



# Immigrants in the United States

## A profile of the foreign-born using 2014 and 2015 Census Bureau data

By Steven A. Camarota and Karen Zeigler

**D**ata from the Census Bureau shows that 42.4 million immigrants (both legal and illegal ) now live in the United States. This *Backgrounder* provides a detailed picture of immigrants, also referred to as the foreign-born, living in the United States by country of birth and state. It also examines the progress immigrants make over time. All figures are for both legal and illegal immigrants who responded to Census Bureau surveys.

Among the report's findings:

### Population Size and Growth

- The nation's 42.4 million immigrants (legal and illegal) in 2014 is the highest number ever in American history. The 13.3 percent of the nation's population comprised of immigrants in 2014 is the highest percentage in 94 years.
- Between 2000 and 2014, 18.7 million new immigrants (legal and illegal) settled in the United States. Despite the Great Recession beginning at the end of 2007, and the weak recovery that followed, 7.9 million new immigrants settled in the United States from the beginning of 2008 to mid-2014.
- From 2010 to 2014, new immigration (legal and illegal) plus births to immigrants added 8.3 million residents to the country, equal to 87 percent of total U.S. population growth.
- The sending countries with the largest percentage increases in immigrants living in the United States from 2010 to 2014 were Saudi Arabia (up 93 percent), Bangladesh (up 37 percent), Iraq (up 36 percent), Egypt (up 25 percent), and Pakistan, India, and Ethiopia (each up 24 percent).
- States with the largest percentage increases in the number of immigrants from 2010 to 2014 were North Dakota (up 45 percent), Wyoming (up 42 percent), Montana (up 19 percent), Kentucky (up 15 percent), New Hampshire (up 14 percent), and Minnesota and West Virginia (both up 13 percent).

### Labor and Employment

- Rates of work for immigrants and natives tend to be similar — 70 percent of both immigrants and natives (ages 18 to 65) held a job in March 2015.
- Immigrant men have higher rates of work than native-born men — 82 percent vs. 73 percent. However, immigrant women have lower rates of work than native-born women — 57 percent vs. 66 percent.
- A large share of immigrants have low levels of formal education. Of adult immigrants (ages 25 to 65), 28 percent have not completed high school, compared to 8 percent of natives. The share of immigrants (25 to 65) with at least a bachelor's degree is only slightly lower than natives — 30 percent vs. 32 percent.

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- Because many immigrants have modest levels of education, they have significantly increased the share of some types of workers relative to others.
- In 2014, 49 percent of maids, 47 percent of taxi drivers and chauffeurs, 33 percent of butchers and meat processors, and 35 percent of construction laborers were foreign-born.
- While the above occupations are often thought of as overwhelmingly comprised of immigrants, most of the workers in these jobs are U.S.-born.
- Workers in other occupations face relatively little competition from immigrants. In 2014, 5 percent of English language journalists, 6 percent of farmers and ranchers, and 7 percent of lawyers were immigrants.
- At the same time immigration has added to the number of less-educated workers, the share of young less-educated natives holding a job declined significantly. In 2000, 66 percent of natives under age 30 with no education beyond high school were working; in 2015 it was 53 percent.

### **Socioeconomic Status**

- Despite similar rates of work, because a larger share of adult immigrants arrive with little education, immigrants are significantly more likely to work low-wage jobs, live in poverty, lack health insurance, use welfare, and have lower rates of home ownership.
- In 2014, 21 percent of immigrants and their U.S.-born children (under 18) lived in poverty, compared to 13 percent of natives and their children. Immigrants and their children account for about one-fourth of all persons in poverty.
- Almost one in three children (under age 18) in poverty have immigrant fathers.
- In 2014, 18 percent of immigrants and their U.S.-born children (under 18) lacked health insurance, compared to 9 percent of natives and their children.
- In 2014, 42 percent of immigrant-headed households used at least one welfare program (primarily food assistance and Medicaid), compared to 27 percent for natives. Both figures represent an undercount. If adjusted for undercount based on other Census Bureau data, the rate would be 57 percent for immigrants and 34 percent for natives.
- In 2014, 12 percent of immigrant households were overcrowded, using a common definition of such households. This compares to 2 percent of native households.
- Of immigrant households, 51 percent are owner-occupied, compared to 65 percent of native households.
- The lower socio-economic status of immigrants is not due to their being mostly recent arrivals. The average immigrant in 2014 had lived in the United States for almost 21 years.

### **Immigrant Progress Over Time**

- Immigrants make significant progress the longer they live in the country. However, even immigrants who have lived in the United States for 20 years have not come close to closing the gap with natives.
- The poverty rate of adult immigrants who have lived in the United States for 20 years is 57 percent higher than for adult natives.
- The share of households headed by an immigrant who has lived in the United States for 20 years using at least one welfare program is 80 percent higher than native households.
- The share of households headed by an immigrant who has lived in the United States for 20 years that are owner occupied is 24 percent lower than that of native households.

## Impact on Public Schools

- There are 10.9 million students from immigrant households in public schools, and they account for nearly 23 percent of all public school students.
- There are 64 public school students per 100 immigrant households, compared to 38 for native households. Because immigrant households tend to be poorer, immigration often increases school enrollment without a corresponding increase in the local tax base.
- In addition to increasing enrollment, immigration often creates significant challenges for schools by adding to the number of students with special needs. In 2014, 75 percent of students who spoke a language other than English were from immigrant households, as are 31 percent of all public school students in poverty.
- States with the largest share of public school students from immigrant households are California (47 percent), Nevada (37 percent), New York and New Jersey (33 percent each), and Texas (32 percent).

## Entrepreneurship

- Immigrants and natives have very similar rates of entrepreneurship — 12.4 percent of immigrants are self-employed either full- or part-time, as are 12.8 percent of natives.
- Most of the businesses operated by immigrants and natives tend to be small. In 2015, only 16 percent of immigrant-owned businesses had more than 10 employees, as did 19 percent of native-owned businesses.

## Impact on the Aging of American Society

- Recent immigration has had a small impact on the nation's age structure. If post-2000 immigrants are excluded from the data, the median age in the United States would still be 37.
- Recent immigration has had a small impact on the nation's fertility rate. In 2014, the nation's total fertility rate (TFR) was 1.85 children per women. Excluding all immigrants, it would have been the rate for natives — 1.78 children per woman. The presence of immigrants has increased the nation's TFR by about 4 percent.

## Introduction

This *Backgrounder* uses the latest Census Bureau data from 2014 and 2015 to provide the reader with information to make sound judgments about the effects of immigration on American society with the hope that it will shed some light on what policy should be in the future. There are many reasons to examine the nation's immigrant population. First, the 59 million immigrants and their U.S.-born children in 2014 comprise nearly one-fifth of U.S. residents. How they are faring is vitally important to the United States. Moreover, understanding how immigrants are doing is the best way to evaluate the impact of immigration on American society. Absent a change in policy, between 12 and 15 million new immigrants (legal and illegal) will likely settle in the United States in the next 10 years. And perhaps 30 million new immigrants will arrive in the next 20 years.<sup>1</sup>

Immigration policy determines the number allowed in, the selection criteria used to admit them, and the level of resources devoted to controlling illegal immigration. The future, of course, is not set and when deciding on what immigration policy should be it is critically important to know the impact of immigration in recent decades.

There is no single approach to answering the question of whether the country has been well served by its immigration policy. Although not explicitly acknowledged, the two most important ways of examining the immigration issue are what might be called the “immigrant-centric” approach and the “national” approach. They are not mutually exclusive, but they are distinct.

The immigrant-centric approach focuses on how immigrants are faring, or what is sometimes called immigrant adaptation or assimilation. The key assumption underlying this perspective is not so much how immigrants are doing relative to natives, but rather how they are doing given their level of education, language skills, and other aspects of their human capital

endowment. This approach also tends to emphasize the progress immigrants make over time on its own terms, and the benefit of migration to the immigrants themselves. The immigrant-centric view is the way most, but by no means all, academic researchers approach the issue.

The other way of thinking about immigration can be called the national perspective, which is focused on the impact immigration is having on American society. This approach implicitly assumes that immigration is supposed to benefit the existing population of American citizens; the benefit immigrants receive by coming here is less important. So, for example, if immigration adds significantly to the population in poverty or using welfare programs, this is seen as a problem, even if immigrants are clearly better off in this country than they would have been back home and are no worse off than natives with the same education. This approach is also focused on possible job competition between immigrants and natives and the effect immigration has on public coffers. In general, the national perspective is the way the American public thinks about the immigration issue.

When thinking about the information presented in this report, it is helpful to keep both perspectives in mind. There is no one best way to think about immigration. By approaching the issue from both points of view, the reader may arrive at a better understanding of the complex issues surround immigration.

## Data Sources and Methods

**Data Sources.** The data for this *Backgrounder* comes primarily from the 2014 American Community Survey (ACS) and the March 2015 Current Population Survey (CPS). In some cases, for state-specific information we combine the March 2014 and 2015 CPS to get a larger, more statistically robust sample. The 3/8 file of the March 2014 CPS was chosen as this is compatible with the March 2015 CPS for income and poverty statistics.<sup>2</sup> The ACS and CPS have become the two most important sources of data on the size, growth, and socio-economic characteristics of the nation's immigrant population. In this report, the terms foreign-born and immigrant are used synonymously. Immigrants are persons living in the United States who were not American citizens at birth. This includes naturalized American citizens, legal permanent residents (green card holders), illegal aliens, and people on long-term temporary visas, such as foreign students or guestworkers, who respond to the ACS or CPS.<sup>3</sup> We use the terms illegal alien and illegal immigrant interchangeably. The 2014 and 2015 March CPS files were downloaded from the Data Ferret website provided by the Census Bureau. Historical files in Figure 2 (2000-2013) were downloaded from IPUMS.

The public-use sample of the 2014 ACS used in this study has roughly 3.1 million respondents, nearly 360,000 of whom are immigrants. It is by far the largest survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. The ACS includes all persons in the United States, including those in institutions such as prisons and nursing homes. Because of its size and its more complete coverage of the total population, we use the ACS in this report for the overall number of immigrants and their year of arrival at the national and state level. Because it includes questions on language and public school enrollment not found in the CPS, we also use the ACS to examine these issues. Although the ACS is an invaluable source of information on the foreign-born, it contains fewer questions than the CPS. The 2014 ACS file was downloaded from IPUMS.

The March Current Population Survey, which is called the Annual Social and Economic Supplement, includes an extra-large sample of minorities. The survey is abbreviated as the CPS ASEC or just the ASEC. While much smaller than the ACS, the CPS ASEC still includes about 200,000 individuals, more than 26,000 of whom are foreign-born. Because the CPS contains more questions, it allows for more detailed analysis in some areas than the ACS. The CPS has been in operation much longer than the ACS and for many years it has been the primary source of data on the labor market characteristics, income, health insurance coverage, and welfare use of the American population. The CPS is also one of the only government surveys to include questions on the birthplace of each respondent's parent, allowing for generational analysis of immigrants and the descendants of immigrants.

Another advantage of the CPS, unlike the ACS, is that every household in the survey receives an interview (phone or in-person) from a Census Bureau employee.<sup>4</sup> Like the ACS, the CPS is weighted to reflect the actual size of the total U.S. population. Unlike the ACS, the CPS does not include those in institutions and so does not cover the nation's entire population. However, those in institutions are generally not part of the labor market, nor are they typically included in statistics on health insurance coverage, poverty, income, and welfare use.

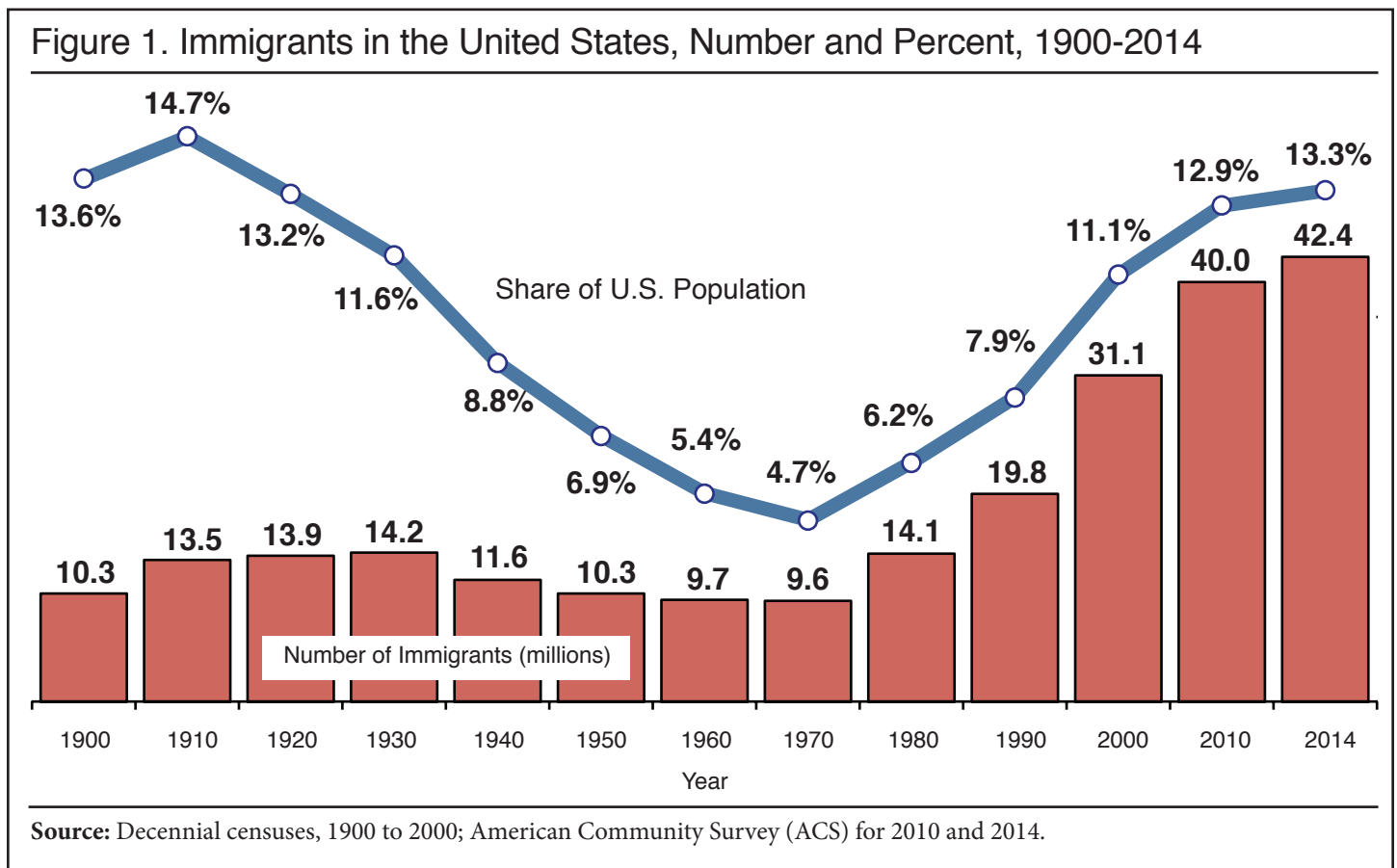
The ACS and CPS each have different strengths. By using both in this report we hope to provide a more complete picture of the nation's foreign-born. However, it must be remembered that some percentage of the foreign-born (especially illegal aliens) are missed by government surveys of this kind, thus the actual size of the population is somewhat larger than what is reported here. There is research indicating that some 5 percent of the immigrant population is missed by Census Bureau surveys.<sup>5</sup>

## Historical Trends in Immigration

Immigration has clearly played an important role in American history. Figure 1 reports the number and percentage of immigrants living in the United States from 1900 to 2014. The figure shows very significant growth in the foreign-born both in absolute numbers and as a share of the total population since 1970. The immigrant population in 2014 stood at 42.4 million in the ACS. The Department of Homeland Security estimates that 1.85 million immigrants are missed in the ACS.<sup>6</sup> So the actual number of immigrants may have been 44.25 million in 2014. Even without accounting for those missed by the Census Bureau, it is still the case that the foreign-born population in 2014 has more than doubled since 1990, tripled since 1980, and quadrupled since 1970, when it stood at 9.6 million. The increase in the size of the immigrant population has been so dramatic (22.6 million) since 1990 that just this growth is double the size of the entire foreign-born population in 1970 or even 1900.

