

An Uncertain Future: How the Immigration Crackdown Threatens Massachusetts' Labor Force

Thursday, June 4, 2026
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.



An Uncertain Future:
How the Immigration Crackdown
Threatens Massachusetts' Labor Force

Boston Indicators
MassINC Policy Center

June 4, 2026

The Boston Globe

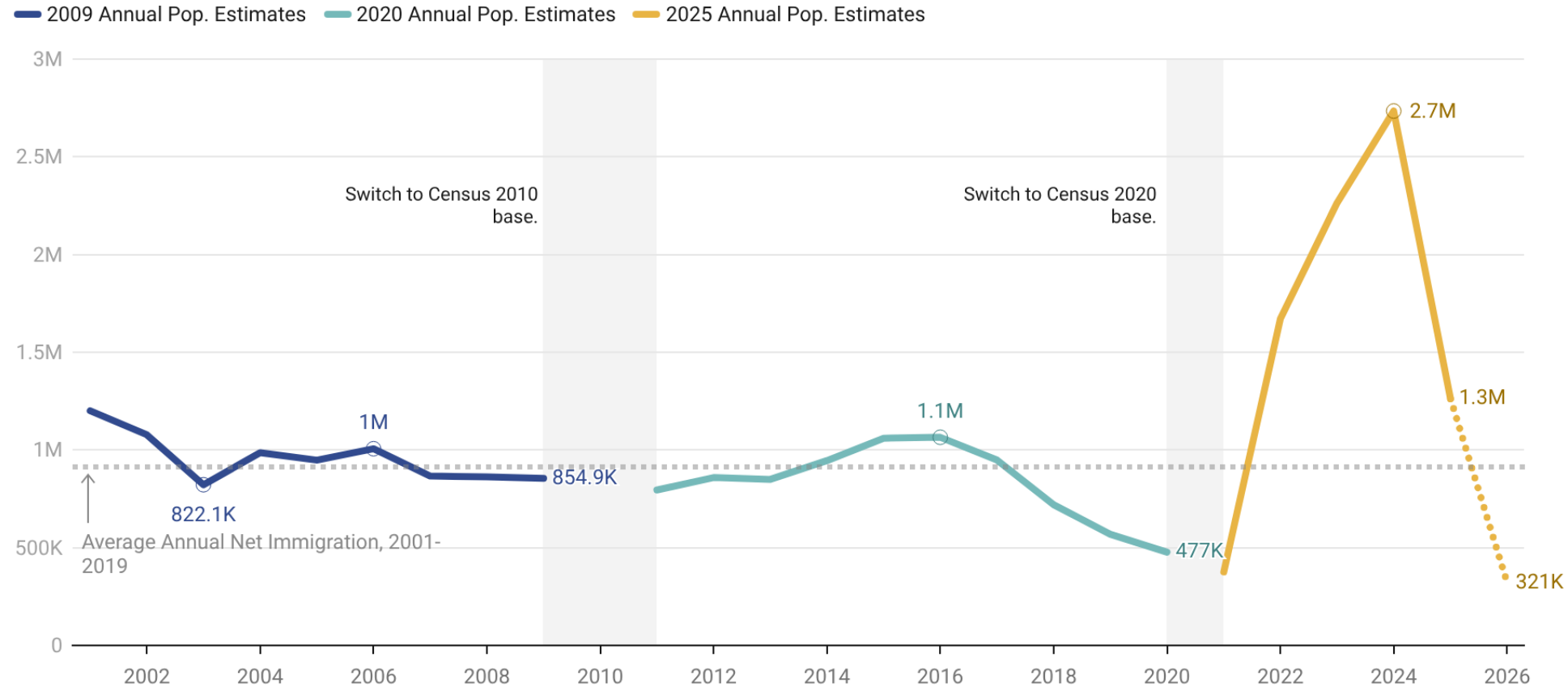
Trump promises to deport ‘millions and millions’ of immigrants; dismayed local advocates vow a fight

By [Giulia McDonnell Nieto del Rio](#) Globe Staff, Updated January 20, 2025, 8:18 p.m.



National net immigration could fall to 321,000 in 2026.

The three lines use different Census Bureau data vintages, benchmarked to different decennial censuses, so they are not directly comparable. Estimates are for annual net change as of July 1 of each respective year.



Note: 2026 data are from a projection courtesy of U.S. Population Growth Slows Due to Historic Decline in Net International Migration," U.S. Census Bureau.

Chart: Boston Indicators • Source: Population Estimates Program. U.S. Census Bureau. • Created with Datawrapper

Examples of President Trump's Efforts to Reduce and Immigration

The New York Times

A \$100,000 Per Worker Visa Fee Tips the Balance to Big Tech

Silicon Valley start-ups said they were concerned they would be disproportionately hurt by the new visa fee for skilled foreign workers, given their limited resources.

POLITICO

Trump administration pulls \$450M more from Harvard

The federal cash comes from eight federal agencies across the government.



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Trump administration

LIVE

Elections 2026

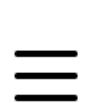
Bill Pulte

Google stock

NBA Finals

POLITICS

Trump expands travel ban and restrictions to include an additional 20 countries



• Live

Video

Shows ▾

Good Morning America

DHS to Expand Social Media Vetting for Visa Applicants

ABC News investigation revealed department generally doesn't vet social media.



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The test for U.S. citizenship is about to get harder

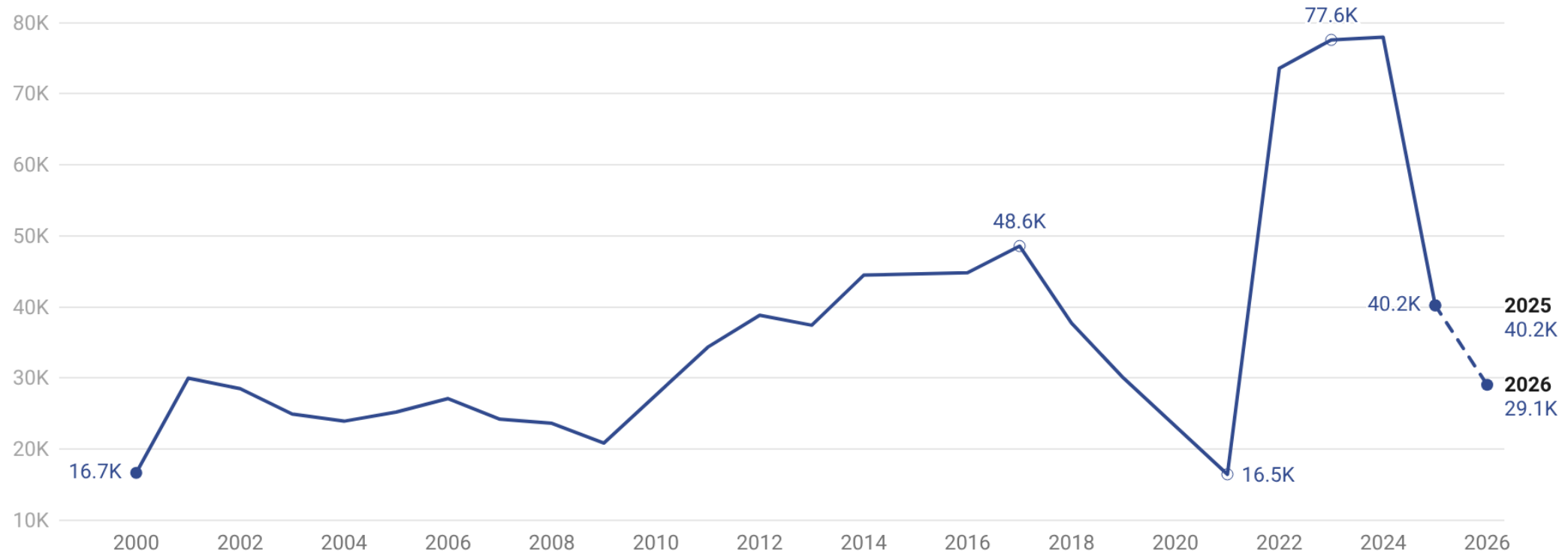
OCTOBER 16, 2025 · 3:52 PM ET

HEARD ON [ALL THINGS CONSIDERED](#)



