

Foreign Born, Americans, New England Understanding, DEI

1 in 6 New England residents is foreign-born.

30–35% of the region’s population is first- or second-generation.

30–33% of New England residents are not “White.”

1. Dominican Republic
2. China
3. India

Other very large groups closely behind include:

- Brazil
- Haiti
- Jamaica
- El Salvador
- Guatemala
- Portugal

Undocumented populations:

The top three origin groups commonly estimated in New England are:

1. Central America
 - Guatemala
 - El Salvador
 - Honduras
2. Brazil
 - Especially significant in Massachusetts
3. The Caribbean
 - Dominican Republic
 - Haiti

In Massachusetts specifically, undocumented populations are often estimated to include large numbers from:

- Brazil
- El Salvador
- Guatemala

- Dominican Republic
- Haiti
- China

Africa, China, India, Brazil

Using rough demographic math for New England:

Category	Current Estimate
Total Population	~15.3 million
Foreign-Born Population	~2.5 million
Minority Population	~30–33%
Black Population	~8–9%

A hypothetical addition of 500,000 Somali immigrants would represent a very large demographic shift for New England because:

- Somalia-born immigrants are overwhelmingly foreign-born and first-generation,
- overwhelmingly Black/African under Census categories,
- and 500,000 people is a very large number relative to New England's total population.

New Total Population

15.3 million + 500,000 = ~15.8 million

Foreign-Born Impact

Current foreign-born population:

- ~2.5 million

After adding 500,000 Somali immigrants:

- ~3.0 million foreign-born residents

Result:

The foreign-born share would rise from:

- ~16–17%

to roughly:

- ~19%

Black Population Impact

Current Black population:

- roughly 8–9%

- approximately 1.25–1.35 million people

Adding 500,000 Somali immigrants would increase that to roughly:

- 1.75–1.85 million people

Result:

The Black population share would rise to roughly:

- 11–12%

Minority Population Impact

Current minority population:

- ~30–33%

Adding 500,000 mostly non-White immigrants would likely increase that to approximately:

- 33–36%

First- and Second-Generation Impact

Current:

- ~30–35%

Adding 500,000 first-generation immigrants alone would likely move this toward:

- 34–38% over time, especially once children are included.

Context

A migration event involving 500,000 people into New England would be historically significant:

- larger than many previous refugee waves,
- and comparable to some major European ethnic migrations of the industrial era in terms of regional impact.

Where those immigrants settled would matter enormously:

- dispersal across all six states would dilute the effect,
- while concentration in one metro area or state would create much larger local demographic changes.

Additional concerns often raised include:

- increasing demographic change,
- increasing institutional focus on minority representation,
- and decreasing emphasis on historic regional identities.

Possible societal effects discussed in these debates include:

- shifts in voting patterns,
- changes in cultural norms and public priorities,
- reduced emphasis on historic regional traditions in schools and institutions,
- language and identity politics reshaping public discourse,
- and increasing political representation for newer populations over time.

Many Americans view these developments as undermining traditional American culture, heritage, and values. For many, the concern is not simply about legal immigration itself, but about the pace of rapid demographic change, political displacement, weakening regional traditions, declining social cohesion, political trafficking, and that long-established communities are losing cultural and institutional representation within their own homeland. These issues remain politically, culturally, and emotionally contentious across the United States.