While the number of immigrants in the country is higher than at any time in American history, the immigrant share of the population in 2014 (13.3 percent) was somewhat higher a century ago. Absent a change in policy, the number and share of immigrants in the population will continue to increase for the foreseeable future. The most recent Census Bureau projections indicate that by 2023 the foreign-born share of the U.S. population will reach 14.8 percent, the highest percentage in American history. Moreover, the share of the population will continued to increase through 2060, according the Census Bureau.<sup>7</sup>

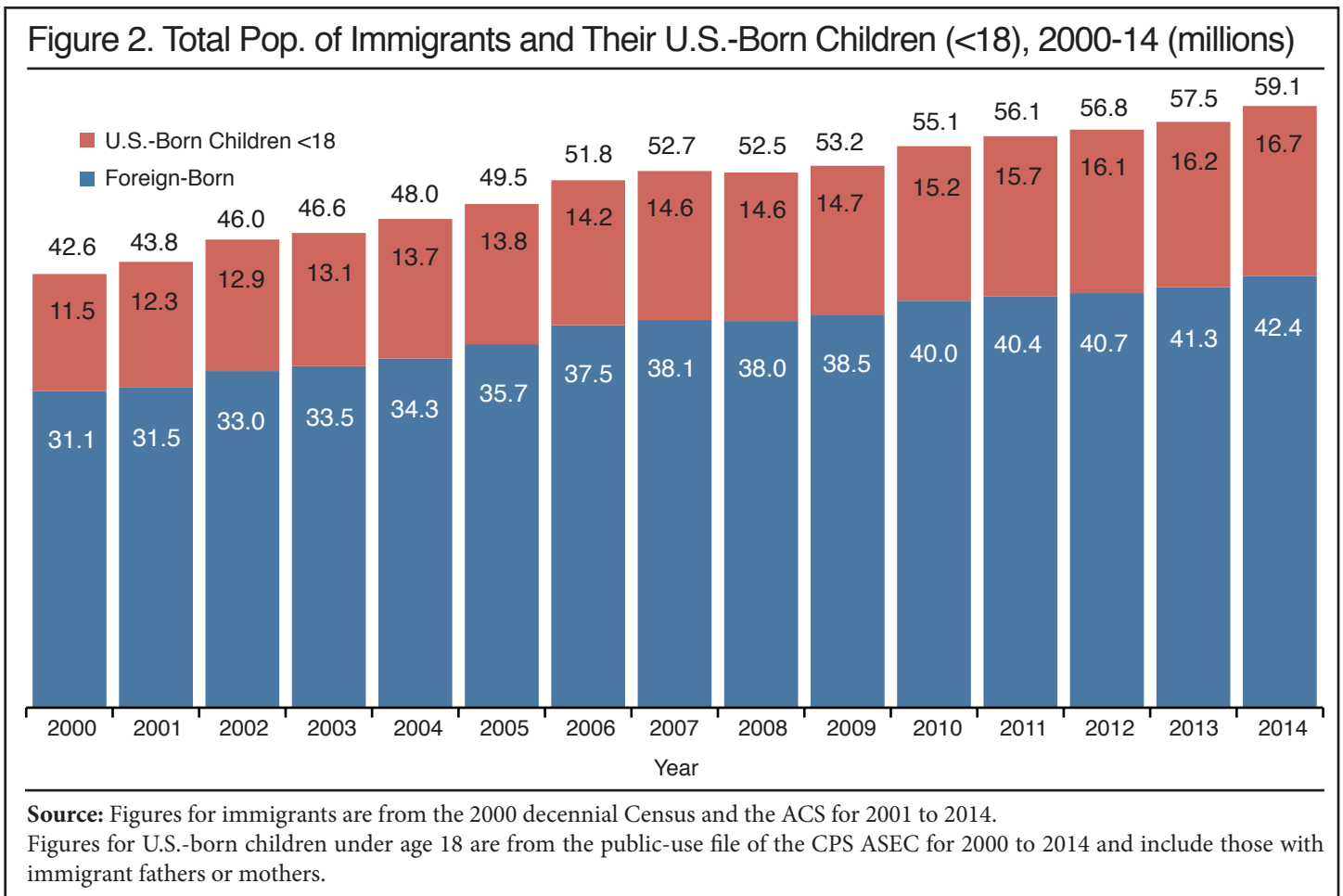
In terms of the impact of immigrants on the United States, both the percentage of the population made up of immigrants and the number of immigrants are clearly important. The ability to assimilate and incorporate immigrants is partly dependent on the relative sizes of the native and immigrant populations. On the other hand, absolute numbers also clearly matter; a large number of immigrants could create the critical mass necessary to foster linguistic and cultural isolation regardless of their



percentage of the overall population. Whether one focuses on numbers or population share, the growth of the foreign-born population in recent decades is extraordinary and the latest projections indicate that the country is headed into uncharted territory.

## Recent Trends in Immigration

**Total Numbers.** Figure 2 reports the size of the foreign-born population from 2000 to 2014 based on the ACS and the number of children (<18) with immigrant fathers or mothers based on the CPS.<sup>8</sup> The figure shows significant growth during the last 14 years. Figure 2 shows a significant fall-off in the growth of the immigrant population from 2007 to 2009, with an increase of only 450,000 over that two-year period. This slowing in the growth likely reflects a reduction in the number of new immigrants (legal and illegal) settling in the country and an increase in out-migration. The deterioration in the U.S. economy coupled with stepped-up enforcement efforts at the end of the Bush administration almost certainly accounts for much of this decline. In a series of reports looking at this time period, the Center for Immigration Studies estimated immigration and emigration rates throughout the decade. In general, our prior research found good evidence that the level of new immi-

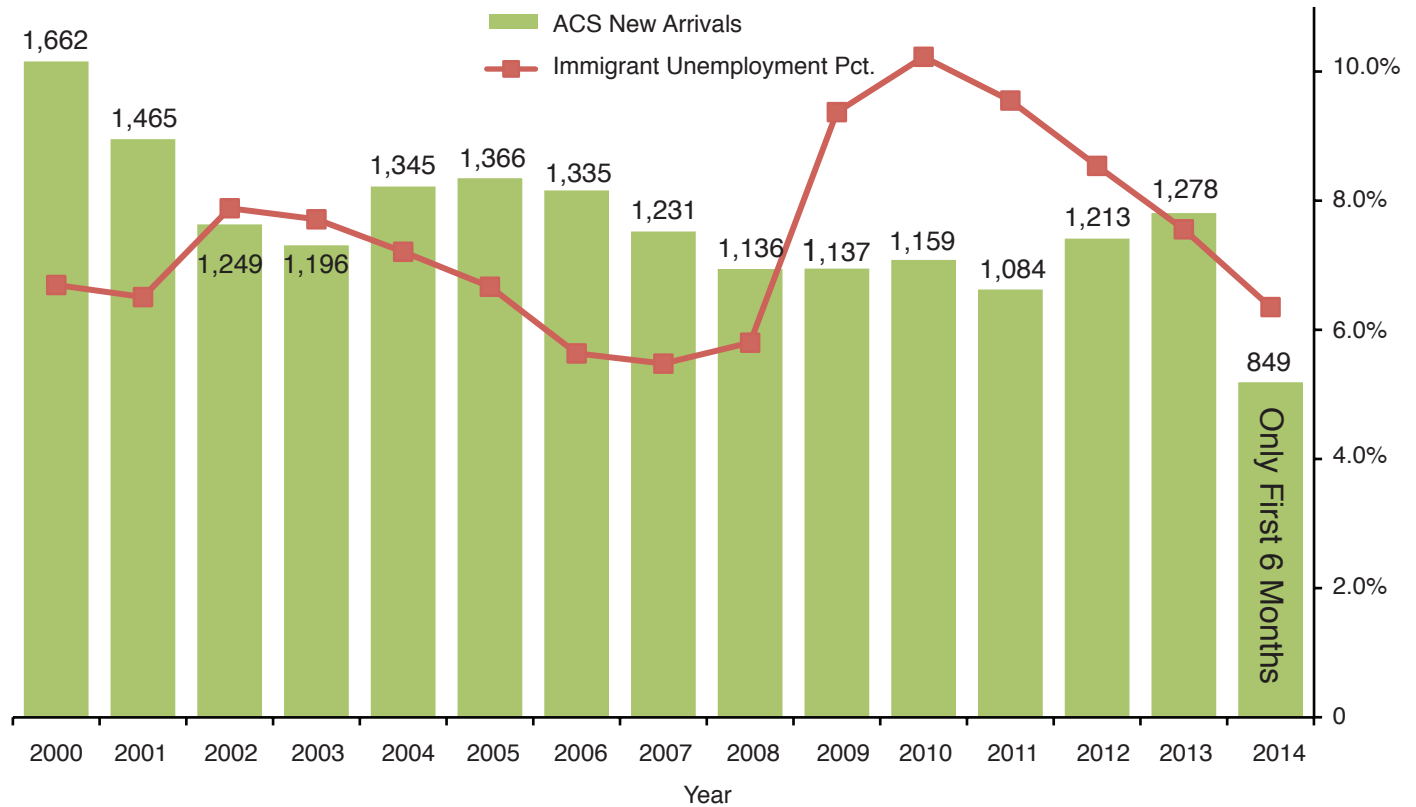


gration fell at the end of the decade and that out-migration increased.<sup>9</sup> Since 2012, growth in the foreign-born population has picked up, increasing by 1.7 million in the two years prior to 2014. Figure 2 also shows that the number of U.S.-born children of immigrants under age 18 has also increased significantly.

**Flow of New Immigrants.** Another way to examine trends in immigration is to look at responses to the year-of-arrival question. Figure 3 reports new arrivals based on the ACS from 2000 to 2014. (The ACS for each year provides complete arrival data for the preceding calendar year, so, for example, arrival figures for 2013 are from the 2014 ACS and the figures for 2012 are from the 2013 ACS.) Data for 2014 is only for the first six months of that year, as the ACS reflects the U.S. population as of July 1. Figure 3 also reports the unemployment rate for immigrants during the same time period. The figure indicates that the number of new arrivals was higher in the first part of the decade relative to the end of the decade. But the key finding is that immigration remained very high, even when immigrant unemployment increased dramatically.



Figure 3. New Arrivals From the ACS Compared to Immigrant Unemployment Rate (thousands)



Source: Figures are from the ACS 2001 to 2014. The 2000 unemployment rate is from the 2000 Census.

Over the entire period 2000 to 2014, 18.7 million new immigrants arrived. Figure 3 also shows that, despite the Great Recession, which began at the end of 2007, and the weak economic growth that followed it, 7.9 million new immigrants still settled in the United States from the beginning of 2008 to mid-2014. This is an enormous flow of new people entering the country during a steep recession and relatively weak recovery. During the very worst of the economic downturn, 2008 to 2011, Figure 3 still shows 4.5 million new immigrants settled in the country.

The results in Figure 3 are a reminder that immigration is a complex process; it is not simply a function of labor-market conditions in the United States. While the state of the U.S. economy can impact the pace of immigration, the desire to be with relatives or to enjoy greater political freedom and lower levels of official corruption also play a significant role in the decision to come to the United States. The generosity of America's public benefits and the quality of public services also make this country an attractive place to settle. These things do not change during a recession, even a steep one.

Figure 3 also shows an increase in new arrivals 2011 to 2013. This fact, and the increase in growth 2012 to 2014 already discussed in Figure 2, supports the idea that immigration maybe rebounding — with more immigrants arriving and perhaps fewer returning home each year.

It is worth pointing out that the results in Figure 3 do not exactly match some of the tables in this report when we report figures by decade of arrival for the immigrant population in 2014. For example, in Table 1 we show 5.2 million immigrants living in the country who arrived in 2010 or later. Yet, Figure 3 indicates that 5.58 million arrived 2010 to 2014. The difference reflects return migration and deaths among those who arrived 2010 to 2014. The difference also reflects sampling variability for both sets of numbers.<sup>10</sup>

**Mortality Among the Foreign-Born.** By definition, no one born in the United States is foreign-born and so births cannot add to the immigrant population. Moreover, each year some immigrants die and others return home. There is some debate

about the size of out-migration, but together deaths and return-migration should equal about 1.5 percent of the immigrant population annually, or roughly 600,000 a year. (Note that this estimate of deaths and out-migration applies to the entire foreign-born population, not just new arrivals.) For the foreign-born population to grow, new immigration must exceed deaths and outmigration.

It is possible to estimate deaths and outmigration based on the ACS data. Given the age, gender, race, and ethnic composition of the foreign-born population, the death rate over the last decade should be about seven per 1,000. (These figures include only individuals living in the United States and captured by the ACS, not any deaths that occur among illegal immigrants trying to cross the border illegally.) This means that the number of deaths 2010 to 2014 was 1.15 million, or an average of 288,000 deaths per year.

**Net Immigration.** Figure 3 shows that new immigration was 5.58 million from 2010 to 2014. However, these figures are for all of 2010 while the growth figures (2.44 million) are from July 1, 2010, to July 1, 2014. Excluding one-half of the new arrivals in 2010 so that arrivals correspond to the growth figures means new immigration from July to July equaled five million. Out-migration can be estimated using the following formula: outmigration = new arrivals – (growth + deaths). Plugging in the numbers we get the following: 1.41 million = 5 million – (2.44 million + 1.15 million). This implies 1.41 million immigrants left the United States during the four years from 2010 to 2014, or about 350,000 annually. Demographers often use the term “net immigration” to describe the difference between new arrivals and those leaving. Based on the above calculations, net immigration was 3.59 million from 2010 to 2014. To estimate net immigration, we subtract new arrivals (five million) from emigration (1.41 million) for net immigration of 3.59 million since 2010. It should be noted that emigration occurs among the entire immigrant population, not just among new arrivals. In fact, most of those leaving the country 2010 to 2014 arrived years earlier.

There are several caveats about these numbers. First, the estimates are for a four-year period and outmigration may have varied from year to year. Second, there is no adjustment for undercount in these numbers, which is not trivial among new arrivals. Third, this approach assumes that growth in the foreign-born population can only be caused by those who report that they are new entrants. In fact, growth can be caused by immigrants returning to the United States after spending time outside of the country. It is not clear what year these returning immigrants will report when asked by the Census Bureau what year they “came to live in the United States”.<sup>11</sup> Despite these possible sources of error, the level of out-migration and net immigration reported above provides a reasonable estimate of the flow of people into and out of our country.

## State Numbers

**State Data.** Table 1 shows the number of immigrants in each state and the share that is immigrant in 2014. California, Texas, New York, Florida, New Jersey, Illinois, Massachusetts, Virginia, Georgia, Washington, Arizona, Maryland, and Pennsylvania have the largest immigrant populations. Each of these states had more than 800,000 foreign-born residents in 2014. California has the largest immigrant population, accounting for one-fourth of the national total. New York and Texas are next with over 10 percent of the nation’s immigrants. With 9 percent of the nation’s immigrants, Florida’s foreign-born population is similar in size. New Jersey and Illinois are next with 5 and 4 percent of the nation’s immigrants, respectively. Table 1 shows that the immigrant population is concentrated in relatively few states. Six states account for 64 percent of the nation’s foreign-born population, but only 40 percent of the nation’s overall population.

Table 1 also reports year of arrival for the foreign-born population in each state in 2014. In 2014, there were 5.2 million immigrants who indicated they had arrived in the United States in 2010 or later. As already discussed, the actual number of new arrivals 2010 to 2014 was higher, but some who came in this period went home or died over this time.

Table 1 shows that the average immigrant has lived in the United States for almost 21 years.<sup>12</sup> Thus the immigrant population in the United States is comprised mostly of long-time residents. This is important: As will become clear in this report, immigrants have much higher rates of poverty, uninsurance, and welfare use and lower incomes and rates of home ownership. However, the economic status of the immigrant population is not because they are mostly new arrivals.

Looking at the immigrant share of each state’s population shows that in general many of the states with the largest immigrant populations are also those with the highest foreign-born shares. However, several smaller states such as Hawaii and Nevada rank high in terms of the percentage of their populations that is foreign-born, even though the overall number of immigrants



**Table 1. State Immigrant Population 2014 by Year of Arrival (thousands)**

State	Immigrant Share of Population	Total Immigrant Population	Year of Arrival <sup>1</sup>				Average Length of Residence in the U.S. (years) <sup>2</sup>
			2010-2014	2000-2009	1990-1999	Pre-1990	
California	27.1%	10,512	908	2,553	2,592	4,460	20.8
New York	22.6%	4,465	537	1,188	1,139	1,601	21.4
New Jersey	21.9%	1,961	238	580	487	655	20.9
Florida	20.0%	3,974	514	1,128	901	1,430	21.4
Nevada	19.4%	552	49	158	140	205	21.7
Hawaii	17.6%	250	28	69	54	99	22.7
Texas	16.8%	4,522	578	1,383	1,175	1,386	19.6
Massachusetts	15.7%	1,060	176	307	237	340	19.8
Maryland	14.9%	890	128	298	211	254	18.7
D.C.	14.0%	92	20	33	16	24	16.7
Illinois	13.9%	1,784	179	468	509	628	22.0
Connecticut	13.7%	492	70	146	113	163	20.7
Arizona	13.7%	920	107	250	237	326	21.5
Rhode Island	13.4%	141	20	34	31	56	22.2
Washington	13.4%	945	140	283	246	275	19.4
Virginia	12.1%	1,006	148	336	242	279	17.9
Colorado	10.0%	538	65	168	154	151	19.7
Oregon	9.9%	394	52	107	110	124	20.6
New Mexico	9.9%	206	17	62	50	76	22.2
Georgia	9.9%	995	120	345	281	248	18.1
Delaware	8.6%	80	12	28	16	24	19.7
Utah	8.5%	250	33	82	72	63	18.3
Minnesota	7.8%	428	73	144	111	100	16.8
North Carolina	7.7%	764	99	290	216	158	17.1
Alaska	7.4%	55	6	18	12	19	19.6
Kansas	7.0%	204	33	68	57	46	17.8
Nebraska	6.7%	125	23	44	33	25	16.3
Pennsylvania	6.4%	822	144	259	179	240	19.3
Michigan	6.4%	637	112	172	148	205	20.5
New Hampshire	6.0%	80	12	23	16	29	23.1
Idaho	6.0%	97	11	29	25	32	20.0
Oklahoma	5.8%	227	38	80	54	55	17.2
Iowa	4.9%	153	41	42	37	33	15.7
Tennessee	4.9%	321	53	127	72	69	16.9
Wisconsin	4.9%	280	42	89	68	81	20.3
Indiana	4.8%	320	55	116	76	72	17.6
South Carolina	4.7%	229	38	77	55	59	18.5
Arkansas	4.7%	140	19	50	36	34	17.3
Louisiana	4.2%	194	39	65	34	55	18.3
Ohio	4.2%	482	97	152	93	140	19.6
Vermont	4.1%	26	5	7	5	9	20.6
Wyoming	3.8%	22	3	8	5	6	19.3
Maine	3.7%	50	11	11	7	20	24.5
Missouri	3.7%	225	39	72	58	56	18.0
Kentucky	3.7%	162	32	68	35	27	15.5
North Dakota	3.3%	24	6	9	5	4	12.7
Alabama	3.2%	157	22	61	37	37	18.6
South Dakota	2.9%	25	6	9	4	5	14.8
Montana	2.3%	24	4	6	4	10	25.5
Mississippi	2.2%	65	11	23	14	18	19.2
West Virginia	1.4%	25	6	6	4	9	21.0
Nation	13.3%	42,392	5,221	12,131	10,517	14,522	20.8

**Source:** 2014 ACS from American FactFinder at Census.gov.

<sup>1</sup> Based on when immigrants in 2014 indicated they came to the United States.