Adrian Florido

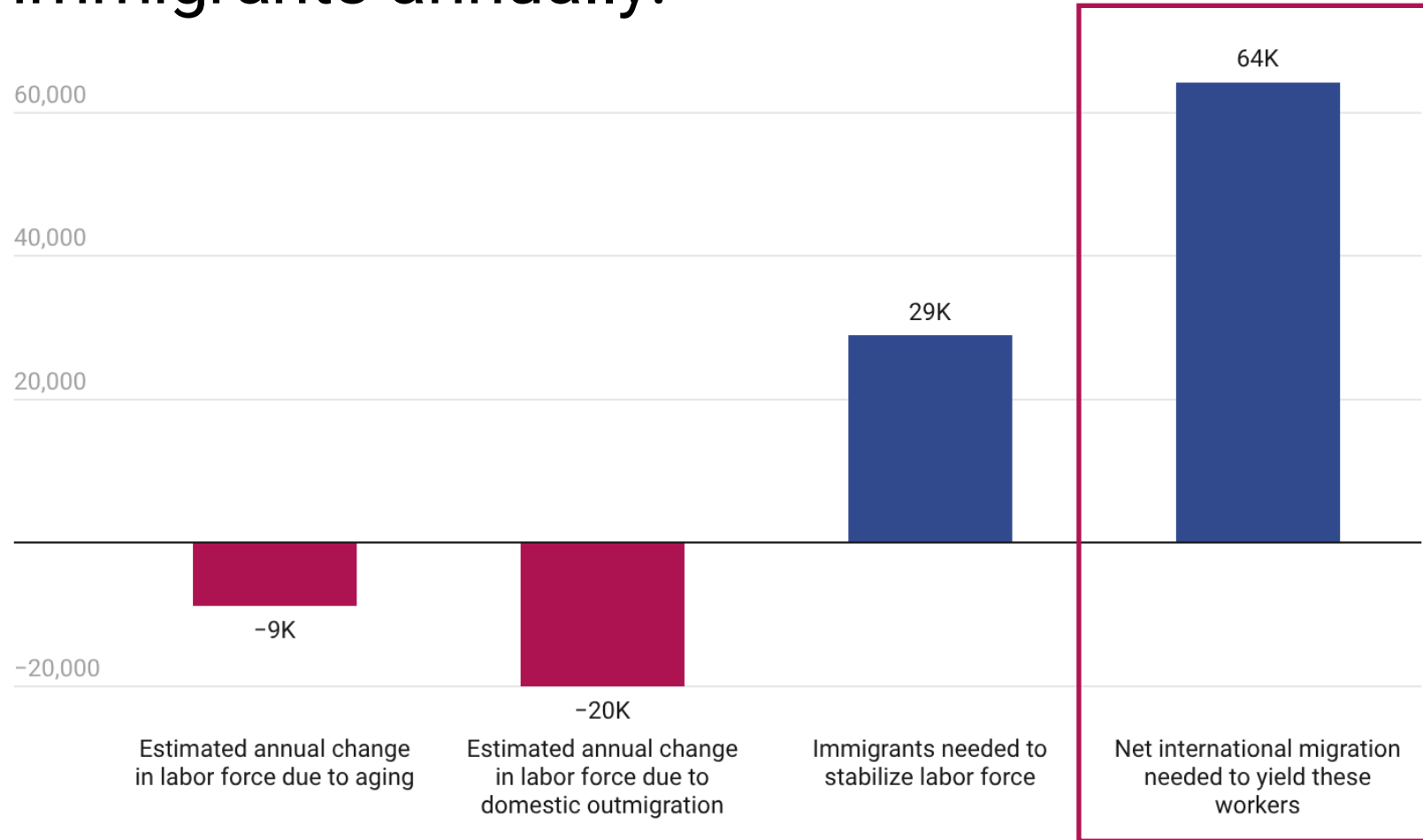
Net international migration in Massachusetts could drop below 30,000 in 2026.



Note: The 2026 value is a local extrapolation of national projections calculated by the Census Bureau.

Chart: Boston Indicators • Source: UMass Donahue Institute, U.S. Census Bureau Population Division • Created with Datawrapper

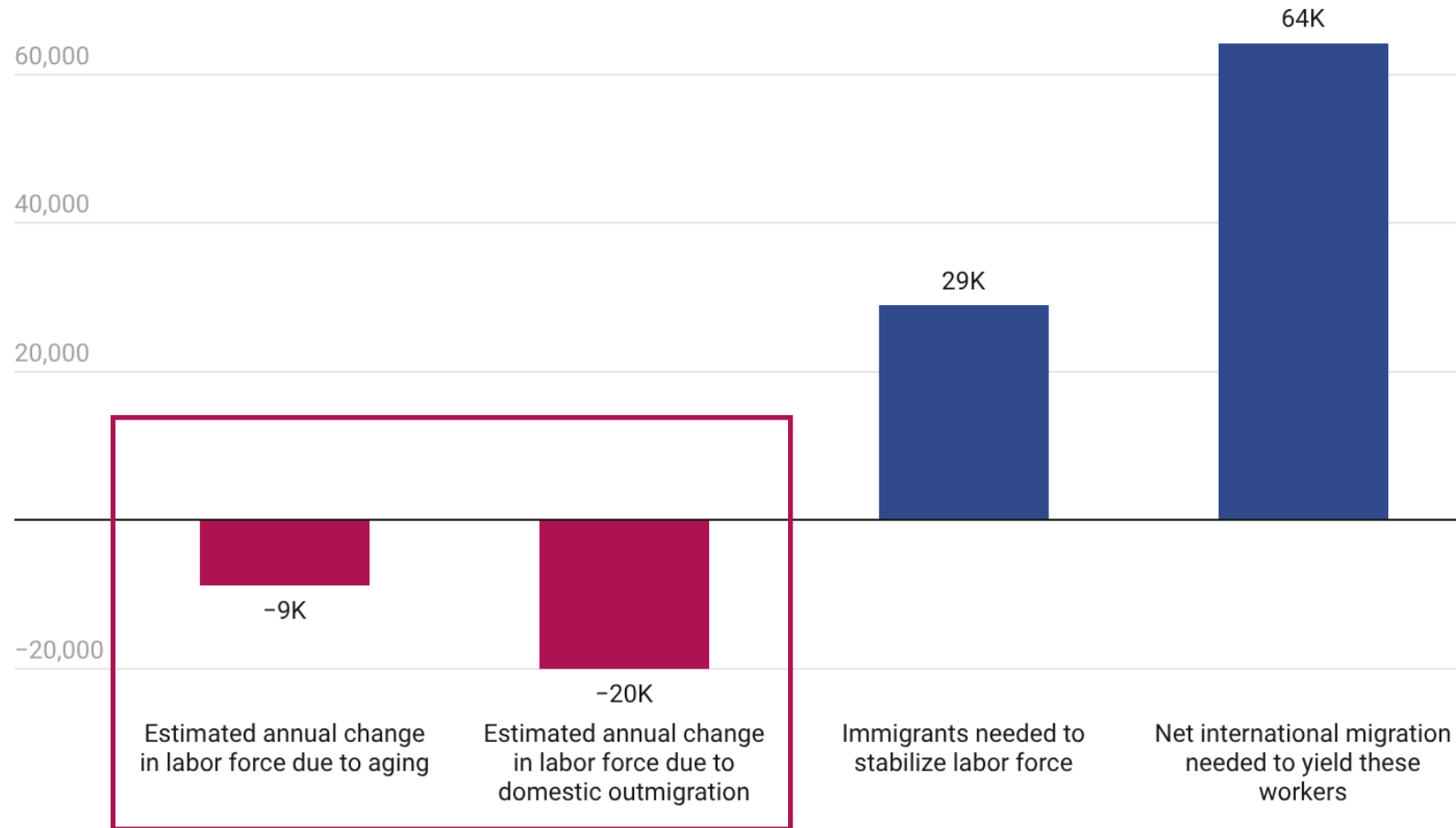
To sustain the current labor force size, Massachusetts needs at least 60,000 immigrants annually.



