French*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share language 4 (%)</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language 5</td>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share language 5 (%)</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity* (%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic whites</td>
<td>60.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic blacks</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic Asians</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Size, Growth, and Key Characteristics of the Total, Immigrant, and Native ECEC Workforce

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Virginia</th>
<th>ECEC Workforce</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Immigrants</th>
<th>Natives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Size and Growth</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1990</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECEC workforce (estimate)</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>31,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant share (%)</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2011-13</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECEC workforce (estimate)</td>
<td>52,000</td>
<td>13,000</td>
<td>39,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant share (%)</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent change: 1990 to 2011-13</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>286.2</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Characteristics in 2011-13</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average age</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Share female (%)</td>
<td>95.1</td>
<td>98.4</td>
<td>94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Top 5 Languages Spoken</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language 1</td>
<td>English only</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>English only</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share language 1 (%)</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>93.4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language 2</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>English only</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share language 2 (%)</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language 3</td>
<td>Tagalog</td>
<td>Tagalog</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share language 3 (%)</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language 4</td>
<td>German*</td>
<td>German*</td>
<td>French*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share language 4 (%)</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language 5</td>
<td>Urdu</td>
<td>Persian, Iranian, Farsi</td>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share language 5 (%)</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>English Proficiency</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share limited English proficient (LEP)</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em><em>Race/Ethnicity</em> (%)</em>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic whites</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic blacks</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic Asians</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational Attainment (%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population ages 25 and older</td>
<td>39,000</td>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>28,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school/GED/Some college</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>55.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate’s or higher</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Occupational Groups (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population ages 16 and older</th>
<th>52,000</th>
<th>13,000</th>
<th>39,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family-based child-care worker</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private home-based child-care worker</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher assistant</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool teacher</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center-based child-care worker</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of programs</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Average Annual Earned Income ($)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All workers</th>
<th>28,000</th>
<th>27,000</th>
<th>28,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Poverty (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Under 100 percent poverty</th>
<th>16.7</th>
<th>20.9</th>
<th>15.2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100-199 percent poverty</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 percent or higher</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>69.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*French includes French and Patois; German refers to German and Pennsylvania Dutch.

* Other race is not included due to small numbers

** Workers who worked full time year around and earned at least 1 dollar in previous year

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Limited English Proficient (LEP) status applies to persons who reported speaking English less than “very well” in the ACS.

The 2012 federal poverty threshold for a family of four with two children under age 18 was $23,283 and for an unrelated individual, $11,720. See U.S. Census Bureau, “Poverty Thresholds for 2012 by Size of Family and Number of Related Children under 18 Years,” accessed April 3, 2015, [www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/threshld/](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/threshld/).

This state fact sheet is a project of the Migration Policy Institute’s National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy. For more on the Center, visit: [www.migrationpolicy.org/integration](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/integration).

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