<sup>2</sup> Average length of residence from 2014 public use file of the ACS.

is more modest relative to larger states. Table A.1 in the appendix at the end of this report shows the immigrant share of each state's population from 1980 to 2014. Table A.2 in the appendix shows citizenship rates and the number of persons in immigrant households by state.

In addition to total numbers, Table 1 shows the immigrant populations by state based on their year of arrival, grouped by decade. Table 2 reports the size of state immigrant populations in 2014, 2010, 2000, and 1990. While the immigrant population remains concentrated, it has become less so over time. In 1990, California accounted for 33 percent of the foreign-born, but by 2000 it was 28 percent and by 2014 it was 25 percent of the total. If we look at the top six states of immigrant settlement, they accounted for 73 percent of the total foreign-born in 1990, 68 percent in 2000, and 64 percent in 2014.

Table 2 also shows there were nine states (10 if we count the District of Columbia) where the growth in the immigrant population was more than twice the national average of 6 percent over the last four years. These states were North Dakota (45 percent), Wyoming (42 percent), Montana (19 percent), Kentucky (15 percent), New Hampshire (14 percent), Minnesota and West Virginia (both 13 percent), and Louisiana and Utah (both 12 percent). It is worth noting that the growth rate in California, the state with the largest immigrant population growth, was about 4 percent, lower than the national average. Table 2 makes clear that the nation's immigrant population has grown very dramatically outside of traditional areas of immigrant settlement like California.

## Immigrants by Country of Birth

Tables 3, 4, and 5 report immigrant figures in 2014 by region and country of birth and the year they came to the United States.<sup>13</sup> Table 3 shows regions of the world by year of arrival, with Mexico and Canada reported separately.<sup>14</sup> Latin America accounts for almost 52 percent of immigrants overall. In terms of the number of post-2010 immigrants, 37 percent of those who came 2010 to 2014 are from Latin America (Mexico, Central America, South America and the Caribbean). Table 4 reports the top immigrant-sending countries in 2014. In terms of sending the most immigrants 2010 to 2014, Mexico, India, China, the Philippines, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Vietnam were the top countries.

Table 4 also reports the number of immigrants from each country who arrived in 2010 or later. Thus, the table reads as follows: 5.9 percent of Mexican immigrants in 2014 indicated in the survey that they arrived in 2010 or later. For immigrants from Saudi Arabia, 72 percent arrived in 2010 or later. Countries such as Nepal (43 percent), Iraq (41 percent), Burma (35 percent), and Spain (30 percent) had higher percentages of recent arrivals. In contrast, for countries like Poland and Laos, few are recent arrivals. Table 5 shows the top sending countries in 2014 and those same countries in 2010, 2000, and 1990. Table 5 shows that, among the top sending countries, those with the largest percentage increase in their immigrant populations in the United States from 2010 to 2014 were Saudi Arabia (93 percent), Bangladesh (37 percent), Iraq (36 percent), Egypt (25 percent), and Pakistan, India, and Ethiopia (all 24 percent). This compares to an overall growth rate of 6 percent during the time period.

## Population Growth

The ACS can be used to provide insight into the impact of immigration on the size of the U.S. population. Table 6 reports six different methods using the 2014 ACS to estimate the effect of immigration on U.S. population growth since 2010. The first column in the table shows that between July 2010 and July 2014, the U.S. population grew by 9.5 million people. The first three rows of Table 6 use the number of immigrants who arrived in the United States in the last four years, and are still in the country, to estimate the impact of immigration on U.S. population growth. In 2014, there were 5.2 million immigrants who indicated that they had entered the country in 2010 or later. That is, they came to the country in this time period and have not left the country.<sup>15</sup>

Because arrival numbers from the ACS are for January 1, 2010, to July 2014, we adjusted new arrivals by subtracting half of those who arrived in 2010 from this total so that new arrivals from mid-2010 to mid-2014 total 4.7 million and comport with the period of time that is measured by population growth figures. Of course, immigrants do not just add to the population by their presence in the United States.

Based on the 2014 ACS, there were 3.6 million births to immigrants in the United States over the last four years.<sup>16</sup> The top of Table 6 adds the 4.7 million new arrivals to the 3.6 million births for a total of 8.3 million additions to the U.S. population from immigration. This equals 87.4 percent of U.S. population growth from July 2010 to July 2014. Not all births during the

**Table 2. Number and Growth of Immigrant Population, 1990-2014  
(thousands; ranked by percent growth 2010-2014)**

State	2014	2010	2000	1990	Percent Growth 1990-2014	Percent Growth 2000-2014	Percent Growth 2010-2014
North Dakota	24	17	12	9	157%	99%	45%
Wyoming	22	16	11	8	194%	101%	42%
D.C.	92	72	45	22	313%	105%	28%
Montana	24	20	16	14	73%	46%	19%
Kentucky	162	141	80	34	375%	102%	15%
New Hampshire	80	70	54	41	93%	47%	14%
Minnesota	428	378	260	113	279%	64%	13%
West Virginia	25	23	19	16	62%	31%	13%
Louisiana	194	173	116	87	122%	68%	12%
Utah	250	223	159	59	326%	58%	12%
Nebraska	125	112	75	28	345%	68%	12%
Idaho	97	87	64	29	237%	52%	12%
Pennsylvania	822	739	508	369	122%	62%	11%
Tennessee	321	289	159	59	443%	102%	11%
Alaska	55	49	37	25	120%	47%	11%
Maryland	890	804	518	313	184%	72%	11%
South Dakota	25	22	13	8	219%	82%	11%
Virginia	1,006	911	570	312	223%	76%	10%
Iowa	153	139	91	43	254%	68%	10%
Wisconsin	280	255	194	122	130%	45%	10%
Oklahoma	227	206	132	65	246%	72%	10%
Kansas	204	187	135	63	225%	52%	9%
Texas	4,522	4,142	2,900	1,524	197%	56%	9%
Maine	50	46	37	36	37%	35%	9%
Florida	3,974	3,658	2,671	1,663	139%	49%	9%
Nevada	552	508	317	105	426%	74%	9%
Michigan	637	588	524	355	79%	22%	8%
Colorado	538	497	370	142	278%	46%	8%
Massachusetts	1,060	984	773	574	85%	37%	8%
Arizona	920	857	656	278	231%	40%	7%
Washington	945	886	614	322	193%	54%	7%
Arkansas	140	132	74	25	463%	90%	6%
New Jersey	1,961	1,845	1,476	967	103%	33%	6%
Indiana	320	301	187	94	239%	71%	6%
North Carolina	764	719	430	115	564%	78%	6%
Mississippi	65	61	40	20	220%	63%	6%
Georgia	995	943	577	173	475%	72%	5%
Rhode Island	141	134	119	95	49%	18%	5%
Oregon	394	376	290	139	183%	36%	5%
South Carolina	229	218	116	50	357%	97%	5%
New York	4,465	4,298	3,868	2,852	57%	15%	4%
California	10,512	10,150	8,864	6,459	63%	19%	4%
Ohio	482	470	339	260	86%	42%	3%
Illinois	1,784	1,760	1,529	952	87%	17%	1%
Connecticut	492	487	370	279	76%	33%	1%
Hawaii	250	248	212	163	54%	18%	1%
New Mexico	206	205	150	81	155%	37%	0%
Delaware	80	82	74	59	36%	9%	-2%
Missouri	225	233	151	84	169%	49%	-3%
Alabama	157	169	88	44	261%	79%	-7%
Vermont	26	28	23	18	46%	10%	-7%
Nation	42,392	39,956	31,108	19,767	114%	36%	6%

**Source:** 1990 and 2000 decennial censuses and 2010 and 2014 ACS from American FactFinder at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).

**Table 3. Region by Year of Arrival (thousands)**

Region	Total	2010-2014	2000-2009	1990-1999	Pre-1990
All Latin America	21,829	1,901	6,679	5,900	7,349
Mexico	11,710	691	3,611	3,531	3,877
Caribbean	4,004	503	990	902	1,609
Central America	3,287	360	1,147	789	991
South America	2,828	347	931	677	872
East Asia	8,177	1,190	2,038	1,843	3,106
South Asia	3,040	720	1,059	671	589
Europe	4,868	495	984	1,147	2,242
Middle East	1,698	400	455	330	512
Africa	1,586	335	639	356	256
Canada	794	102	148	157	387
Australia, Oceania, Elsewhere	244	48	80	51	64
Total	42,236	5,192	12,083	10,455	14,506

**Source:** 2014 ACS. See end note 13 for explanation of why totals do not exactly match Tables 1, 2, and 5.

Regions are defined in end note 14.

decade to immigrants where to those who arrived 2010 to 2014. Method 2 reports that of the 3.6 million births during the decade, just 206,258 were to immigrants who arrived during the time period. (Not surprisingly, most births were to immigrants who arrived before 2010.) If we add those born to new arrivals to the number of new entrants, we get 4.9 million additions to the U.S. population, or 51.6 percent of population growth.

The lower part of Table 6 uses net immigration instead of new arrivals to estimate the impact of immigration on population growth. As discussed in the section on deaths and outmigration, our rough estimate is that net immigration from 2010 to 2014 was 3.6 million. This is the difference in the number arriving and the number leaving. If we add net immigration to total immigrant births during the decade it equals 7.2 million, or 75.7 percent of population growth, as shown in Method 4. Method 5 uses net immigration and the number of births to new immigrants for a total addition of 3.8 million, which equals 39.9 percent of population growth. Net immigration by itself equals 37.7 percent of population growth, as shown in Method 6.

It may be worth noting that growth in the immigrant population of roughly 2.4 million (see Figure 1) is not an accurate way of assessing the impact of immigration policy on population size because it includes deaths that are not a function of policy and are not connected with new arrivals.<sup>17</sup> Table 6 makes clear that whether new immigration or net immigration is used to estimate the impact, immigration policy has very significant implications for U.S. population growth.

The same data used in Table 6 not only provides an estimate of immigration’s impact on population growth, it has other uses as well. For example, if we wished to allow the current level of immigration, but still wished to stabilize the U.S. population by reducing native fertility, we can roughly estimate what it would take based on the table. In 2014, there were about 15.4 million children living in the country who were born to natives 2010 to 2014. As shown above, immigration added 8.3 million to the U.S. population. To offset these additions, it would have required 8.3 million fewer births to natives, or roughly a reduction in native fertility of about half. Since the native-born population already has slightly below replacement level fertility, to advocate a one-half reduction in their fertility to accommodate immigration seems impractical in the extreme.

## Characteristics

**Educational Attainment.** Table 7 reports the education level of immigrants and natives. The top of the table reports figures for all persons ages 25 to 65. Based on the 2014 ACS, about 28 percent of immigrants 25 to 65 have not completed high school, compared to 8 percent of natives. This difference in the educational attainment of immigrants and natives has enormous implications for the social and economic integration of immigrants into American society. There is no single better predictor of economic success in modern America than one’s education level. As we will see, the fact that so many adult immigrants have little education means their income, poverty rates, welfare use, and other measures of economic attainment lag well behind natives.

**Table 4. Country by Year of Arrival and Citizenship in 2014 (thousands)**

Birthplace	Total	2010-2014	2000-2009	1990-1999	Pre-1990	Average Years in the U.S.	Citizenship Rate
Mexico	11,710	691	3,611	3,531	3,877	21.0	26.7%
China/HK/Taiwan	2,505	502	682	578	743	18.0	56.4%
India	2,182	504	764	473	440	14.8	46.9%
Philippines	1,923	200	531	436	756	21.4	69.0%
El Salvador	1,323	130	433	336	424	18.9	30.9%
Vietnam	1,298	135	244	394	525	21.8	75.5%
Cuba	1,176	176	303	212	485	24.0	57.3%
Korea	1,082	119	262	202	499	22.2	61.4%
Dominican Republic	996	144	261	258	333	19.9	52.4%
Guatemala	909	106	381	211	211	16.5	26.3%
United Kingdom	801	92	138	140	430	29.1	52.0%
Canada	794	102	148	157	387	29.2	46.9%
Jamaica	711	67	155	154	335	23.4	65.5%
Colombia	697	76	215	168	238	20.5	57.8%
Haiti	617	83	179	148	208	19.4	55.9%
Germany	584	52	67	70	395	38.6	64.3%
Honduras	569	95	229	146	99	14.9	22.4%
Russia <sup>1</sup>	442	46	143	182	72	17.7	74.5%
Peru	442	42	155	115	130	19.3	51.3%
Poland	432	15	90	138	188	26.7	69.3%
Ecuador	419	41	132	119	127	20.3	45.3%
Pakistan	365	58	121	104	83	16.4	64.4%
Iran	364	44	84	60	175	22.5	75.2%
Italy	355	26	33	22	275	40.9	70.2%
Japan	337	76	64	56	141	23.5	35.2%
Brazil	331	66	130	80	56	14.9	37.3%
Ukraine	329	32	95	143	60	18.5	70.9%
Guyana	273	20	66	61	125	22.5	73.5%
Nigeria	262	55	92	61	55	14.9	57.7%
Thailand	250	36	64	53	97	20.2	56.1%
Nicaragua	247	13	54	50	129	23.2	54.8%
Venezuela	228	50	88	49	40	14.7	43.2%
Ethiopia	213	51	91	43	27	12.1	56.2%
Trinidad and Tobago	213	12	39	59	103	25.0	64.9%
Iraq	211	86	61	30	34	11.8	40.1%
Bangladesh	210	54	76	54	26	12.6	54.1%
Laos	198	7	20	32	139	27.3	74.9%
Argentina	183	22	60	33	68	22.8	51.3%
Egypt/United Arab Rep.	167	34	47	38	47	18.3	61.7%
France	162	36	32	28	66	24.7	50.0%
Cambodia (Kampuchea)	162	11	31	20	100	24.4	75.7%
Romania	151	12	44	46	48	21.4	74.4%
Portugal	149	7	12	17	114	34.7	68.2%
Ghana	149	30	65	33	22	13.5	51.3%
Greece	136	6	7	10	112	39.6	80.5%
Israel/Palestine	131	21	31	22	57	22.6	63.9%
Burma (Myanmar)	129	45	54	12	19	10.6	33.2%
Kenya	128	24	66	20	18	12.8	45.5%
Lebanon	122	10	29	22	60	24.0	77.6%
Nepal	114	49	49	12	4	7.5	24.9%
Bosnia	113	4	32	72	5	16.1	70.6%
Turkey	112	21	38	21	31	17.7	52.5%
Panama	109	4	18	20	67	30.5	70.1%
Spain	100	30	16	13	40	21.5	40.0%
Indonesia	96	14	31	21	30	20.1	44.3%
Chile	93	9	22	20	42	23.6	49.4%
Saudi Arabia	90	65	15	7	3	5.3	14.5%
South Africa	89	15	24	28	23	18.0	54.6%
Netherlands	82	13	9	11	49	33.7	56.4%
Liberia	81	9	37	22	14	15.2	51.0%
Total	42,236	5,192	12,083	10,455	14,506	20.8	47.3%

**Source:** Population totals and arrival data are based on the 2014 ACS from American Factfinder at Census.gov. Length of time in the United States and citizenship rates are from 2014 public use ACS. See end note 13 for explanation of why totals do not exactly match Tables 1, 2, and 5.

<sup>1</sup> Includes those who indicated “USSR” and “USSR not specified”.