Note: The sample includes those between the ages of 20 to 64.

Chart: MassINC Policy Center • Source: Author's estimate based on data from the 2024 American Community Survey Public Use Microdata • Created with Datawrapper

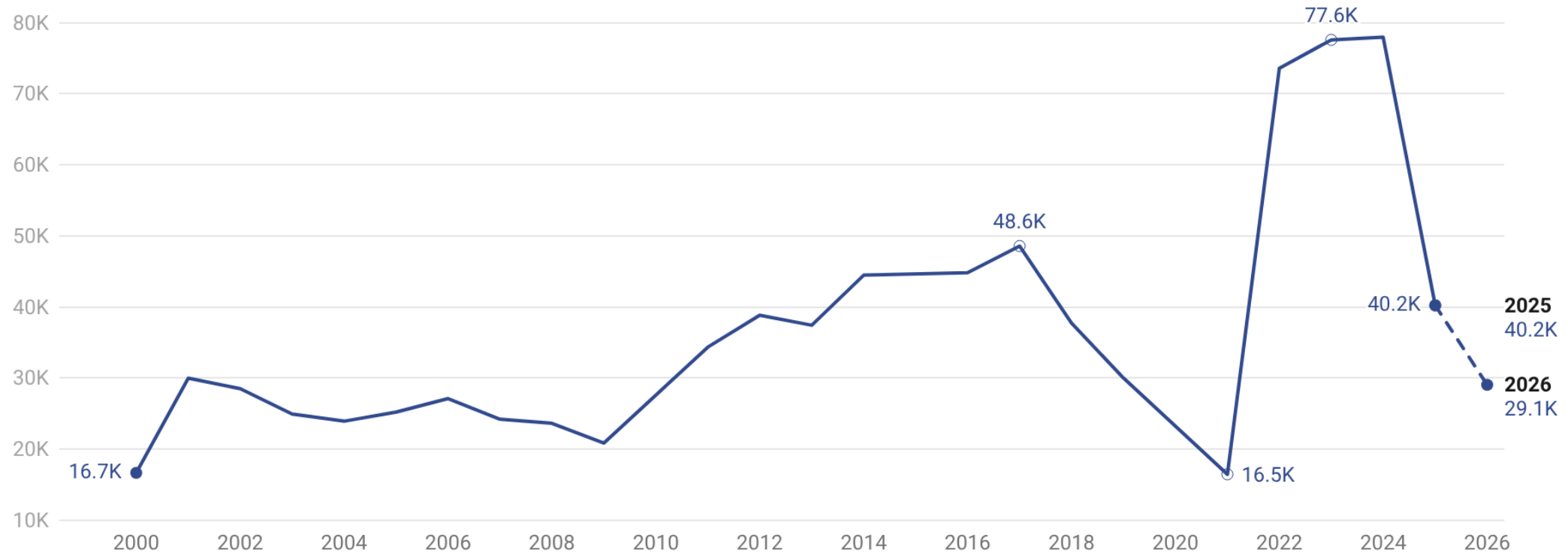
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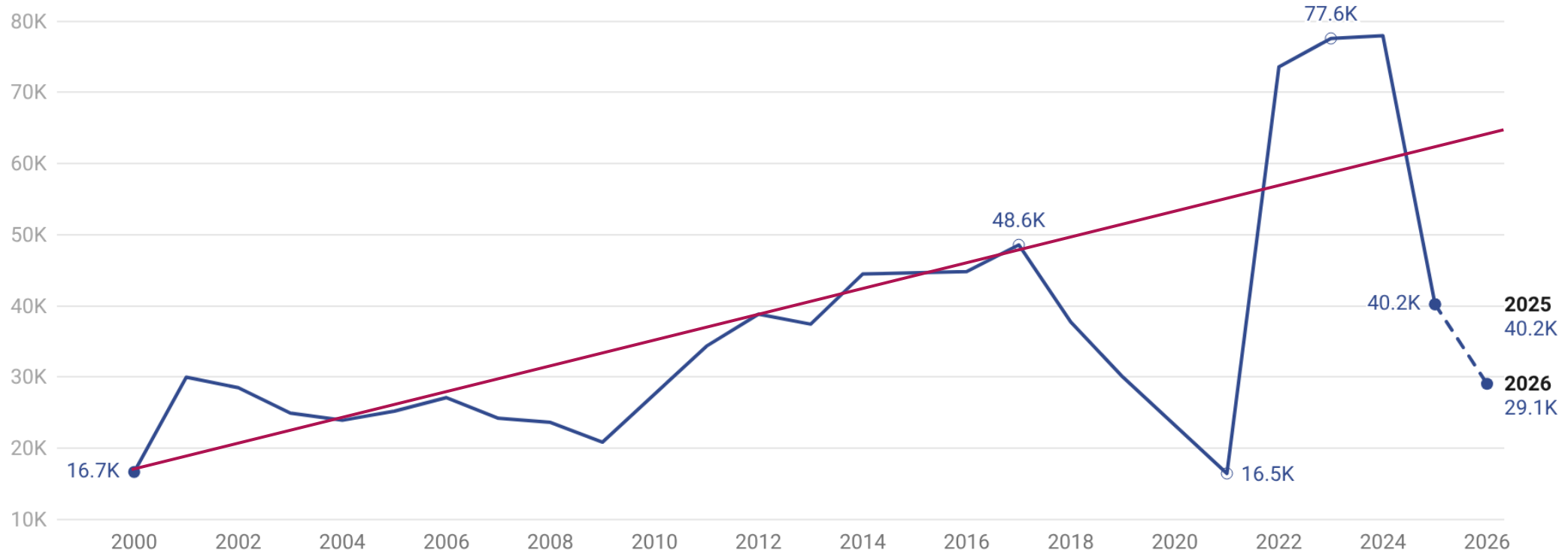
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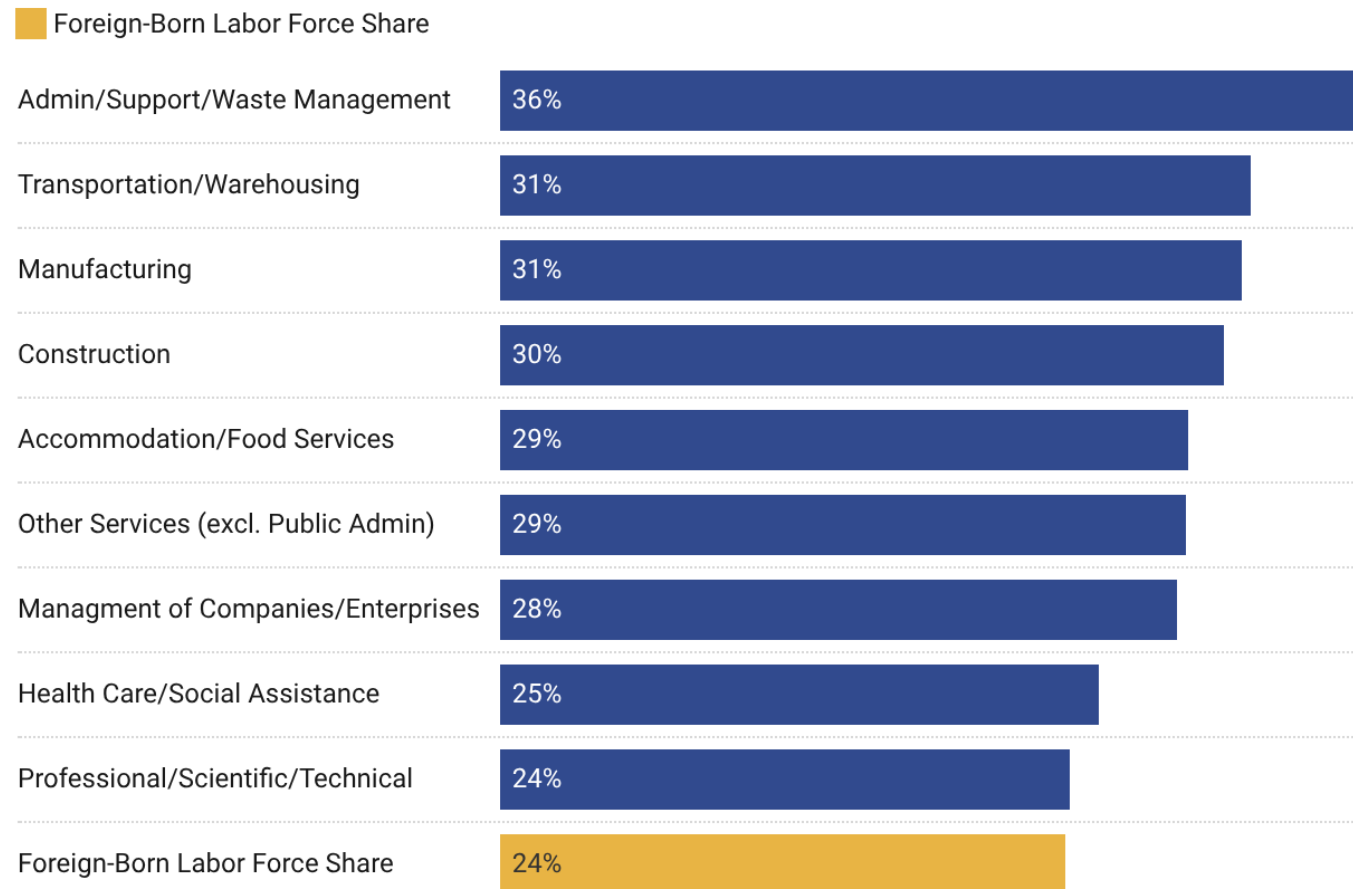