**Table 5. Immigrants in the United States by Selected Countries, 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2014 (thousands)**

Birthplace	2014	2010	2000	1990	Growth 2010-2014	Pct. Growth 2010-2014
Mexico	11,714	11,711	9,177	4,298	3	0%
China/HK/Taiwan	2,520	2,167	1,519	921	353	16%
India	2,206	1,780	1,023	450	426	24%
El Salvador	1,315	1,214	817	465	101	8%
Vietnam	1,292	1,241	988	543	51	4%
Cuba	1,173	1,105	873	737	68	6%
Korea	1,080	1,100	864	568	(21)	-2%
Dominican Republic	998	879	688	348	119	13%
Guatemala	916	831	481	226	85	10%
Canada	806	807	829	745	(1)	0%
Colombia	707	637	510	286	70	11%
Jamaica	706	660	554	334	46	7%
United Kingdom	679	670	678	640	9	1%
Honduras	588	523	283	109	66	13%
Germany	583	605	707	712	(22)	-4%
Peru	449	429	278	144	20	5%
Poland	424	476	467	388	(51)	-11%
Ecuador	424	443	299	143	(20)	-4%
Russia	391	383	340	N/A	8	2%
Pakistan	371	300	223	92	72	24%
Iran	365	357	283	211	9	2%
Brazil	336	340	212	82	(4)	-1%
Nigeria	264	219	135	55	45	21%
Iraq	217	160	90	45	57	36%
Venezuela	216	184	107	42	32	17%
Ethiopia	215	174	70	35	41	24%
Bangladesh	210	154	95	21	56	37%
Egypt	173	138	113	66	35	25%
Ghana	150	125	66	21	26	21%
Israel	133	128	110	86	5	4%
Lebanon	119	121	106	86	(2)	-1%
Saudi Arabia	87	45	21	13	42	93%
Total	42,391	39,956	31,108	19,767	2,435	6%

**Source:** Figures for 1990 and 2000 are from the decennial census; figures for 2010 and 2014 are based on the ACS found at American FactFinder at Census.gov.

Table 7 also shows that a slightly larger share of natives has a bachelor's degree than immigrants, and the share with a post-graduate degree is almost identical for the two groups. Historically, immigrants enjoyed a significant advantage in terms of having at least a college education. In 1970, for example, 18 percent of immigrants had at least a college degree, compared to 12 percent of natives.<sup>18</sup> This advantage at the top end has now entirely disappeared.

The middle of the Table 7 reports education level only for adults in the labor force.<sup>19</sup> The figures are not entirely the same because those who are in the labor force age (18 and older) differ somewhat from the entire population (ages 25 to 65) in their educational attainment. For example, the least-educated natives in particular are much less likely to be in the labor force — working or looking for work. The right side of the table reports figures for those immigrants who arrived in 2010 or later. More recently arrived immigrants are significantly more educated than immigrants overall, with 40 percent of new arrivals having at least a college degree. However, it is still the case that new immigrants are about three times as likely to lack a high school education as natives. The increase in the education of new immigrants almost certainly reflects at least in part the decline of illegal immigration. Whether this large increase in immigrant skills is a temporary or permanent change is unknown.



**Table 6. The Impact of Immigration on U.S. Population Growth, 2010 to 2014**

Six Methods for Calculating Immigration's Impact on Population Growth	U.S. Pop. Growth, 2010-2014 <sup>1</sup>	New Arrivals, 2010-2014 <sup>2</sup>	Births to Immigrants 2010-2014	Addition to Pop. from Immigration	Immigration's Share of Total U.S. Pop. Growth
<b>Calculating Population Increase Based on Number of New Arrivals</b>					
1. New arrivals plus births to all immigrants <sup>3</sup>	9,507,367	4,700,604	3,608,476	8,309,080	87.4%
2. New arrivals plus births to new arrivals only <sup>4</sup>	9,507,367	4,700,604	206,258	4,906,862	51.6%
3. New arrivals only	9,507,367	4,700,604		4,700,604	49.4%
<b>Calculating Population Increase Based on Net Immigration</b>					
4. Net immigration plus births to all immigrants <sup>3</sup>	9,507,367	3,588,807	3,608,476	7,197,283	75.7%
5. Net immigration plus births to new arrivals only <sup>4</sup>	9,507,367	3,588,807	206,258	3,795,065	39.9%
6. Net immigration only <sup>5</sup>	9,507,367	3,588,807		3,588,807	37.7%

<sup>1</sup> Population growth 2010 to 2014 comes from American Factfinder's ACS totals and reflects the increase from July 1, 2010, to July 1, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> New arrivals are adjusted to reflect arrivals from mid-2010 to mid-2014 so that the period aligns with the population.

<sup>3</sup> Births are to all immigrants from mid-2010 to mid-2014

<sup>4</sup> Births are only to immigrants who arrived between 2010 and 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Net immigration is the difference between the number arriving vs. the number leaving the country. See section of this report entitled "Net Immigration".

Overall, 16.8 percent of workers are immigrants and this is somewhat higher than their 13.3 percent share of the total U.S. population because, in comparison to natives, a slightly larger percentage of immigrants are of working age. The large number of immigrants with low levels of education means that immigration policy has dramatically increased the supply of workers with less than a high school degree, while increasing other educational categories more moderately. This is important because it is an indication of which American workers face the most job competition from foreign workers.

While immigrants comprise 16.8 percent of the adult total workforce, they comprise almost half (47.6 percent) of adults in the labor force who have not completed high school. Figure 4 shows how recently arrived immigrants have increased the supply of different types of workers. It reports the number of immigrants who arrived in 2000 or later divided by the total number of workers in each educational category (immigrant and native). Thus, the figure shows that post-2000 immigrants have increased the supply of dropout workers by 21 percent, compared to 4 to 8 percent in other educational categories. This means that any effect immigration may have on the wages or job opportunities of natives will disproportionately affect the least educated native-born workers.

**Income and Wages.** In this report we show figures for both earnings and income. Earnings are income from work, while income can be from any source, such as working, investments, or rental property. Given the large proportion of immigrants with few years of schooling, it is not surprising that the income figures reported at the bottom of Table 7 show that, as a group, immigrants have lower median earnings than natives.<sup>20</sup> (Earnings from the CPS are based on annual income from work in the calendar year prior to the survey.) The annual median earnings of immigrants who work full-time and year-round are only about 81 percent those of natives. And for the most recent immigrants, median earnings are 76 percent those of natives. Another way to think about immigrants and natives in the labor market is to examine the share of immigrants and natives who work for low wages. In 2015, 14.7 percent of immigrants were in this bottom wage decile, compared to 9.2 percent of natives. If we examine the weekly wages for the poorest fifth of the labor market, 29.4 percent of immigrants fall into the bottom quintile, compared to 18 percent of native-born full time year round workers.

**Household Income.** Another way to think about the relative position of immigrants compared to natives is to look at household income. The bottom of Table 7 reports that the median household income of immigrant-headed households is \$49,561, which is 91 percent that of the household income of natives — \$54,695. In addition to having lower incomes, immigrant households are 30 percent larger on average than native households — 3.09 persons vs. 2.38 persons. As a result, the per capita household median income of immigrants is only 70 percent that of natives — \$16,025 vs. \$22,941. This is important not only as a measure of their relative socio-economic standing, but also because it has fiscal implications. Lower household

**Table 7. Selected Characteristics of Immigrants and Natives**

Education Levels	All Persons Ages 25 to 65		
	Natives	All Immigrants	Arrived after 2010 <sup>1</sup>
Less than HS	8.0%	28.2%	19.0%
HS Only	27.2%	22.6%	19.9%
Some College	32.9%	19.5%	15.3%
Bachelor's or More	31.9%	29.6%	45.7%
Bachelor's	20.6%	17.2%	26.2%
Graduate or Professional	11.3%	12.3%	19.5%
	Those in Labor Force(18+) <sup>2</sup>		
Less than HS	6.0%	25.4%	19.9%
HS Only	26.2%	23.0%	22.1%
Some College	35.3%	21.3%	17.9%
Bachelor's or More	32.5%	30.3%	40.1%
Bachelor's	21.0%	17.4%	22.8%
Graduate or Professional	11.5%	12.9%	17.3%
	Other Characteristics		
Median Annual Earnings <sup>3</sup>	\$46,172	\$37,182	\$35,129
Share in Poorest Wage Decile (Bottom 10%) <sup>3</sup>	9.2%	14.7%	21.5%
Share in Poorest Wage Quintile (Bottom 20%) <sup>3</sup>	18.0%	29.4%	37.4%
Median Household Income <sup>4</sup>	\$54,695	\$49,561	\$41,132
Average Household Size <sup>4</sup>	2.4	3.1	2.8
Median Income Divided by Avg. Household Size	\$22,941	\$16,025	\$14,638
Median Age	35	43	28
Share under 18	26%	6%	20%
Share 18-65	61%	81%	76%
Share over 65	13%	13%	4%
Total Fertility Rate <sup>5</sup>	1.78	2.2	2.44

**Source:** Education, age, and fertility data comes from the 2014 public-use file of the ACS. All other figures are from the 2015 public-use file of the CPS ASEC.

<sup>1</sup> Figures are for individuals who indicated that they came to the United States in 2010 or later.

<sup>2</sup> Figures are for individuals 18 and older who are in the labor force.

<sup>3</sup> Median earnings are for those employed full-time and full-year. Quintile and decile figures are for average weekly wages in 2014 for adults who indicated that they were employed full-time and full-year (50-52 weeks).

<sup>4</sup> Immigrant and native households based on nativity of household head. Income is from all sources.

<sup>5</sup> The Total Fertility Rate is the number of children a women can be expected to have in her lifetime given current patterns.

income means that in general immigrant households are likely to pay somewhat less in taxes than native households. This is especially true for progressive taxes, such as state and federal income taxes, which take into account income and the number of dependents. Larger household size also means that, in general, immigrant households will use somewhat more in services than native households. Since households are the primary basis on which taxes are assessed and public benefits distributed in the United States, the lower income and larger size of immigrant households has implications for public coffers.

**Age of Immigrants.** The bottom of Table 7 shows that in 2014 the median age of an immigrant was 43, compared to a median of 35 for natives. The median overall age in the United States was 37. The fact that immigrants have a higher median age is a reminder that although immigrants may arrive relatively young, they age over time like everyone else. The bottom of Table 7 also shows that 13 percent of both immigrants and natives are over age 65. This, too, is a reminder that immigrants age. The idea that immigration is a solution to an aging society is largely misplaced partly because of the simple fact that immigrants age over time.

Those who argue that immigration will fundamentally change the age structure generally have in mind new arrivals. In 2014, the median age of an immigrant who arrived in 2010 or later was 28, compared to 35 for natives. Looking at the newest arrivals, those who came in 2013 or the first half of 2014, had a median age of 27. This confirms the common belief that immigrants are younger than natives at arrival, but the difference with natives is not enormous. The presence of these new immigrants has little impact on the age structure. If, for example, the 5.2 million immigrants who arrived in 2010 or later are removed from the data, the median age in the United States would still be 37 years.

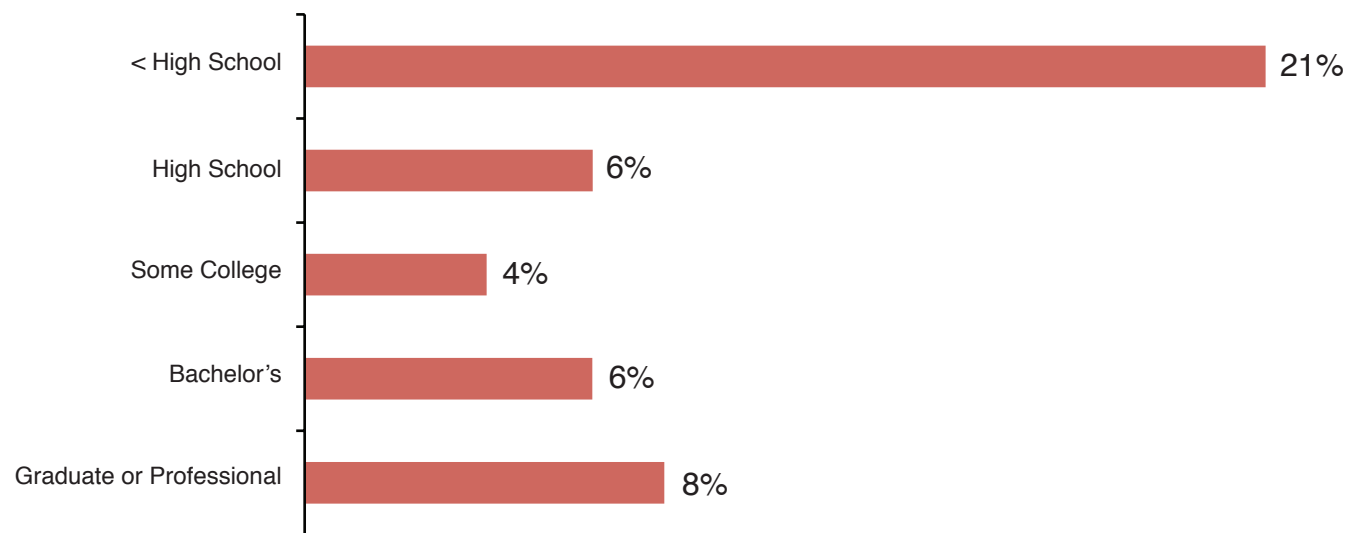
But four years of immigration is not very long and the above analysis does not include children born to immigrants. If we remove from the 2014 ACS the 17.3 million immigrants who arrived since 2000 plus their 3.9 million native-born children, the median age in the United States would be 38 years.<sup>21</sup> Again this compares to 37 years when post 2000 immigrants and their children are included. This means that the full impact of post-2000 immigration on the median age in the United States was to reduce it by only one year.<sup>22</sup> However, median age is probably not the best way to think about this question.

The main concern with an aging society is that there will not be enough people of working age to pay for government or support the economy. We can estimate the overall impact of immigration on the age structure by looking at the share of the population that is of working-age (16 to 65) using the 2014 ACS. In 2014, 66.2 percent of the total population was 16 to 65. If all 17.3 million immigrants in 2014 who indicated that they arrived in 2000 or later are removed from the data, 65.1 percent of the population would be of working age. If we remove post-2000 immigrants plus their 3.9 million native-born children, 66 percent of the U.S. population would be of working age. Again, this compares to 66.2 percent when these immigrants and their children are included. Clearly, the impact of immigration on the share of the population that is of working age is quite small. Immigration adds to the working-age population, but it also adds to the population too old or too young to work.

The modest size of the impact on aging is especially apparent when we consider that post-2000 immigration plus births to these new immigrants added some 21.2 million new people to the U.S. population. Even immigration and births to immigrants of this scale only has a small impact on changing the nation's age structure.

One of the reasons immigration will also have a modest impact on aging going forward is shown at the bottom of Table 7. Immigrant fertility is not that much higher than that of natives. The total fertility rate (TFR) of immigrant women in 2014 was 2.2 children, compared to 1.78 for natives. TFR is a measure of fertility used by demographers to measure the number of children a woman can be expected to have in her lifetime given current patterns.<sup>23</sup> The ACS asks all women in their child-bearing years if they had a child in the last year, so it is a straightforward matter to calculate fertility using the survey.

Figure 4. Pct. of Each Educational Category Comprised of Post-2000 Immigrants



Source: 2015 public-use file of the CPS ASEC. Figures are for employed persons 18 and older who indicated in the survey they arrived in 2000 or later.

The total fertility rate in the United States (immigrant and native) is 1.85. Without immigrants the rate would be the TFR for natives of 1.78. Thus, the presences of immigrants raises the TFR of the country by .08 — about 4 percent.<sup>24</sup> While immigrants do tend to arrive relatively young and have somewhat higher fertility rates than natives, immigrants age just like everyone else, and the differences with natives are not large enough to fundamentally alter the nation’s age structure. Demographers, the people who study human populations, have long known this is the case.

In an important 1992 article in *Demography*, the leading academic journal in the field, economist Carl Schmertmann explained that, mathematically, “constant inflows of immigrants, even at relatively young ages, do not necessarily rejuvenate low-fertility populations. In fact, immigration may even contribute to population aging.”<sup>25</sup> The Census Bureau also concluded in projections done in 2000 that immigration is a “highly inefficient” means for increasing the percentage of the population that is of working-age in the long run.<sup>26</sup> In a paper presented at the annual meeting of the Population Association of America in 2012 by myself and several co-authors, we also showed that immigration has only a small impact on aging, but a large impact on the size of the U.S. population.<sup>27</sup> There is a clear consensus among demographers that immigration has a positive but small impact on the aging of society like ours. A simple analysis of the ACS data confirms this conclusion.

**Labor Force Attachment.** Table 8 shows the share of immigrant and native-born men and women holding a job or in the labor force based on the March 2015 CPS. Those in the labor force have a job or are looking for a job.<sup>28</sup> The top of the table reports figures for persons 18 to 65 and the lower portion of the table provides the same figures for those in the primary working years of 25 to 55 — when rates of employment tend to be the highest. The table shows that immigrants and natives (18 to 65) overall have virtually identical rates of employment and labor force participation. However, male immigrants have higher rates of employment and labor force participation than native-born men, while female immigrants have lower rates than their native-born counterparts.

For those in the prime working years of 25 to 55, Table 8 shows that the overall rates of native employment and labor force participation are somewhat higher than for immigrants. But male immigrants 25 to 55 are still more likely to work or be looking for work than native-born men. In contrast, native-born women in the primary employment years are much more likely to work than are foreign-born women. As is discussed throughout this report, immigrants’ income, health insurance coverage, home ownership, and other measures of socio-economic status lag well behind those of natives. But Table 8 shows that these problems are not caused by immigrants being unwilling to work. Immigrant men in particular have a strong attachment to the labor market.

**Table 8. Labor Force Attachment of Immigrants and Natives**

	Ages 18-65	
	Holding a Job	In Labor Force <sup>1</sup>
<b>All Immigrants</b>	69.5%	73.2%
Hispanic	69.4%	73.8%
<b>All Natives</b>	69.5%	73.7%
White	72.0%	75.4%
Black	60.8%	67.9%
Hispanic	65.9%	71.7%
<b>Immigrant Men</b>	81.9%	86.2%
Hispanic Men	84.8%	89.7%
<b>Native Men</b>	72.9%	77.9%
White Men	76.0%	80.1%
Black Men	60.1%	68.3%
Hispanic Men	70.0%	76.7%
<b>Immigrant Women</b>	57.2%	60.4%
Hispanic Women	52.5%	56.5%
<b>Native Women</b>	66.2%	69.7%
White Women	68.0%	70.6%
Black Women	61.3%	67.6%
Hispanic Women	62.1%	66.9%

	Ages 25-55	
	Holding a Job	In Labor Force <sup>1</sup>
<b>All Immigrants</b>	73.6%	77.1%
Hispanic	72.8%	77.0%
<b>All Natives</b>	76.8%	80.8%
White	78.8%	82.0%
Black	68.8%	75.9%
Hispanic	74.2%	79.2%
<b>Immigrant Men</b>	87.4%	91.2%
Hispanic Men	89.0%	93.3%
<b>Native Men</b>	81.1%	85.7%
White Men	83.6%	87.5%
Black Men	68.9%	76.7%
Hispanic Men	79.2%	84.9%
<b>Immigrant Women</b>	60.0%	63.2%
Hispanic Women	54.9%	59.1%
<b>Native Women</b>	72.7%	76.0%
White Women	74.1%	76.5%
Black Women	68.7%	75.3%
Hispanic Women	69.4%	73.8%

**Source:** 2015 public-use file of the CPS ASEC.

<sup>1</sup> Those in the labor force are either holding a job or looking for a job.

**Occupational Distribution.** Table 9 shows the occupational concentration of immigrants and natives. The major occupational categories are shown in bold and ranked based on immigrant share, shown in the first column. The numbers in the second and third columns show natives and immigrants in each occupation (whether working or looking for work in the occupation). The table shows several important facts about U.S. immigration. First, there are millions of native-born Americans employed in occupations that have high concentrations of immigrants. While immigrants certainly are concentrated in particular occupations, it is simply not correct to say that immigrants only do jobs natives don't want. There are more than 25 million native-born Americans in the occupational categories of farming/fishing/forestry, building cleaning/maintenance, construction, production, and food service and preparation. A second interesting findings in Table 9 is that in these top immigrant occupations unemployment for natives averaged almost 10.2 percent in 2014, compared to 6.0 percent nationally.

It is hard to argue that there are no Americans willing to work in these high-immigrant professions. Perhaps the native-born workers are not where employers want, or there is some other reason businesses find these unemployed natives unacceptable, but on its face Table 9 indicates that there are quite a lot of Americans willing to work at jobs that are often thought to be high-immigrant occupations.

A third interesting finding in Table 9 is the enormous variation in the immigrant share of different occupations. Less than 7 percent of lawyers are foreign-born. Only about 5 percent of reporters working for English-language media outlets are immigrants, as are fewer than 6 percent of farmers and ranchers. In contrast, roughly half of maids and a third of butchers and construction laborers are foreign-born. This uneven distribution across occupations means that some Americans face a good deal more competition from immigrant workers, while others face very little. This distribution not only has economic implications, but also may help to explain the politics of immigration. Reporters and lawyers are important opinion leaders in our society, and they face relatively little competition from immigrants.

It would be a mistake to think that every job taken by an immigrant is a job lost by a native. Many factors impact labor market outcomes. But, it would also be a mistake to assume that dramatically increasing the number of workers in these occupations as a result of immigration policy has no impact on the wages or employment prospects of natives.

## Poverty, Welfare, and the Uninsured

**Poverty Among Immigrants and Natives.** The first column in Table 10 reports the poverty rate for immigrants by country and the second column shows the figures when their U.S.-born children under age 18 are included with their immigrant parents.<sup>29</sup> Based on the March 2015 CPS, 18.5 percent of immigrants, compared to 13.5 percent of natives, lived in poverty in 2014.<sup>30</sup> (Poverty statistics from the CPS are based on annual income in the calendar year prior to the survey and reflect family size.) The higher incidence of poverty among immigrants as a group has increased the overall size of the population living in poverty. In 2014, 16.7 percent of those in poverty in the country were immigrants.

In some reports, the U.S.-born children of immigrants are counted with natives. But it makes more sense to include these children with their immigrant parents because the poverty rate of minor children reflects their parents' income. Overall, in the United States there are 59 million immigrants and U.S.-born children (under 18) with either an immigrant father or mother. In the analysis of poverty and insurance coverage in this report we focus on the 56.4 million immigrants and their children (under 18) with an immigrant father. Those with an immigrant mother and a native-born father are counted with natives. In this way, we avoid overstating the impact of immigration. It should be noted that if those with only an immigrant mother are added to the poverty totals for immigrants and their children it would add slightly to poverty associated with immigrants.

The second column in Table 10 includes the U.S.-born children (under 18) of immigrant fathers. Table 10 shows that the poverty rate for immigrants and their U.S.-born children was 20.7 percent, compared to the 13.5 percent for natives and their young children. (The figures for natives exclude the U.S.-born minor children of immigrant fathers.)

The data by country and region indicate that there is an enormous variation in poverty rates among immigrants from different countries.<sup>31</sup> For example, the 29.5 percent of Mexican immigrants and their U.S.-born children living in poverty is many times the rate associated with immigrants from countries such as India and the Philippines.

Of the 46.7 million people in the United States living in poverty in 2014 (based on the 2015 data), 11.7 million or 25 percent are immigrants or the U.S.-born children (under 18) of immigrant fathers. Among persons under age 18 living in poverty, 30



Table 9. Occupational Distribution of Immigrants and Natives (thousands)

Birthplace	Immigrant Share	Natives <sup>1</sup>	Immigrants <sup>1</sup>	Total	Native Unemployment Rate	Number of Natives Unemployed <sup>1</sup>	Number of Immigrants Who Arrived 2005-2014 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Farming, Fishing, and Forestry</b>	45.6%	667	560	1,227	11.5%	77	146
Farm workers non-supervisors	50.7%	470	484	954	11.8%	55	133
<b>Building/Cleaning and Maintenance</b>	33.8%	4,347	2,217	6,565	11.0%	477	453
Maids and housekeeping cleaners	49.3%	889	863	1,752	11.7%	104	182
Janitors and building cleaners	26.6%	2,071	750	2,821	9.1%	189	154
Grounds maintenance workers	33.5%	1,010	509	1,519	16.4%	166	104
<b>Construction</b>	26.9%	5,821	2,139	7,960	10.9%	633	450
Construction laborers	34.7%	1,289	684	1,973	15.3%	198	155
<b>Computer and Mathematical</b>	23.9%	3,245	1,017	4,262	3.1%	102	354
Computer programmers/developers	25.6%	342	117	459	3.5%	12	37
<b>Production</b>	22.3%	7,379	2,120	9,498	7.2%	532	403
Butchers, meat/poultry/fish processing	32.7%	188	91	280	8.8%	17	28
<b>Food Preparation and Serving</b>	21.5%	7,524	2,056	9,579	10.5%	793	569
Cooks	29.0%	1,860	760	2,620	12.5%	232	185
Waiter/waitress	16.3%	2,036	396	2,432	10.1%	206	124
<b>Life, Physical, and Social Science</b>	21.1%	1,052	282	1,334	3.3%	35	95
<b>Personal Care and Service</b>	20.5%	4,708	1,212	5,921	7.6%	358	278
Barbers and hairdressers	16.9%	855	174	1,030	3.8%	33	30
<b>Healthcare Support</b>	19.1%	3,031	717	3,747	6.0%	181	155
Home health aids	23.0%	1,702	508	2,210	7.1%	120	122
<b>Transportation and Material Moving</b>	18.8%	8,296	1,918	10,214	8.8%	728	376
Taxi drivers and chauffeurs	46.7%	214	188	402	6.7%	14	35
<b>Architecture and Engineering</b>	18.7%	2,244	517	2,760	3.0%	67	119
<b>Healthcare Practitioners and Technical</b>	15.0%	7,532	1,326	8,858	2.2%	162	206
Physicians and surgeons	27.1%	633	235	868	0.6%	4	39
Nurses	15.1%	2,739	487	3,227	1.6%	43	77
<b>Financial Specialists</b>	14.4%	2,912	491	3,404	3.0%	87	82
<b>Installation, Maintenance, and Repair</b>	14.2%	4,243	701	4,944	5.0%	212	111
<b>Sales and Related Occupations</b>	13.2%	14,858	2,254	17,111	7.1%	1,060	476
Cashiers	15.0%	3,237	572	3,808	13.2%	428	176
<b>Management: Business/Science/Arts</b>	13.1%	13,387	2,022	15,409	3.0%	399	352
Chief executives	12.1%	1,052	144	1,196	2.0%	22	25
Farmers/ranchers	5.9%	554	35	589	1.8%	10	4
<b>Arts, Design, Entertainment, Media</b>	12.6%	2,720	390	3,110	6.5%	177	100
Reporters	14.4%	71	12	83	4.9%	4	5
Reporters (likely English-language) <sup>2</sup>	4.8%	66	3	70	4.9%	3	1
<b>Business Operations Specialists</b>	11.0%	3,473	431	3,905	3.7%	130	92
<b>Office and Administrative Support</b>	11.0%	18,275	2,251	20,526	6.2%	1,138	408
<b>Education, Training, and Library</b>	10.9%	8,228	1,004	9,232	3.1%	257	252
Teachers, preschool to high school	7.4%	4,881	389	5,270	2.2%	109	60
<b>Extraction</b>	10.4%	245	29	273	6.1%	15	6
<b>Community and Social Services</b>	9.7%	2,344	251	2,595	3.1%	73	43
Social workers	9.4%	760	79	839	2.9%	22	9
<b>Legal Occupations</b>	7.9%	1,591	136	1,727	2.6%	41	24
Lawyers	6.9%	1,039	77	1,116	1.6%	17	15
<b>Protective Service Occupations</b>	7.6%	3,212	266	3,478	4.5%	145	46
<b>Total Civilian Labor Force</b>	16.7%	131,334	26,307	157,641	6.0%	7,879	5,596
<b>Public Sector Employees</b>	9.9%	19,505	2,153	21,658	2.9%	573	342
<b>Private Sector Employees</b>	17.8%	111,829	24,154	135,983	6.5%	7,306	5,253

Source: Public-use file of the 2014 ACS.

<sup>1</sup> Figures are for persons 16-plus in the labor force — working, or looking for work. Analysis does not include those who are unemployed, but do not provide an former occupation.

<sup>2</sup> Speaks only English at home, making it likely that they work at an English-language media outlet.



**Table 10. Poverty and Near Poverty**

Country	Poverty		In or Near Poverty <sup>1</sup>	
	Immigrants	Immigrants & their U.S.-Born Children <sup>2</sup>	Immigrants	Immigrants & their U.S.-Born Children <sup>2</sup>
Guatemala	27.7%	33.3%	58.1%	63.8%
Honduras	27.4%	32.2%	66.0%	70.6%
Mexico	24.7%	29.5%	57.1%	62.4%
Brazil	22.6%	18.3%	35.7%	33.8%
Dominican Republic	22.4%	22.2%	55.6%	57.0%
Cuba	22.4%	22.1%	50.0%	50.1%
El Salvador	20.5%	23.5%	49.3%	54.1%
Ukraine	19.7%	19.0%	32.6%	32.2%
Iran	18.9%	17.3%	33.9%	30.3%
Pakistan	18.8%	17.5%	39.7%	42.2%
China	18.1%	17.4%	38.3%	37.5%
Russia	15.2%	14.8%	32.4%	33.0%
Poland	14.6%	13.0%	33.5%	32.6%
Haiti	14.1%	12.6%	38.3%	38.2%
Colombia	12.9%	12.3%	34.5%	35.9%
Peru	12.7%	15.7%	33.6%	36.0%
Vietnam	12.1%	12.4%	34.2%	34.7%
Korea	10.8%	11.3%	25.5%	26.3%
United Kingdom	10.1%	8.5%	22.0%	20.9%
Jamaica	9.9%	10.2%	30.0%	32.3%
Canada	9.8%	9.5%	22.4%	20.3%
Ecuador	9.3%	10.9%	41.1%	45.7%
Japan	9.0%	7.6%	22.9%	22.5%
India	7.9%	7.1%	17.0%	16.1%
Philippines	6.2%	6.2%	17.8%	18.2%
Germany	5.8%	6.2%	23.8%	23.6%
Middle East	27.4%	26.8%	47.0%	46.9%
Mexico	24.7%	29.5%	57.1%	62.4%
Central America	23.5%	27.4%	54.0%	58.8%
Sub-Saharan Africa	22.5%	24.1%	43.8%	45.3%
Caribbean	18.5%	18.0%	44.7%	45.1%
East Asia	13.0%	13.3%	30.7%	31.6%
South America	12.8%	12.9%	33.6%	35.7%
Europe	11.2%	10.6%	26.1%	25.3%
South Asia	10.2%	9.4%	21.6%	21.4%
All Immigrants	18.5%	20.7%	41.9%	45.2%
Hispanic	23.0%	27.0%	53.9%	58.7%
Black	18.8%	19.6%	40.2%	41.1%
Asian	12.5%	12.4%	28.5%	28.8%
White	15.1%	14.8%	30.9%	31.2%
	<b>Poverty</b>		<b>In or Near Poverty<sup>1</sup></b>	
All Natives <sup>3</sup>	13.5%		30.8%	
Hispanic	20.2%		44.5%	
Black	27.0%		50.1%	
Asian	9.4%		23.4%	
White	9.8%		24.9%	
Children of Immigrants (<18)	27.4%		55.2%	
Children of Natives (<18)	19.0%		39.0%	
All Persons	14.8%		33.4%	

**Source:** Public-use file of the 2015 CPS ASEC.

<sup>1</sup> Defined as under 200% of the poverty threshold.

<sup>2</sup> Includes U.S.-born children under age 18 of immigrant fathers.

<sup>3</sup> Excludes U.S.-born children under age 18 of immigrant fathers.

Figures for blacks, Asians, and whites are for those who chose only one race. Hispanics can be of any race and are excluded from other categories.

Regions defined in end note 31.

percent are either immigrants or the young children of an immigrant fathers. Immigration policy has significantly added to the population in poverty in the United States.

**In or Near Poverty.** In addition to poverty, Table 10 also reports the percentage of immigrants and natives living in or near poverty, with near-poverty defined as income less than 200 percent of the poverty threshold. Examining those with incomes under 200 percent of poverty is an important measure of socio-economic status because those under this income generally do not pay federal or state income tax and typically qualify for a host of means-tested programs. As is the case with poverty, near-poverty is much more common among immigrants than natives. Table 10 shows that 41.9 percent of immigrants compared to 30.8 percent of natives live in or near poverty. (Like the figures for poverty, the figures for natives exclude the U.S.-born minor children of immigrant fathers.) If the U.S.-born children of immigrants are included with their immigrant parents, the immigrant rate is 45.2 percent. Among the young children of immigrants (under 18), 55.2 percent live in or near poverty, in contrast to 39 percent of the children of natives. In total, 25.5 million immigrants and their young children live in or near poverty. As a share of all persons in or near poverty, immigrants and their young children account for 24.2 percent.

**Without Health Insurance.** Table 11 reports the percentage of immigrants and natives who were uninsured for all of 2014. (The CPS asks about health insurance in the calendar year prior to the survey.) The table shows that lack of health insurance is a significant problem for immigrants from many different countries and regions. Overall, 21.4 percent of the foreign-born lack health insurance, compared to 8.8 percent of natives. (Like the figures for poverty, Table 11 excludes the U.S.-born minor children of immigrant fathers from the figures for natives.) Immigrants account for 27.3 percent of all uninsured persons in the United States. This compares to their 13.3 percent share of the total population in the 2015 CPS. If the young (under 18) U.S.-born children of immigrant fathers are included with their parents, the share without health insurance is 17.9 percent. The share of children who are uninsured is lower than for their parents mainly because the U.S.-born children of immigrants are eligible for Medicaid, the health insurance program for the poor. Thus, the inclusion of the U.S.-born children pulls down the rate of uninsured immigrants slightly. In total there are 10.1 million uninsured immigrants and their young U.S.-born children in the country, accounting for 30.6 percent of all persons without health insurance. This is dramatically higher than their 17.8 percent share of the total population.

The low rate of insurance coverage associated with immigrants is very much related to their much lower levels of education. Because of the limited value of their labor in an economy that increasingly demands educated workers, many immigrants hold jobs that do not offer health insurance, and their low incomes make it very difficult for them to purchase insurance on their own. A larger uninsured population cannot help but strain the resources of those who provide services to the uninsured already here. Moreover, those with insurance have to pay higher premiums as health care providers pass along some of the costs of treating the uninsured to paying customers. Taxpayers are also affected as federal, state, and local governments struggle to provide care to the growing ranks of the uninsured. There can be no doubt that by dramatically increasing the size of the uninsured population our immigration policy has wide ranging effects on the nation's health care system.