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Immigrants are over-represented in critical industries such as health care support and construction.

Foreign-born share of Massachusetts workforce. 2024



Note: Sample includes only working age adults (16-64)

Chart: Boston Indicators • Source: IPUMS: American Community Survey, 2024 1-Year Estimates • Created with Datawrapper

The Commonwealth could lose billions of dollars in economic activity if immigration slows down.



\$50.5B

Total immigrant
spending power
(2024)



\$23B

Paid in federal
taxes (2024)



\$7.4B

Paid in state/local
taxes (2024)



\$5.7B

Contribution by
international
students (2025)

A reduction in international students to the region could result in a loss of \$1.42 billion.

Annual estimates of the financial contribution that international students add to the Massachusetts economy.

Fall Year ▲	International Undergraduate Students	International Graduate Students	Total Contribution	Difference
2024-25	\$2.41B	\$3.25B	\$5.67B	NA
2025-26	\$2.51B	\$3.2B	\$5.71B	\$40.05M
2026-27 (backfilled)	\$1.88B	\$2.4B	\$4.28B	-\$1.42B

Note: The following estimates are calculated using an adapted model by NAFSA: Association of International Educators. The 2026-27 (backfilled) estimates are based on an assumption that schools with an acceptance rate of 20% or lower can backfill international enrollment declines with domestic students.

Table: Boston Indicators • Source: Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) and Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) • Created with Datawrapper

Theme from our interviews:

Fear and uncertainty are functioning as economic disruptors



19 interviews



8 in healthcare



6 in construction



5 in life sciences

Life Sciences and the Knowledge Economy

“For young companies working off venture capital dollars... \$100,000 is a hell of a lot of money.”

- Industry association representative

Healthcare Support

“This is an impossible way to operate a business.”

- A long-term care organization that lost a significant number of workers in one day