**Do Uninsured Immigrants Cost Less?** One study found that after controlling for such factors as education, age, and race, uninsured immigrants impose somewhat lower costs than uninsured natives. However, when the authors simply compared uninsured immigrants to uninsured natives the cost differences were not statistically significant. In other words, when using the actual traits that immigrants have, the costs that uninsured immigrants create were the same as uninsured natives.<sup>32</sup> It seems likely that uninsured immigrants do cost less than uninsured natives because the immigrants are more likely to be in younger age cohorts where use of health care is less. Of course even if the average uninsured immigrant costs less than the average uninsured native, the difference would have to be enormous to offset the fact that immigrants are almost 2.5 times more likely to be uninsured than native-born Americans.

**Immigration and Growth in the Uninsured.** Because of Medicaid expansion and direct and indirect subsidies under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the number of uninsured people has declined in recent years. While the costs and benefits of the ACA are not part of this analysis, we can say that prior to the act immigration played a very large role in the growth of the uninsured population. New immigrants and their U.S.-born children accounted for about two-thirds of the growth in the uninsured from 2000 to 2011.<sup>33</sup> Thus to a significant extent the growth in the uninsured in the United States, which was one of the primary arguments for the ACA, was driven by the nation's immigration policies.

**Uninsured or on Medicaid.** The 2015 CPS shows that 27.1 percent of immigrants and their U.S.-born children under 18 are on Medicaid, compared to 17.9 percent of natives and their children.<sup>34</sup> Thus, the large share of immigrants and their U.S.-born children who are uninsured is not due to their being unable to access Medicaid per se. Their use of Medicaid is actually

**Table 11. Share without Health Insurance**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Immigrants</b>	<b>Immigrants &amp; their U.S.-Born Children<sup>1</sup></b>
Honduras	45.3%	34.8%
Guatemala	43.3%	34.0%
El Salvador	37.1%	29.3%
Mexico	36.8%	27.4%
Ecuador	29.0%	26.3%
Brazil	28.3%	25.2%
Peru	20.6%	18.9%
Cuba	18.9%	17.1%
Colombia	17.3%	15.1%
Poland	17.0%	14.9%
Dominican Republic	15.8%	13.6%
Korea	15.8%	15.1%
Russia	14.2%	14.8%
Haiti	14.1%	12.2%
Jamaica	14.1%	11.7%
Pakistan	11.7%	9.4%
China	10.4%	9.7%
Vietnam	10.2%	9.5%
India	9.2%	8.2%
Iran	8.9%	7.9%
Ukraine	8.3%	7.6%
Philippines	7.9%	7.1%
United Kingdom	7.5%	7.0%
Canada	4.7%	4.3%
Japan	3.7%	4.5%
Germany	1.4%	2.5%
Central America	38.9%	30.6%
Mexico	36.8%	27.4%
South America	21.1%	19.0%
Caribbean	15.7%	13.6%
Sub-Saharan Africa	14.3%	11.5%
Middle East	11.9%	10.7%
East Asia	10.1%	9.2%
South Asia	9.7%	8.7%
Europe	9.3%	8.7%
Canada	4.7%	4.3%
All Immigrants	21.4%	17.9%
Hispanic	33.3%	26.0%
Black	14.1%	11.8%
Asian	10.2%	9.3%
White	10.4%	9.7%
All Natives <sup>2</sup>		8.8%
Hispanic		13.8%
Black		11.5%
Asian		8.4%
White		7.5%
Children of Immigrants (<18)		7.5%
Children of Natives (<18)		5.4%
All Persons		10.4%

**Source:** Public-use file of the 2015 CPS ASEC.

<sup>1</sup> Includes U.S.-born children under age 18 of immigrant fathers.

<sup>2</sup> Excludes U.S.-born children under age 18 of immigrant fathers.

Figures for blacks, Asians, and whites are for those who chose only one race. Hispanics can be of any race and are excluded from other categories.

Regions defined in end note 31.

higher than that of natives. It is true that unlike natives, illegal immigrants are not supposed to be enrolled in the program unless they are pregnant and most new legal immigrants are barred as well. Nonetheless, despite these prohibitions, more immigrants and their children use Medicaid than do natives and their children. One reason for this is that the overwhelming majority of legal immigrants have been in the country long enough to access the program.

Combining the uninsured and those on Medicaid together shows that 45 percent of immigrants and their young children (under 18) either have no insurance or have it provided to them through the Medicaid system, compared to 26.7 percent for natives and their children. These numbers are a clear indication of the enormous impact immigration has on publicly financed health care.

**Welfare Use.** As the Census Bureau does in many of its publications, we report welfare use based on whether the head of the household is immigrant or native.<sup>35</sup> With regard to immigrant households, this means we are mainly reporting welfare use for immigrants and their U.S.-born children who live with them and comparing them to natives and their children. Table 12 shows the percentage of immigrant- and native-headed households in which one or more members uses a welfare program(s). The definition of programs is as follows: cash assistance: Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), state-administered general assistance, and Supplemental Security Income (SSI), which is for low-income elderly and disabled persons; food assistance: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, informally known as food stamps), free and subsidized school lunch, and the Women, Infants, and Children nutrition program (WIC); housing assistance: subsidized and government-owned housing. The table also shows figures for Medicaid use, the health insurance program for those with low incomes.

Table 12 shows that use of food assistance is significantly higher for immigrant households than it is for native households — 27.3 percent vs. 15.9 percent. The same is also true for Medicaid, 33.6 percent of immigrant households have one or more persons using the program compared to 20.3 percent of native households. From the point of view of the cost to taxpayers, use of Medicaid by immigrants and their dependent children is the most problematic because that program costs more than the combined total for the other welfare programs listed.

Use of cash tends to be quite similar for immigrant and native households. Thus if by “welfare” one only means cash assistance programs, then the CPS ASEC shows immigrant use is roughly the same as natives. Of course, there is the question of whether native use of welfare is the proper yardstick by which to measure immigrants. If immigration is supposed to be a benefit, our admission criteria should, with the exception of refugees, select only those immigrants who are self-sufficient. Table 12 shows that welfare use, even of cash programs, is not at or near zero.

As was the case with lower income and higher poverty rates, the higher welfare use rates by immigrant households are at least partly explained by the large proportion of immigrants with few years of schooling. Less educated people tend to have lower incomes. Therefore, it is not surprising that immigrant household use of the welfare system is significantly higher than that of natives for some types of programs.

**Under-Reporting of Welfare Use.** While welfare use rates are quite high for many sending countries, there is general agreement that the CPS ASEC actually understates welfare use. We know this because the number of people who report in the survey that they are using particular programs is a good deal less than the number shown in administrative data. There is another Census Bureau survey called the Survey of Income and Program Participation specifically designed to capture welfare use and it does a significantly better job of reporting welfare use than any other Census survey, including the CPS ASEC. An extensive analysis comparing administrative data to eight different government surveys conducted for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) concluded that the “SIPP performs much better than other surveys in identifying program participants.”<sup>36</sup> Other research shows the same thing.<sup>37</sup> Unfortunately, the SIPP is not released on a timely basis like the CPS, nor does the public-use SIPP report individuals’ sending-countries.

In an extensive report done by the Center for Immigration Studies using the SIPP we found that in 2012 (the most recent SIPP available) 51.3 percent of immigrant households used one or more welfare programs, compared to 30.2 percent of native households. Data from the CPS ASEC for the same year showed 38.5 percent for immigrants and 24 percent for natives.<sup>38</sup> If we adjust up the overall welfare use rates from Table 12 to reflect the likely undercount based on the SIPP, it would imply that 56.6 percent of immigrants used one or more welfare programs as did 33.8 percent of natives. The programs listed in Table 12 cost the government well over \$700 billion annually and this is a reminder that immigration has important implications for public coffers.

**Table 12. Use of Means-Tested Programs by Household Head**

	Any Welfare	Cash	Food Assistance	Subsidized Housing	Medicaid	EITC Eligibility	ACTC Eligibility
Dominican Republic	70.1%	17.0%	48.6%	21.0%	55.6%	33.1%	22.5%
Honduras	61.1%	4.8%	45.2%	2.8%	53.0%	39.7%	31.9%
Mexico	60.3%	5.9%	44.1%	3.2%	49.3%	40.3%	33.0%
El Salvador	59.5%	6.4%	38.9%	4.5%	49.0%	41.2%	31.3%
Guatemala	56.8%	6.0%	42.0%	6.7%	45.0%	41.7%	30.6%
Ukraine	53.7%	26.1%	27.7%	18.6%	50.0%	6.8%	6.3%
Ecuador	50.6%	5.4%	42.2%	12.0%	32.5%	31.9%	19.3%
Peru	43.7%	2.6%	26.7%	7.4%	27.7%	21.6%	13.7%
Cuba	43.5%	8.1%	33.6%	6.4%	31.1%	18.6%	9.3%
Haiti	43.2%	5.7%	27.3%	7.2%	31.4%	23.9%	14.8%
Vietnam	42.0%	9.8%	21.5%	6.1%	34.6%	19.4%	11.1%
Jamaica	38.8%	5.3%	23.7%	6.1%	25.5%	16.8%	9.3%
Colombia	34.5%	1.0%	20.7%	5.4%	23.5%	20.4%	12.6%
Pakistan	34.1%	4.4%	22.2%	5.9%	28.7%	21.3%	19.3%
China	32.9%	5.4%	13.9%	7.3%	25.2%	14.4%	8.0%
Brazil	30.3%	1.2%	17.6%	0.0%	24.8%	20.6%	11.5%
Russia	29.9%	12.1%	16.1%	9.8%	24.9%	10.2%	8.0%
Iran	29.0%	11.5%	9.2%	6.0%	24.9%	7.4%	2.3%
Korea	27.6%	5.4%	9.0%	8.7%	23.4%	9.6%	5.7%
Poland	25.9%	4.4%	12.6%	5.4%	18.0%	10.7%	4.9%
Philippines	25.7%	4.5%	11.2%	3.3%	18.7%	9.8%	5.5%
United Kingdom	16.5%	0.0%	5.5%	5.5%	9.4%	7.1%	2.4%
India	15.9%	1.3%	6.0%	1.1%	11.8%	8.0%	4.9%
Canada	13.8%	2.0%	8.6%	3.9%	8.6%	6.3%	2.3%
Japan	13.4%	2.4%	6.3%	7.1%	4.7%	10.2%	3.1%
Germany	9.6%	2.5%	2.5%	2.1%	7.5%	2.1%	0.0%
Mexico	60.3%	5.9%	44.1%	3.2%	49.3%	40.3%	33.0%
Central America	54.7%	6.1%	38.0%	4.8%	44.7%	37.1%	27.8%
Caribbean	49.2%	9.3%	34.3%	10.5%	35.9%	22.3%	13.6%
Sub-Saharan Africa	46.3%	6.6%	30.6%	9.7%	36.1%	23.5%	17.6%
Middle East	42.5%	9.9%	22.9%	5.1%	36.2%	18.8%	13.3%
South America	35.8%	2.3%	23.6%	4.9%	24.7%	19.8%	12.3%
East/Southeast Asia	32.6%	6.4%	15.8%	5.9%	25.1%	14.1%	8.9%
Europe	24.0%	6.5%	10.5%	4.4%	19.9%	7.2%	4.1%
South Asia	20.9%	2.0%	9.7%	2.1%	16.5%	11.1%	6.9%
All Immigrants	42.4%	6.1%	27.3%	5.2%	33.6%	23.5%	17.2%
Hispanic	56.2%	6.4%	40.4%	5.0%	44.9%	35.8%	27.8%
Black	44.6%	6.2%	29.3%	8.2%	32.5%	21.3%	14.8%
Asian	29.7%	5.0%	14.0%	4.9%	22.8%	13.7%	8.6%
White	27.3%	6.7%	14.0%	4.2%	22.9%	10.3%	6.2%
All Natives	26.9%	6.1%	15.9%	4.6%	20.3%	10.9%	6.9%
Hispanic	45.6%	10.4%	31.7%	7.5%	35.6%	20.4%	15.2%
Black	47.0%	12.9%	32.3%	13.2%	34.2%	18.7%	11.5%
Asian	25.2%	4.2%	9.6%	3.2%	19.1%	8.9%	6.0%
White	21.0%	4.4%	11.2%	2.7%	16.1%	8.4%	5.2%
Imm. Households w/ Children	60.3%	4.9%	45.2%	3.9%	48.2%	39.6%	35.3%
Native Households w/Children	42.6%	6.7%	29.7%	5.1%	33.8%	23.8%	20.0%
Imm. Households w/ at Least 1 Worker	41.7%	4.0%	26.9%	3.3%	33.3%	26.8%	19.9%
Native Households w/ at Least 1 Worker	24.5%	3.6%	14.1%	2.7%	19.0%	13.2%	8.6%
Imm. Households w/ 65+ Year-Old Head	32.5%	12.1%	16.9%	10.9%	23.5%	2.8%	1.0%
Native Households w/ 65+ Year-Old Head	16.7%	4.7%	8.1%	4.5%	10.4%	0.9%	0.4%
Refugee-Sending Countries	44.5%	10.9%	27.7%	8.1%	36.4%	19.2%	12.5%
Non-Refugee-Sending Countries	42.1%	5.3%	27.2%	4.7%	33.2%	24.2%	18.0%

**Source:** Public-use file of the 2015 CPS ASEC. Figures for blacks, Asians, and whites are for those who chose only one race. Hispanics can be of any race(s) and are excluded from other categories. Welfare programs include: Cash: TANF, SSI, state general assistance; Food: food stamps (SNAP), free/reduced price school lunch, and WIC; Housing: subsidized and public housing. Regions defined in end note 31 and refugee countries are found in end note 40.



**Use of the EITC and ACTC.** In addition to welfare programs, Table 12 reports the share of households in which at least one worker is eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the refundable portion of the Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC).<sup>39</sup> Based primarily on income and number of dependents, the Census Bureau calculates eligibility for these programs and includes this information in the public-use CPS files. Workers receiving the EITC pay no federal income tax and instead receive cash assistance from the government based on their earnings and family size. The ACTC works in the same fashion, except that to receive it, one must have at least one dependent child. The IRS will process the EITC and ACTC automatically for persons who file a return and qualify. Even illegal aliens sometimes receive the EITC and ACTC. This is especially true of the ACTC because the IRS has determined that illegals are allowed to receive it, even if they do not have a valid Social Security number. To receive the EITC, one must have a valid Social Security number. With an annual cost of over \$40 billion for the EITC and \$35 billion for the ACTC, the two programs constitute the nation's largest means-tested cash programs for low-income workers.

Table 12 shows that 23.5 percent of immigrant-headed households have enough dependents and low enough income to qualify for the EITC and 17.2 percent have low enough incomes to receive the ACTC. This compares to 10.9 and 6.9 percent respectively for natives. As already stated, the figures for the EITC and ACTC probably overstate receipt of the programs for both immigrants and natives because they are imputed by the Census Bureau. This is in contrast to the welfare programs listed, which are based on self-reporting by survey respondents, though as already discussed welfare use is underreported in the CPS ASEC.

Given the low education level of so many immigrants it is not surprising that a large share work, but that their incomes are low enough to qualify for the EITC and ACTC. It important to understand that the high rate of EITC and ACTC eligibility does not reflect a lack of work on the part of immigrants. In fact, one must work to be eligible for them. Nor does the relatively high use of welfare programs reflect a lack of work on the part of immigrants. In 2014, 82.8 percent of immigrant households had at least one worker, compared to 74.3 percent of native households. Work in no way precludes welfare use and it is required to receive the EITC and ACTC. The high rate of welfare use by immigrant households should also not be seen as moral failing. Like all advanced industrial democracies, the United States has a well-developed welfare state. This fact coupled with an immigration system that admits large numbers of immigrants with modest levels of education and tolerates large-scale illegal immigration is what explains the figures in Table 12.

In short, many immigrants come to America to find a job and have children. Their low incomes mean that many are unable to support their own children and so turn to taxpayers to help support them. While that does not mean that immigrants come to American to get welfare, many immigrants do use these programs, creating large costs for taxpayers.

**Welfare Use by Country and Region.** Table 12 shows that immigrants from some countries have lower welfare use rates than natives while those from other countries have much higher use rates. Mexican, Honduran, and Dominican households have welfare use rates that are much higher than natives — even higher than for refugee-sending countries like Russia and Cuba. In fact, if one excludes the primary refugee-sending countries, as shown in the bottom portion of Table 12, the share of immigrant households using a welfare program remains virtually unchanged at 42.1 percent.<sup>40</sup> Refugees are simply not a large enough share of the foreign-born, nor are their rates high enough to explain the level of welfare use by immigrant households. Or put a different way, the relatively large share of immigrant households using welfare is not caused by refugees.