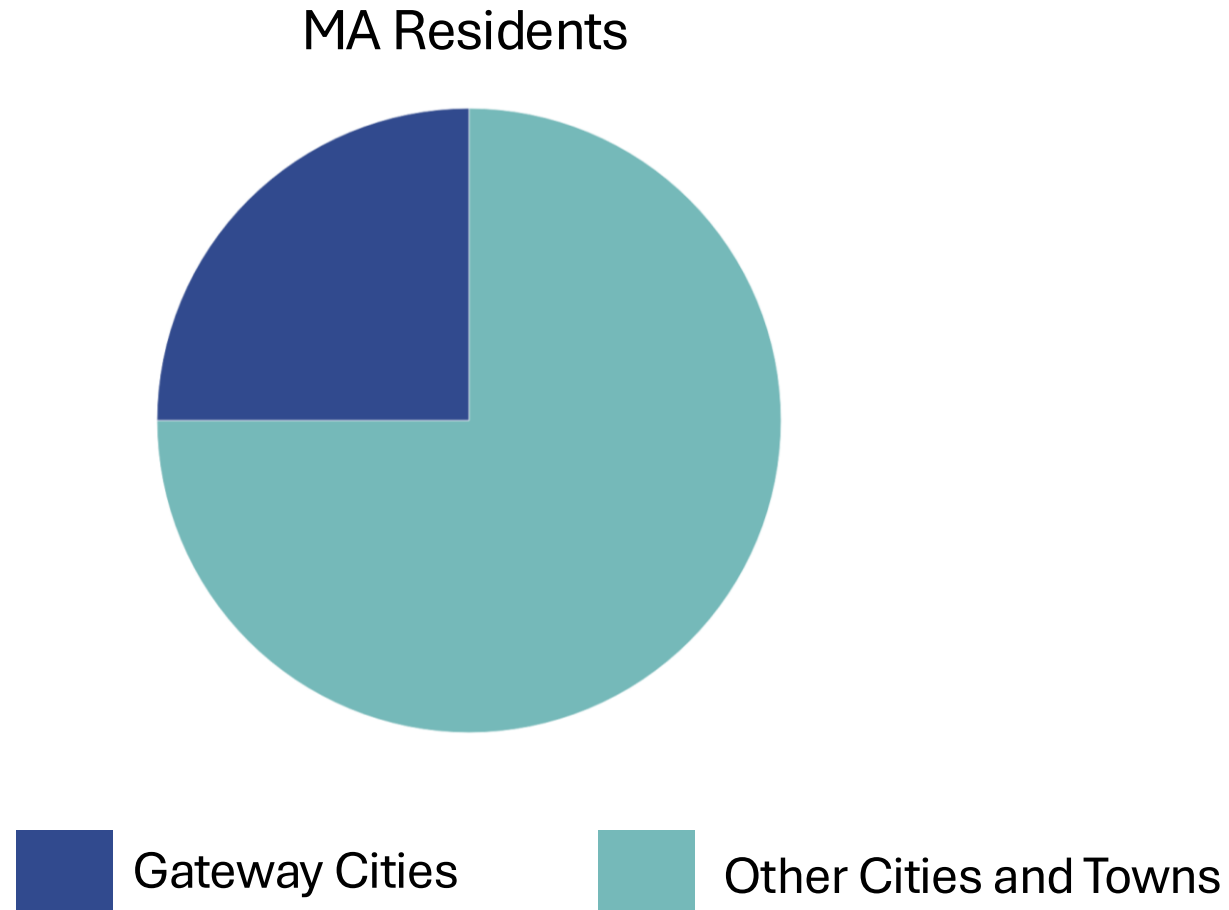
Construction

Delays could amount to an increase of 10% or more of the original contract amount.
- General contractor

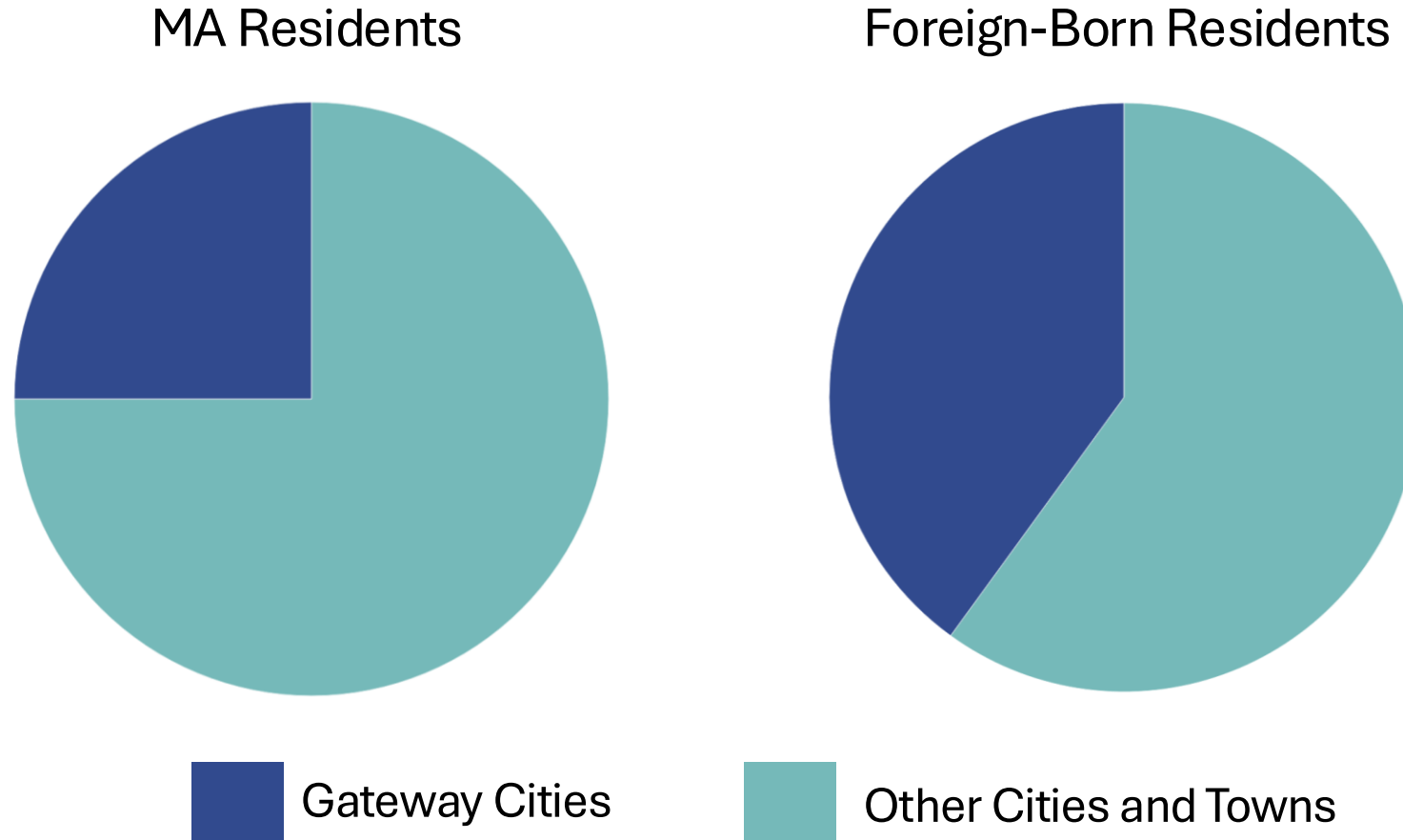
Gateway Cities

Incubators for Our Future Labor Force

True to their moniker, Gateway Cities disproportionately welcome newcomers to the Commonwealth.

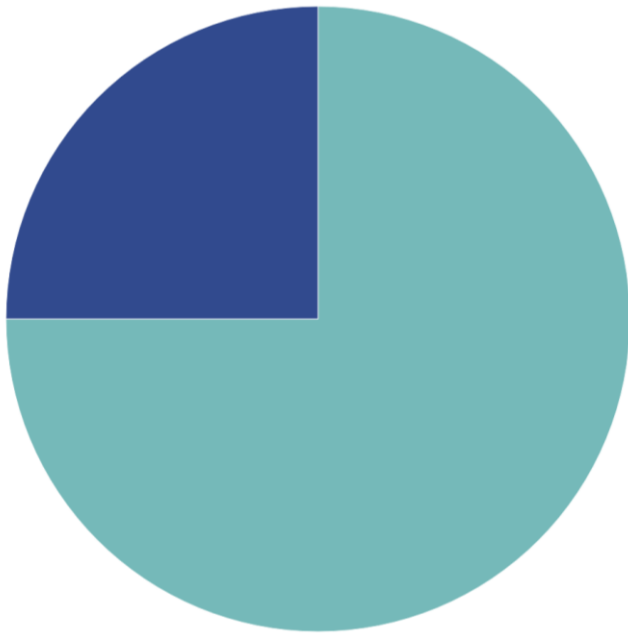


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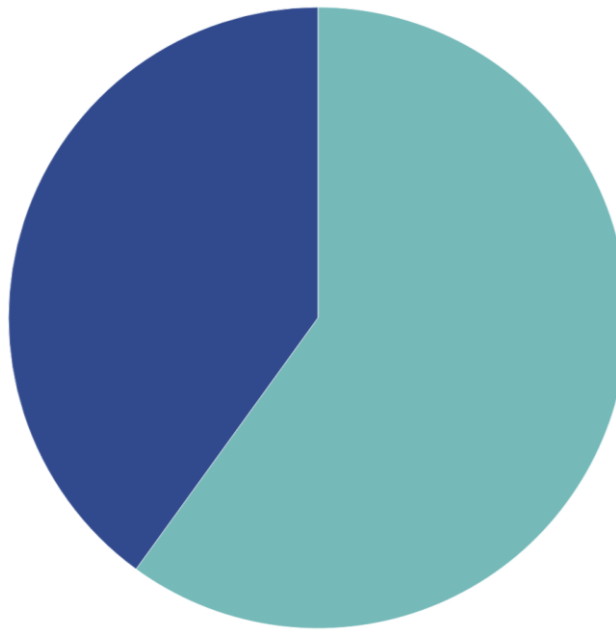


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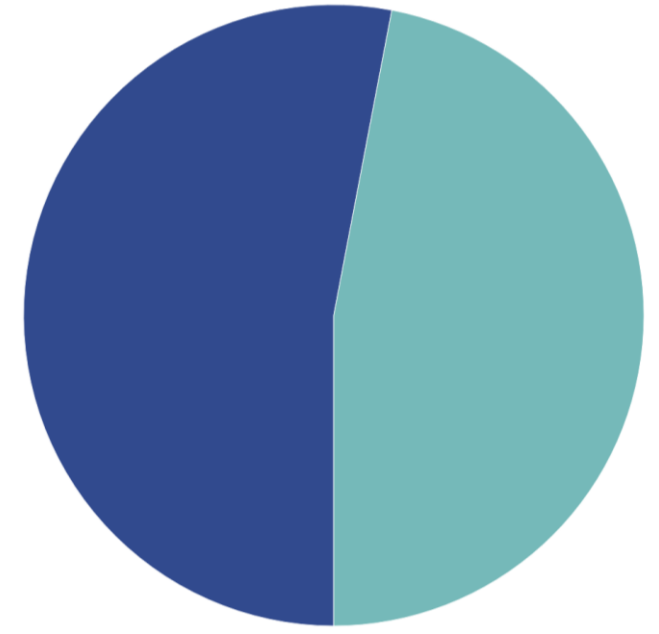
MA Residents



Foreign-Born Residents



Recent Arrivals



Gateway Cities



Other Cities and Towns



the yoga tree

90

the yoga tree
haverhill, ma
10293haverhill.com

MAS FUERTE UNIDOS
A multi-artist exhibition curated
by Melanie Palacios | 2-6 PM

HAVERHILL
ART WALK

Photo: Creative Haverhill



American Red Cross

Photo: Essex Art Center



I



MAIN SOUTH



MAIN SOUTH BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Photo: Worcester Telegram





What matters to you.

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DONATE

PRICED OUT

Once-abandoned mills are now home to thousands of Massachusetts residents

SHARE   



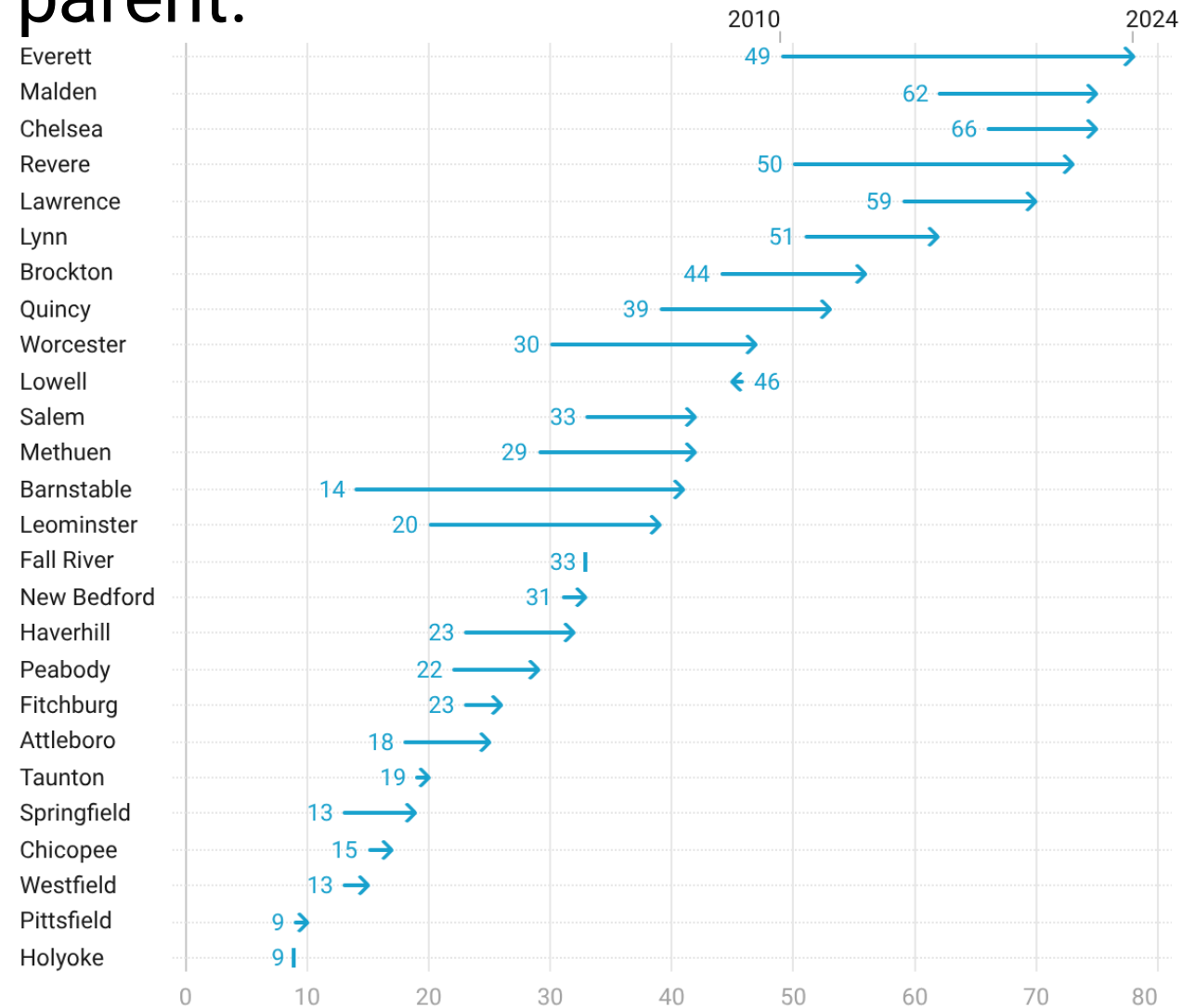
The city of Haverhill wants to convert an abandoned shoe mill into affordable housing.