**Welfare for Households with Children.** The bottom of Table 12 makes a number of different comparisons between immigrant and native households. Households with children have among the highest welfare use rates. The share of immigrant households with children using at least one major welfare program is high — 60.3 percent. The share of native households with children using welfare is also very high. But the figures for immigrants do mean that a very large share of immigrants come to America and have children but are unable to support them. As a result, immigrant households with children make extensive use of food assistance and Medicaid. This raises the important question of whether it makes sense to allow the large-scale settlement of immigrants who are unable to support their own children.

**Welfare Use Among Working Households.** The bottom of Table 12 shows the share of households with at least one worker using welfare. The table shows that 41.7 percent of immigrant households with at least one working person still use the welfare system. This compares to 24.5 percent of native households with at least one worker. Most immigrant households have at least one person who worked in 2014. And as we have already seen, immigrant men in particular have high rates of work. But this in no way means they will not access the welfare system, particularly non-cash programs, because the system is designed to provide assistance to low-come workers with children and this describes a very large share of immigrant households.



Given their education levels, and relatively large family size, many immigrant households work and use the welfare system. In fact, of immigrant households using the welfare system, 82.8 percent had at least one worker during the year. For native households, it was 74.3 percent. All of this is a very important reminder that bringing less-educated workers to fill low-wage jobs rather than relying on the supply of less-educated workers already in the country can create very large costs for taxpayers.

## Entrepreneurship

**Self-Employment.** Table 13 examines the self-employment rates of immigrants and natives. The table shows that immigrants and natives exhibit remarkably similar levels of entrepreneurship, at least when measured by self-employment rates. The table shows that 11.4 percent of immigrants and 11.1 percent of natives are self employed. Some people argue that immigrants are more likely to start businesses than natives. If true, the self-employment rates indicate that their businesses may fail at higher rates so that in term of overall rates of entrepreneurship the rates of immigrants and natives are nearly identical. Entrepreneurship is neither lacking nor a distinguishing characteristic of the nation's immigrants. If one removed immigrants from the data, the overall rate of self-employment in the United States would be about the same. Of course, the table also shows that immigrants from some countries do have very high rates of self-employment, while others have very low rates.

The bottom of Table 13 reports the share of immigrants and natives who have a part-time business. That is, they report self-employment income, but do not indicate that this is their primary employment. Natives are slightly more likely than immigrants to be self-employed part-time — 1.7 percent vs. 1 percent. Overall, 12.8 percent of natives and 12.4 percent of immigrants are self-employed full- or part-time. Again, this is a tiny difference.

**Income and Company Size.** Turning to self-employment income, we see that the average self-employment income (revenue minus expenses) of immigrants is slightly higher than that of natives, though the average is quite low for both groups. It seems likely that operators of small business are very reluctant to provide the government with information about their business income and this at least partly explains the very low reported income for both groups in Table 13. The table also reports

**Table 13. Self-Employment Rate (persons)**

Iran	25.0%
Ukraine	23.0%
Germany	22.9%
Korea	21.8%
Poland	20.2%
Russia	19.0%
Pakistan	18.8%
Brazil	17.7%
Canada	15.8%
Cuba	14.0%
El Salvador	13.1%
United Kingdom	13.1%
Ecuador	12.6%
Honduras	12.1%
Dominican Republic	12.0%
Peru	12.0%
Colombia	11.9%
Guatemala	10.4%
Japan	10.0%
China	10.0%
India	9.9%
Vietnam	9.9%
Mexico	9.4%
Jamaica	6.9%
Philippines	5.6%
Haiti	5.3%
Middle East	19.2%
Europe	18.8%
South America	13.3%
Central America	11.6%
South Asia	10.8%
East/Southeast Asia	9.9%
Caribbean	9.7%
Mexico	9.4%
Sub-Saharan Africa	8.4%
All Immigrants	11.4%
Part-Time Self-Employed <sup>1</sup>	1.0%
All Immigrants Full- and Part-Time Self-Employed	12.4%
Hispanic	10.6%
Black	7.1%
Asian	10.2%
White	17.9%
Has >10 Employees	16.0%
Average Self-Employment Income	\$20,710
All Natives	11.1%
Part-Time Self-Employed <sup>1</sup>	1.7%
All Natives Full- and Part-Time Self-Employed	12.8%
Hispanic	6.9%
Black	5.4%
Asians	8.3%
White	12.5%
Has >10 Employees	19.1%
Average Self-Employment Income	\$20,224

**Source:** Public-use file of the 2015 CPS ASEC. Persons must be employed. Regions defined in end note 31. Black, Asian, and white are persons who chose only one race; Hispanics are of any race and are excluded from the other categories.

<sup>1</sup> Figures are for those who do not report they are self-employed, but who show self-employment income.

the share of entrepreneurs whose businesses have more than 10 employees. Self-employed natives are somewhat more likely to have larger business than self-employed immigrants — 19.1 percent vs. 16 percent. But this still means that the vast majority of immigrant and native business are small. Like self-employment rates and income, in general the CPS shows little difference in the number of employees for immigrant and native entrepreneurs.

## Households, Home Ownership, and Language

**Household Income.** Table 14 shows average and median household income. The average household income of immigrant households is only slightly lower than that of native households. Turning to median income, the table shows a larger difference, with immigrant households having income that is 10 percent below that of natives. The larger difference between median and mean is almost certainly due to income among immigrants being somewhat more skewed than native income, with a large share of immigrant households on the high and low income extremes. As discussed earlier in this report, Table 14 shows there is a large difference with natives in per-capita household income, whether it is calculated by dividing median or mean income by household size. Immigrant households are 30 percent larger than native households. Per-capita median household income for natives is \$6,916 (43 percent) higher than per-capita median immigrant household income. Per-capita mean household income for natives is \$7,178 (31 percent) higher than that of immigrants. Immigrant household income does not differ that much from native household income, but because the households are much larger on average, their per-capita income is much lower.

Table 14 also shows large differences in income for immigrants by country and sending region. Immigrants from Canada and South Asia have very high household incomes, while those from Mexico, Central America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Caribbean tend to have relatively low incomes. It is worth noting that while the average income of some immigrant groups, such as South Asians, is much higher than that of natives, the per-capita household income is closer to that of natives because many of these immigrant groups have larger households on average than natives.

### Overcrowded Households.

There are several possible measures of what constitutes an overcrowded household. The Department of Housing and Urban Development has compiled a detailed summary of the overcrowding literature and the various ways to measure it.<sup>41</sup> Most researchers define a household as overcrowded when there is more than one person per room. The analysis that follows uses this standard definition of dividing the number of rooms in the housing unit by the number of people who live there. The ACS records the number of rooms by asking respondents how many separate rooms are in their house or apartment, excluding bathrooms, porches, balconies, foyers, halls, or unfinished basements. Dividing the number of rooms in a household by the number of people living there determines if the household is overcrowded.

Overcrowding is a problem for several reasons. First, it can cre-

**Table 14. Household Income and Overcrowding**

	Median Income	Average Income	Average Size	Median Per-Capita Income	Average Per-Capita Income	Share Overcrowded <sup>1</sup>
Mexico	\$37,771	\$51,271	3.71	\$10,191	\$13,833	22.3%
Caribbean	\$40,658	\$59,355	2.68	\$15,152	\$22,120	7.5%
Central America	\$41,864	\$55,442	3.52	\$11,880	\$15,733	17.7%
Sub-Saharan Africa	\$46,003	\$69,321	3.14	\$14,660	\$22,091	9.8%
Middle East	\$47,217	\$74,973	2.91	\$16,209	\$25,738	9.3%
South America	\$51,697	\$68,801	2.81	\$18,425	\$24,520	7.3%
Europe	\$60,495	\$88,453	2.32	\$26,119	\$38,190	2.5%
Canada	\$63,811	\$96,559	2.20	\$28,954	\$43,812	1.2%
East/Southeast Asia	\$64,398	\$86,175	2.96	\$21,730	\$29,078	7.5%
South Asia	\$97,903	\$123,727	3.17	\$30,853	\$38,992	9.4%
All Immigrants	\$49,561	\$72,628	3.09	\$16,025	\$23,484	11.6%
Hispanic	\$39,732	\$53,506	3.45	\$11,526	\$15,522	18.1%
Black	\$48,232	\$66,612	2.92	\$16,491	\$22,775	8.9%
Asian	\$72,583	\$96,854	3.03	\$23,993	\$32,017	8.1%
White	\$57,382	\$86,366	2.48	\$23,095	\$34,760	3.6%
Natives	\$54,695	\$73,103	2.38	\$22,941	\$30,662	1.9%
Hispanic	\$47,168	\$61,622	2.89	\$16,324	\$21,327	6.6%
Black	\$34,070	\$49,651	2.31	\$14,765	\$21,517	2.8%
Asian	\$77,251	\$100,185	2.70	\$28,567	\$37,048	3.9%
White	\$60,321	\$82,256	2.33	\$25,866	\$35,273	1.2%

**Source:** Public-use file of the 2015 CPS ASEC.

Figures for blacks, Asians, and whites are for those who chose only one race. Hispanics can be of any race and are excluded from other categories. Regions are defined in end note 31.

<sup>1</sup> Overcrowding is defined as more than one person per room excluding bathrooms, porches, balconies, foyers, halls, or unfinished basements and comes from the public-use file of the ACS.

ate congestion, traffic, parking problems, and other issues for neighborhoods and communities. Second, it can strain social services because the local system of taxation is based on the assumption that households will have the appropriate number of residents. Third, like poverty it can be an indication of social deprivation.

The far right column in Table 14 shows the share of households that are overcrowded for households headed by immigrants and natives.<sup>42</sup> The 2014 ACS shows that 11.6 percent of immigrant-headed households are overcrowded, compared to 1.9 percent of native households. Because immigrant households are so much more likely to be overcrowded, they account for a very large share of such households. In 2014, immigrant-headed households accounted for 51 percent of overcrowded households, even though they are only 14.6 percent of all households. Table 14 shows that overcrowding varies significantly by sending region. Relatively few households headed by Canadians and Europeans are overcrowded. In contrast, it is quite common among immigrants from Mexico and Central America.

**Home Ownership.** Owning a home has long been an important part of the American dream. Table 15 reports home ownership for immigrant and native households and some of the characteristics of those households.<sup>43</sup> There is a very significant difference in home ownership rates between immigrants and natives. Overall, Table 15 shows that 50.8 percent of immigrant households are owner-occupied, compared to 65.3 percent of native-headed households. While it may seem that home ownership is a clear sign of belonging to the middle class, Table 15 shows that for immigrant households in particular this may not always be the case.

**Table 15. Home Ownership by Household Head Nativity**

	All Immigrants	Hispanic Immigrants	All Natives	Hispanic Natives
Share homeowners	50.8%	42.9%	65.3%	47.1%
Share of owner-occupied households overcrowded <sup>1</sup>	6.6%	11.8%	1.0%	4.1%
Share of owner-occupied households using at least one major welfare program	31.1%	46.7%	18.0%	32.7%
Share of owner-occupied households in or near poverty	29.5%	43.1%	22.5%	29.6%

**Source:** Home ownership and overcrowded figures are from the 2014 public-use file of the ACS. Welfare use and poverty are based on analysis of the March 2015 public-use CPS ASEC. See Table 12 for list of welfare programs.

<sup>1</sup> Overcrowding defined as more than one person per room excluding bathrooms, porches, balconies, foyers, halls, or unfinished basements and comes from the 2014 public-use file of the ACS.

Hispanics can be of any race.

The table shows that overcrowding is much more common among owner-occupied immigrant households, with 6.6 percent being overcrowded, compared to just 1 percent of owner-occupied native households. While 6.6 percent is not a large percentage, it does mean that roughly one out of 15 owner-occupied immigrant households is overcrowded, compared to one out of a hundred for native households. The table also shows that 31.1 percent of owner-occupied immigrant households used at least one major welfare program, compared to 18 percent of native households. A somewhat larger share of immigrant households also has low incomes, with 29.5 percent below 200 percent of poverty, compared to 22.5 percent of native homeowners. Thus it would be a mistake to think that home ownership is always associated with being part of the middle class.

Table 16 shows home ownership rates by country of birth. As with the other socio-demographic characteristics examined so far in this report, there is significant variation by country. For example, the home ownership rate for households headed by German immigrants (73.1 percent) is over three times that of Dominican immigrants (23.5 percent). Table 17 shows home ownership rates by region, race, and ethnicity. In addition to overall rates, Table 17 shows home ownership rates for households headed by immigrants who have been in the country for 20 years.<sup>44</sup> The table shows that immigrant households headed by these well-established immigrants have about the same rate of home ownership as immigrants over all. This does not mean that immigrant home ownership does not rise over time. In fact, as we will see later in this report, home ownership does increase significantly the longer immigrants live in the country. What it does mean is that the much lower rate of ownership for immigrants overall is not caused by a large number of new arrivals. Even immigrants who have been in the country for two decades still have substantially lower rates of home ownership than native-headed households.

**Language Ability.** Table 18 reports immigrants’ language ability by country. Table 19 shows the same information by region, race, and ethnicity. The 2014 ACS data on which the tables are based reports language skills for persons five years of age and older. The skill level is entirely based on the respondent’s own opinion of their language ability. The tables show that about half of all immigrants report that they speak only English or speak it very well and almost 30 percent report that they speak it not at all or not well. Like the other tables reporting socioeconomic status by country or region in this *Backgrounder*, Tables 18 and 19 show significant variation in language ability.

Not surprisingly, the vast majority of immigrants from English-speaking countries such as Guyana, the United Kingdom, and Jamaica report that they speak only English or speak it very well. In contrast, a near majority of immigrants from Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and El Salvador report that they speak English not at all or not well. There is a large body of research showing that language skills are a key determinant for immigrant earnings. The large share of immigrants from Latin America that have limited or no English language ability must play a significant role in the high rates of poverty, near poverty, lack of health insurance, and welfare use reported for these groups earlier in this report.

## Public Education

**Public Schools.** One the biggest impacts of immigration on the country is on its public schools. The American Community Survey (ACS) asks respondents if they are in school, and if the school is public or private, so it is possible to report statistics for students from immigrant and native households by the type of school they attend. The top of Table 20 shows the number of school-age children (five to 17) in school from immigrant and native households. The 2014 ACS shows that 21.6 percent of the nation’s five- to 17-year-olds live in immigrant-headed households.<sup>45</sup>

In the last few years, a good deal of attention has been focused on the dramatic increase in enrollment experienced by many school districts across the country. While it has been suggested that this increase is the result of the children of baby boomers reaching school age, the so called “baby boom echo,” it is clear from the ACS that immigration policy accounts for the dramatic increase in school enrollment. Table 20 shows that there are 11.6 million school-age children from immigrant households. Of these students, 16.4 percent are immigrants themselves. The children of immigrants account for such a large percentage of the school-age population because a higher proportion of immigrant women are in their childbearing years and immigrants tend to have somewhat larger families than natives.

Table 20 shows that children from native households are significantly more likely to be in private school than children from immigrant households. As a result, children from immigrant households are a slightly larger share of public school students than they are of the school-age population. The 10.9 million children from immigrant households in public schools are 22.5 percent of all students in public school.

Table 20 also shows the average number of public school students per household is dramatically larger for immigrant households. In 2014, there were 64 public school students for every 100 immigrant households, compared to 38 students per 100 native households. This means that the average number of public school students per immigrant household is about 70 percent larger than the number for native households. Of course, the dramatic increase in school enrollment caused by immigration may not strain public schools if tax revenue increases proportionately. However, as reported in Table 14, the median household income of immigrant households is about 10 percent less than the median household income of native households — \$49,561 compared to \$54,695. This almost certainly translates into lower average tax payments from immigrant households, as the household is the primary unit by which taxes are collected. The much larger number of students on average in immigrant households coupled with slightly lower income means that immigration is likely to create a fiscal strain for some public school districts in areas of large-scale immigrant settlement.

**Table 16. Home Ownership by Country of Birth of Household Head**

Country	Share Homeowners
Germany	73.1%
Canada	71.5%
United Kingdom	70.6%
Poland	68.9%
Vietnam	67.9%
Philippines	63.4%
Iran	57.2%
India	55.1%
China	54.8%
Pakistan	53.2%
Jamaica	53.1%
Cuba	52.8%
Korea	50.3%
Ukraine	49.2%
Colombia	48.3%
Japan	48.1%
Peru	48.1%
Russia	46.7%
Mexico	44.7%
Haiti	42.8%
Brazil	40.7%
El Salvador	40.4%
Ecuador	38.9%
Guatemala	28.7%
Honduras	26.4%
Dominican Republic	23.5%
All Immigrants	50.8%
Natives	65.3%

**Source:** Public-use file of the 2014 ACS. Rates based on nativity and country of birth of household head.



**Table 17. Home Ownership by Household Head**

	Share Homeowners	Households in the United States 20 Years That Are Homeowners	Share of Owner-Occupied Households Overcrowded <sup>1</sup>
Central America	36.2%	39.7%	9.8%
Sub-Saharan Africa	36.2%	46.9%	4.5%
Caribbean	43.8%	39.6%	4.3%
Mexico	44.7%	40.3%	15.0%
Middle East	47.4%	48.1%	4.0%
South America	47.4%	46.5%	4.4%
South Asia	53.0%	69.4%	4.4%
East/Southeast Asia	59.8%	63.6%	5.1%
Europe	65.6%	59.9%	1.3%
Canada	71.5%	69.8%	0.7%
All Immigrants	50.8%	49.6%	6.6%
Hispanic	42.9%	40.4%	11.8%
Black	41.0%	42.6%	4.9%
Asian	57.8%	65.3%	4.8%
White	62.9%	58.8%	1.7%
Natives	65.3%	n/a	1.0%
Hispanic	47.1%	n/a	4.1%
Black	41.6%	n/a	1.3%
Asian	55.9%	n/a	2.2%
White	71.5%	n/a	0.8%

**Source:** Public-use file of the 2014 ACS.

Regions are defined in end note 14.