Sam Turken / GBH News

Immigration is generating an increasingly large share of future labor force entrants.



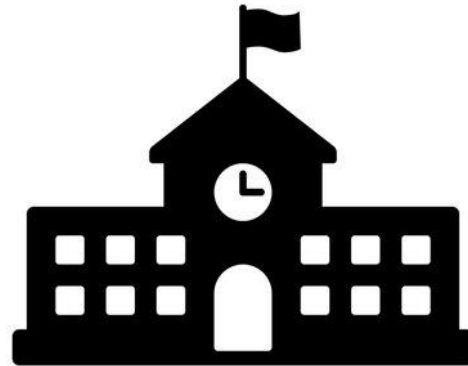
Share of children age 6 to 17 with at least one foreign-born parent.



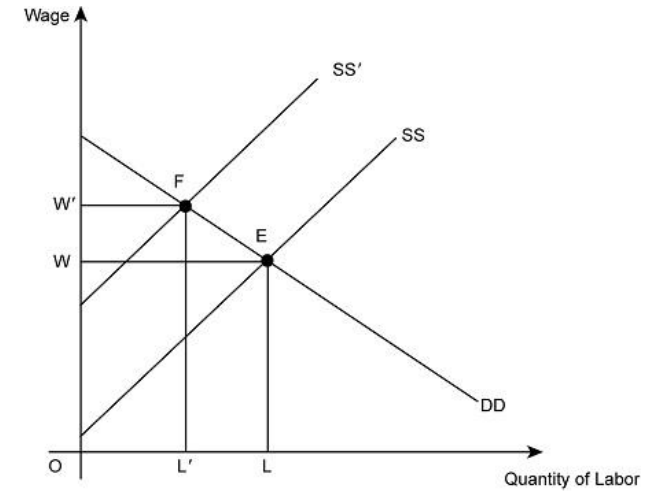
Managing these large inflows can create some challenges.



Housing Cost

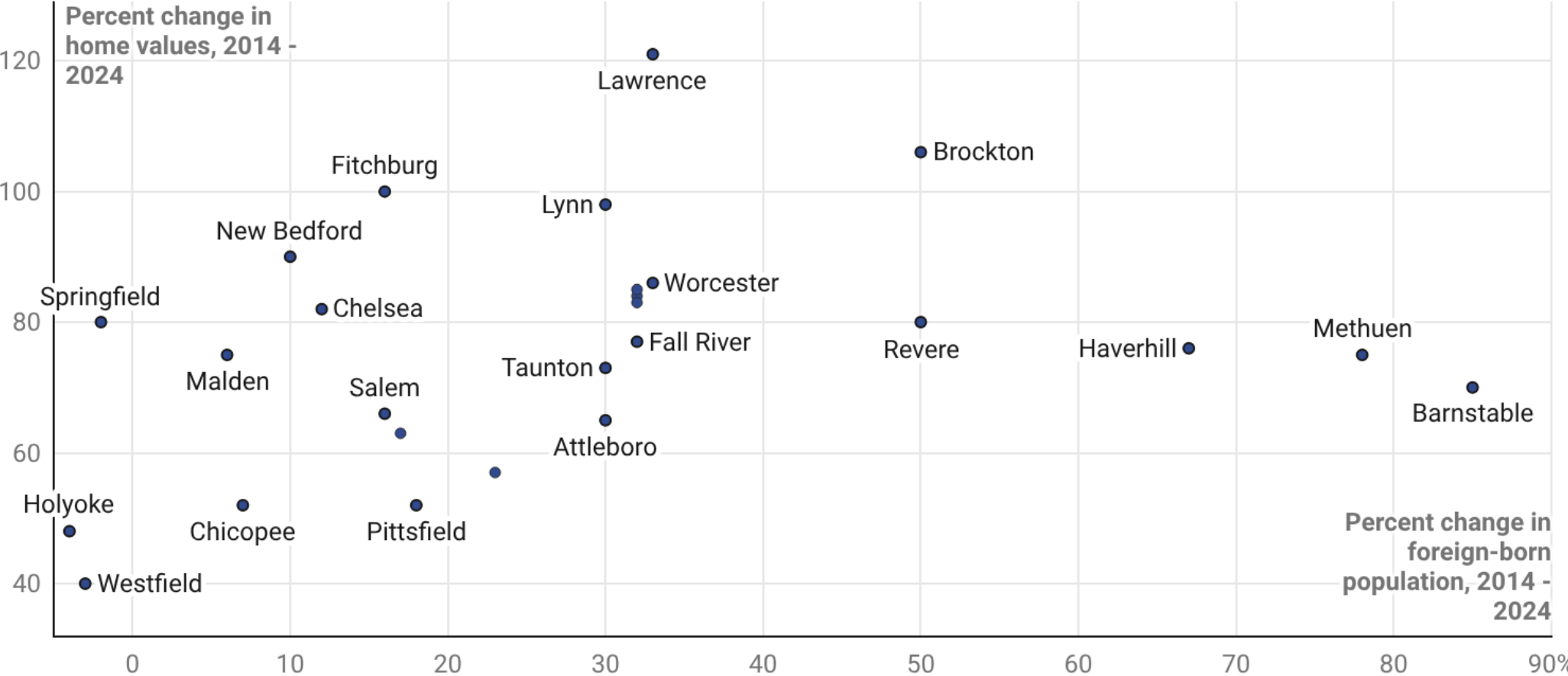


School Performance

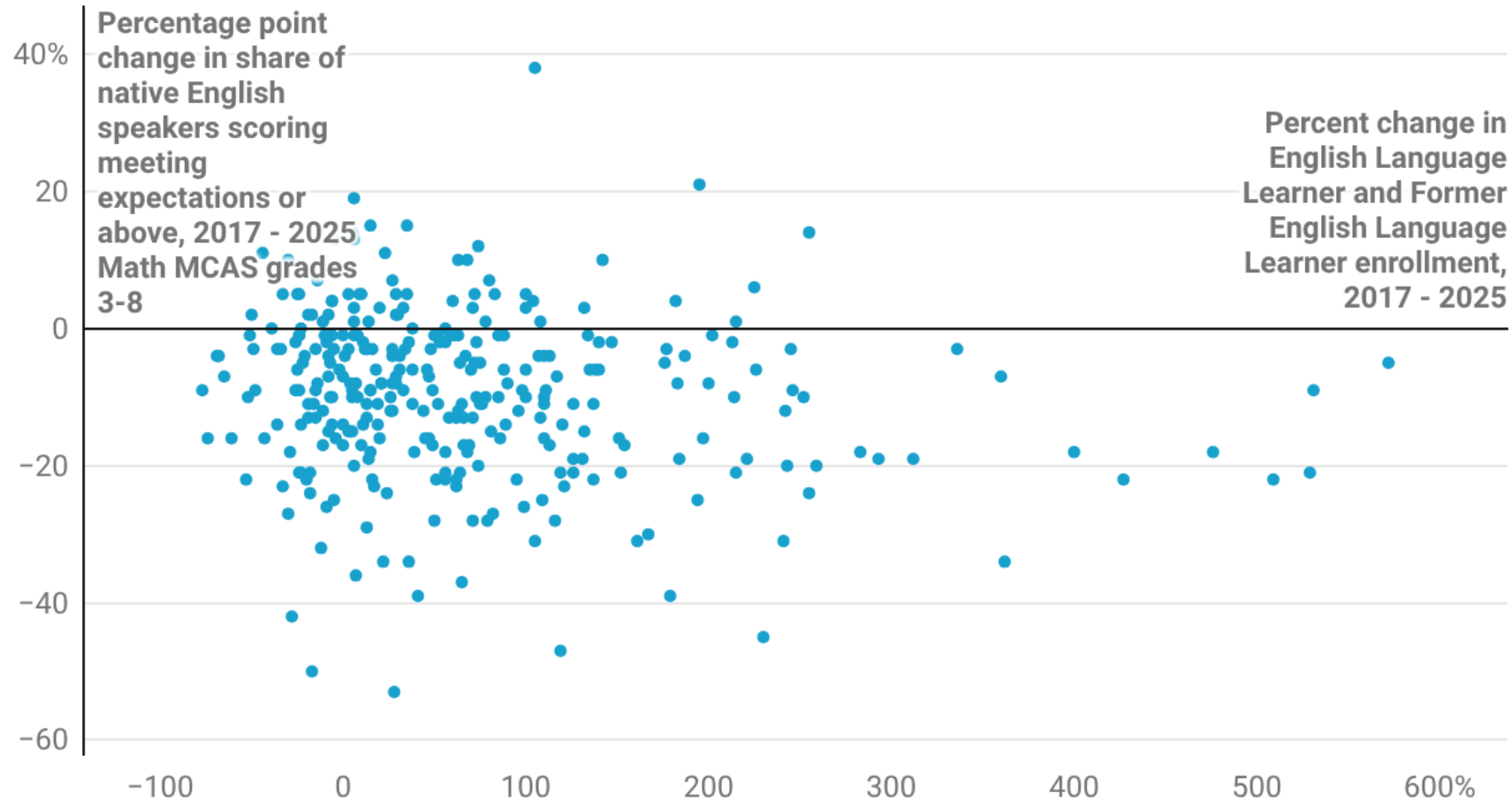


Wages

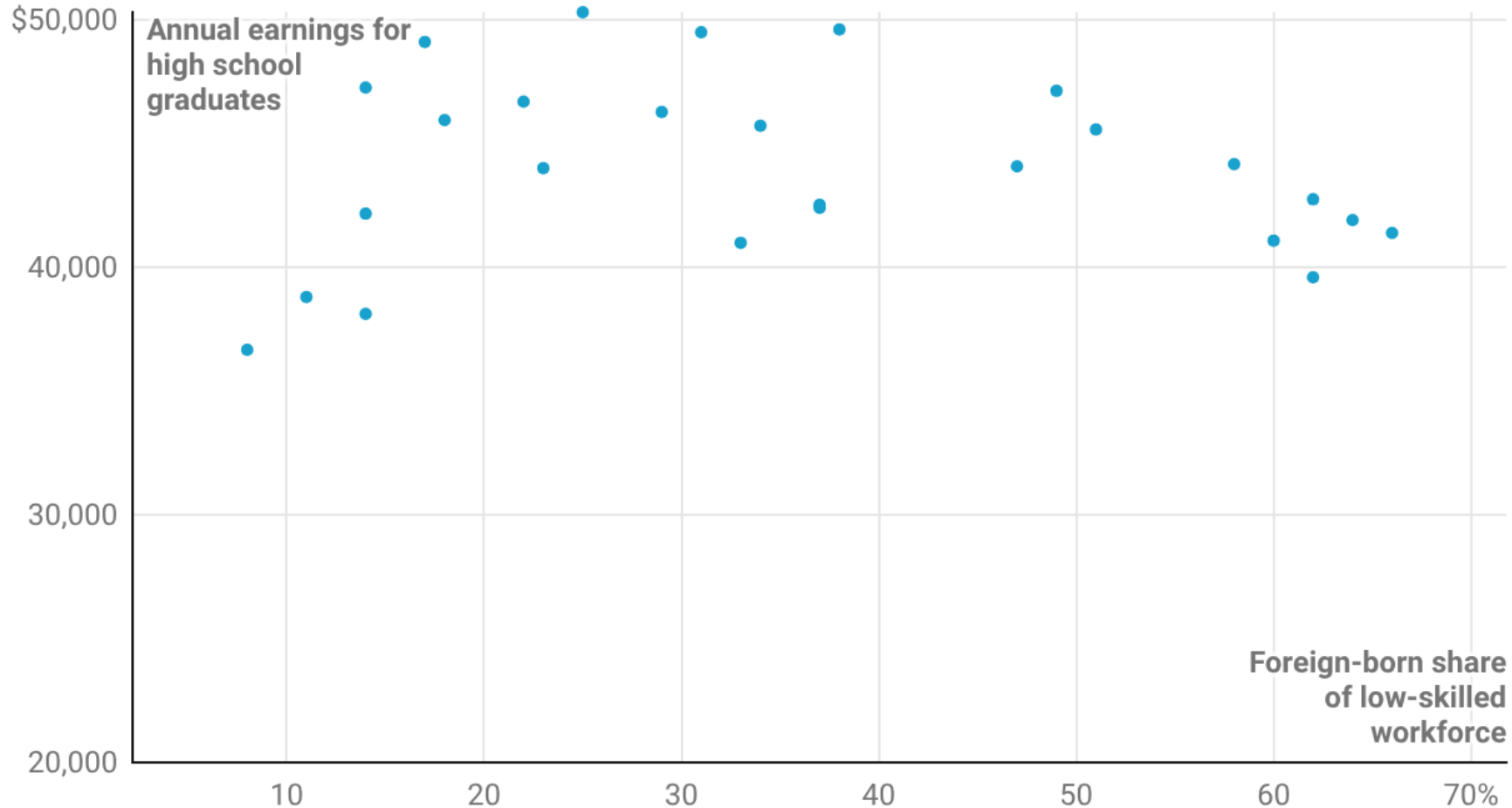
Increases in Gateway City home values do not correlate closely with increases in their foreign-born populations.



There is little correlation between test scores for native English speakers and growth in non-English speaking students.



Low-skilled workers do not earn significantly less in Gateway Cities with a large share of foreign-born workers.



Helping Gateway Cities compete for new Americans must a central pillar of the state's response.



**Protect
immigrant
communities**



**Insulate schools
and public safety
from budget
cuts**



**Support
small
businesses**



**Double down
on efforts to
improve ESOL**