<sup>1</sup> Overcrowding defined as more than one person per room excluding bathrooms, porches, balconies, foyers, halls, or unfinished basements

Figures for blacks, Asians, and whites are for those who chose only one race. Hispanics can be of any race and are excluded from other categories.

In 2014, those in the country in the country 20 years arrived in 1993, 1994, and 1995.

**Non-English Speakers.** Another potential challenge for schools created by immigration stems from the large share of public school students from immigrant households who speak a language other than English. The bottom of Table 20 shows that 8.3 million (76 percent) of students from immigrant households speak a language other than English at home. In addition, there are nearly 2.8 million students from native households that speak a language other than English in public primary and secondary schools. In total, 22.8 percent of students in public school in the United States speak a language other than English at home.

Speaking a language other than English at home does not mean the students struggle with English. Most of these students, it must be remembered, were born in the United States. However, providing appropriate language instruction for the millions of students for whom English is not their first language is a significant expense for many school districts. This fact, coupled with the much larger size of immigrant households and their lower average income, means that the arrival of large numbers of immigrant families will tend to strain the budgets of many school districts.

**Students in Poverty.** A significant share of public school students live in poverty. The bottom of Table 20 shows that 29 percent of students from immigrant households in public school are in poverty and they account for nearly 31 percent of those in poverty. Thus, immigration has significantly added to the population of students in poverty, creating significant challenges for schools that are often already struggling to educate the children of natives who live in poverty. Table 20 shows that immigration has added significantly to the number of students with special needs, both in terms of language and poverty. The addition of so many such students can strain the resources of many districts. As public funds are limited, the difficulties immigration can create for schools may make it harder for them to meet the needs of their students, many of whom also suffer from social disadvantages.

# Immigrant Progress Over Time

**Poverty and Income Over Time.** Both the ACS and CPS ask respondents when they came to the United States. Thus, it is possible to examine immigrants by year of arrival. Table 21 reports the progress of immigrants over time. The public-use CPS groups immigrants by multiple years of arrival in an effort to preserve anonymity. Table 21 reports year of arrival in the most detailed fashion possible using the public-use CPS data. The far left of Table 21 reports the length of time immigrants had been in the country in 2015. The next column reports the share in poverty, followed by the share in or near poverty, followed by the share without health insurance. The bottom of the table reports figures for all immigrants and natives.<sup>46</sup> Table 21 reads as follows: In 2015, 29.9 percent of immigrants who have lived in the country for fewer than four years had incomes below the poverty threshold. The table also shows that 50.3 percent of the newest immigrants were in or near poverty, defined as income below 200 percent of the official poverty threshold. Those with income above this amount can be seen as middle class, while those with incomes below this amount can be viewed as the low-income population. Poverty and near poverty are also good measures of economic progress because they include people in and out of the workforce. Another advantage of using poverty to measure progress is that it controls for the number of people in a family.

Table 18. Language Skills by Country

Country	English-Speaking Ability			Speaks Language other than English at Home
	Not Well or At All	Well	Only English or Very Well	
Guatemala	48.7%	21.7%	29.5%	93.0%
Honduras	48.6%	21.3%	30.1%	95.1%
Mexico	47.1%	21.9%	31.0%	96.2%
El Salvador	45.7%	22.9%	31.5%	94.4%
Cuba	43.1%	18.8%	38.1%	94.5%
Dominican Republic	42.6%	21.4%	36.0%	95.7%
Vietnam	39.4%	28.4%	32.2%	92.6%
Ecuador	39.0%	25.7%	35.4%	95.5%
China	37.4%	26.4%	36.2%	90.8%
Colombia	28.1%	24.9%	47.0%	93.3%
Peru	26.6%	26.2%	47.2%	94.1%
Korea	26.1%	26.9%	47.0%	82.1%
Ukraine	25.7%	27.6%	46.6%	90.7%
Haiti	21.8%	29.5%	48.7%	91.4%
Iran	19.4%	25.9%	54.7%	90.2%
Poland	18.6%	25.8%	55.6%	85.9%
Russia	18.3%	21.2%	60.5%	81.0%
Japan	17.5%	29.1%	53.4%	78.9%
Brazil	17.1%	25.0%	57.9%	90.2%
Pakistan	11.9%	23.2%	65.0%	91.6%
India	8.7%	17.8%	73.4%	89.2%
Philippines	7.0%	22.5%	70.5%	84.9%
Germany	1.3%	8.2%	90.5%	55.4%
Canada	1.2%	2.5%	96.3%	20.5%
UK	0.5%	1.1%	98.4%	10.9%
Jamaica	0.4%	1.1%	98.5%	7.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>28.7%</b>	<b>20.9%</b>	<b>50.4%</b>	<b>84.2%</b>

**Source:** Public-use file of the 2014 ACS. Figures for are persons five years of age and older.

Two key findings can be drawn from Table 21. First, immigrants make significant progress the longer they reside in the United States. The newly arrived have much higher rates of poverty and near poverty than natives, but the longer the immigrants have lived in the country, the lower their poverty or near poverty. The share without health insurance coverage also declines significantly with time. The second key finding is that, despite this progress, it takes immigrants a very long time to close the gap with natives because they start out so much poorer. For example, immigrants who have been in the country for 20-21 years still have a poverty rate that is 40 percent higher than that of natives. Their rate of being in or near poverty is 39 percent higher than that of natives.

The last column in Table 21 shows the average age of immigrants in 2015 based on how long they have lived in the country. The table shows that the poverty and near poverty rate of immigrants is similar to that of natives among those immigrants who have been in the country for 28-29 years. Because it takes immigrants so long to match the rates of natives, they tend to be much older than the average native-born Americans who have a similar rate of poverty or near poverty. Immigrants in the United States for 28 to 29 years are almost 51 years old on average, or 12 years older than the average native. Natives who are 51 years old have a rate of poverty of 10.5 percent, and their share in or near poverty is slightly under 23 percent. So although very long-time immigrant residents have poverty levels similar to natives overall, they are more likely to be poor than natives of the same age. This is important because it indicates that a much larger share of immigrants have low income during their adult lifetimes than natives.



The difference between immigrants and natives is also somewhat understated in Table 21 because there are no children included for immigrants who have been in the country for 18 or more years because of the natural aging that occurs. This is important because poverty is higher for children than for adults. If the U.S.-born children (under 18) of immigrants who live with their parents were included in Table 21 the poverty rates shown would be higher.

Table 21 provides important insight into how immigrants fare over time. However, it must be remembered that it is not known if today's new arrivals will follow a similar path. Table 21 only shows how immigrants are doing at one point in time. What we can say is that progress in terms of poverty and health insurance coverage was significant over time, yet this progress still leaves immigrants well behind natives, especially relative to natives of the same age.

**Welfare, Home Ownership, and Income Over Time.** Table 22 reports welfare and home ownership rates by year of entry for households headed by immigrants. The table also reports average total personal income for adults (18-plus) by year of arrival. Turning first to the share of immigrant households using at least one welfare program, the table indicates that the improvement over time in poverty rates and health insurance coverage shown in Table 21, does not apply to use of welfare. Welfare use is a problem for new arrivals, well established migrants, and those in the country for more than 20 years. Only immigrants that have been here for four to five decades have welfare rates that match natives.

Home ownership, on the other hand, rises significantly over time, though it takes immigrants a very long time to match the rates of natives. Households headed by immigrants that have been in the country for 34 to 35 years have home ownership rates that roughly match those of native-headed households — 65.9 percent. However, these households are headed by an immigrant who is 55 years old on average. Native households headed by a 55-year-old have a home ownership rate of 74 percent. Still, immigrant progress is significant over time and the overall rate of home ownership after a few years can be seen as high. On the other hand, home ownership in the United States is very common, partly as a result of direct and indirect government subsidies. Nearly two thirds of all households in the country are owner-occupied. Even among native households with incomes below the poverty line, 38 percent are still owner-occupied. Thus, high rates of home ownership are to be expected in America. This is especially true given the lax lending standards that became so pronounced in the last decade, which have been so criticized as contributing to a housing bubble and subsequent housing bust.

Turning to average total income for adults (18-plus), Table 22 indicates that immigrant incomes rise the longer they reside in the United States. But like the other socioeconomic measures examined, only immigrants who have been in the country for a very long time have incomes roughly similar to natives. The table indicates that in 2015 immigrants who had been in the country for 26-27 years had average incomes that roughly match those of adult natives. Immigrants who have been in the country for this long are on average 48 years old on average. Native income at age 48 averages \$52,612, or 26.6 percent higher than the income for immigrants in the country for 26-27 years. This is another indication that the lifetime income of the foreign-born is substantially lower than that of the native-born.

**Table 19. Language by Region, Race, and Nativity**

	English-Speaking Ability			Speaks Language other than English at Home
	Not Well or At All	Well	Only English or Very Well	
Mexico	47.1%	21.9%	31.0%	96.2%
Central America	43.7%	21.7%	34.6%	92.6%
Caribbean	27.0%	15.9%	57.2%	68.7%
East/Southeast Asia	25.4%	26.2%	48.4%	87.4%
South America	22.4%	22.4%	55.2%	84.2%
Middle East	17.8%	24.0%	58.2%	88.6%
South Asia	11.5%	20.4%	68.2%	90.1%
Europe	11.3%	16.3%	72.4%	66.5%
Sub-Saharan Africa	9.0%	17.1%	73.8%	75.5%
All Immigrants	28.7%	20.9%	50.4%	84.2%
Hispanic <sup>1</sup>	43.6%	22.0%	34.4%	95.2%
Black	8.5%	13.8%	77.7%	54.3%
Asian	21.5%	24.4%	54.1%	87.7%
White	12.0%	16.5%	71.5%	66.2%
All Natives	0.6%	1.2%	98.2%	17.1%
Hispanic <sup>1</sup>	3.4%	7.2%	89.4%	65.5%
Black	0.1%	0.3%	99.6%	9.8%
Asian	2.2%	5.8%	92.0%	53.7%
White	0.1%	0.3%	99.6%	7.9%

**Source:** Public-use file of the 2014 ACS. Figures for are persons five years of age and older.

Regions defined in end note 14.

<sup>1</sup> Figures for blacks, Asians, and whites are for those who chose only one race. Hispanics can be of any race and are excluded from other categories.

**Table 20. Students from Immigrant and Native Households in Primary and Secondary Schools**

	<b>Immigrant Households</b>	<b>Native Households</b>	<b>Total</b>
Number of school-age children (5 to 17)	11,601,195	42,058,611	53,659,806
Share of total school-age population (5 to 17)	21.6%	78.4%	N/A
Number of students in public school	10,932,453	37,633,314	48,565,767
Share of total public school enrollment	22.5%	77.5%	N/A
Number of students in private school	795,903	4,964,197	5,760,100
Share of students attending private school	6.8%	11.7%	10.6%
Average number of public school students per 100 households	64	38	41
Average household income	\$72,556	\$76,203	\$75,665
Number of public school students speaking a language other than English at home	8,322,059	2,745,651	11,067,710
Percentage of students speaking a language other than English at home	76.1%	7.3%	22.8%
Share of total foreign-language student population	75.2%	24.8%	n/a
Number of public school students in poverty <sup>1</sup>	3,197,748	7,300,205	10,497,953
Share of public school students in poverty <sup>1</sup>	29.3%	19.5%	21.7%
Share of total student population in poverty <sup>1</sup>	30.5%	69.5%	n/a

**Source:** Figures for school enrollment and language are from the 2014 public-file of the ACS. Income figures are from the 2015 public-use file of the CPS ASEC.

Figures for public school enrollment are for those ages five to 19 who report they are enrolled in a public elementary, middle, or high school. Figures do not include those in public pre-kindergarten programs.

<sup>1</sup> Poverty population excludes some public school students who are primarily in foster care.

**Language Skills Over Time.** Table 23 shows self-reported language skills based on the 2014 ACS. The ACS reports individual years of arrival, unlike the CPS, which groups year of arrival by multiple years. The table shows two-year groupings simply to make the table manageable. Table 23 shows significant improvement in language skills over time. Language skills, unlike other measures of progress, cannot be compared meaningfully to the native-born. Nevertheless, Table 23, provides reasons for both optimism and pessimism. On the one hand, immigrants report a clear and steady improvement in language skills over time. On the other hand, fewer than half of immigrants in the country for 25 to 26 years report that they speak only English or speak it very well. And more than one-fourth who have been in the country that long report that they do not speak English or, if they do speak it, they don't speak it well. Common sense and a large body of research indicate that knowing English is a key to improving one's life prospects. The large fraction of even long-time residents who report that they have not mastered English is troubling and contributes to the relatively low socioeconomic status of immigrants shown elsewhere in this report.

Figures 5 and 6 report socioeconomic statistics for immigrants who have been in the country for five or fewer years and those here for 20 years.<sup>47</sup> Figure 6 reports the same information, but for only Hispanic immigrants. Like Tables 21 and 22, Figure 5 indicates that even well established immigrants (those in the country 20 years) lag significantly behind natives. Figure 6 shows this is even more true for Hispanic immigrants. Even well established immigrants are dramatically poorer than natives and have much higher welfare use and much lower home ownership rates than natives.

**Progress Over Time by Age.** As we have seen, time spent in the United States and age are, quite naturally, highly correlated. Immigrants who have been in the country longer tend to be older on average. Therefore, one way to think about progress over time is to examine socioeconomic status by age. Table 24 reports the share of immigrants in or near poverty (under 200 percent of poverty threshold), the share of workers in the bottom fifth of the wage distribution, and average total income. (Unlike income, wage data is only for those who are employed full-time and year-round.) All figures for both immigrants and natives are for adults 18 and older.

Table 24 shows that immigrant adults never come close to matching the income of natives of the same age, with the exception of average income for those 18 to 24. Figure 7 shows average income by age. Both Table 24 and Figure 7 support the general observation that the lifetime income or wages of immigrants are substantially below those of natives, even though the immigrants do make progress over time as they age. Table 25 further reinforces this observation. It shows the average income and

the share in or near poverty for immigrants in 2014/2015 who arrived in the 1990s and 1980s by age. (To obtain more robust estimates, Table 25 uses a combined sample of the March 2014 and 2015 CPSs.) On average, 1990s immigrants had been in the country for roughly 20 years in 2015 and 1980s immigrant had been here 30 years.

Turning first to 1990s immigrants, Table 25 shows that the share of immigrants in or near poverty (under 200 percent of poverty threshold) is significantly higher for immigrants at every age. In terms of income, 1990s immigrants ages 30 to 34 come closest to natives. But the difference is still almost \$5,000 on average, and in the other age groups the difference is about twice this amount. Like the age comparisons in Table 24 and Figure 7, the younger age cohorts come closest to matching natives. This is an indication that those immigrants who arrive young and grow up in the United States do better than those who arrive as adults. This makes perfect sense, since children will be more acclimated to the language and culture of the United States. Moreover, they will have greater access to educational opportunities.

But children will always comprise a modest share of new arrivals because most people make the decision to go to a new a country in their late twenties, typically before they have children. The ACS shows that in 2014, of the immigrants who arrived in 2013 or the first six months of 2014, three-fourths were adults. Immigrants generally do not come as children, nor do they generally arrive at older ages. Of the newest arrivals in 2014, 55 percent were between 18 and 39. The age of immigrants at arrival partly reflects the nation's immigration policy, but it mainly reflects the simple fact that people generally make the decision to leave their home countries as adults before age 40. This means that only a modest share of immigrants will ever grow up in the United States. The overwhelming majority will come as adults. The fact that young immigrants have more similar income and poverty rates to natives, while encouraging, will matter little to immigrants overall.

The 1980s immigrants shown in Table 25 are somewhat better off at most age groups than are 1990s immigrants. This makes sense because these immigrants have lived in the United States considerably longer than 1990s immigrants. And as we have seen, conditions improve for immigrants over time. However, 1980s immigrants still have substantially higher rates of poverty/near poverty and lower average incomes than natives of the same age (with the exception of those ages 30-34 which seems to be a statistical anomaly). For example, across age groups immigrant income is on average 11 percent lower than native income. Immigrants who arrived in the 1980s can only be described as very well established in the United States by the time of the 2015 CPS, yet they are still a deal good poorer on average than natives of the same age.

Tables 21 through 25 and Figures 5 through 7 show that it would be incorrect to think that immigrants do not do better the longer they live in the country. With the exception of welfare use, immigrants improve their situation over time for every measure examined. However, the tables and figures also show that even very long-time residents lag well behind natives. This is especially true compared to natives of the same age. Of course, we cannot say for sure that immigrants will continue to follow the same pattern in the future. But if they do, then they will arrive with relatively low incomes and make significant progress over time. But that progress will still leave them substantially poorer, more likely to use welfare, and less likely to have health insurance or be homeowners than natives, even after they have been in the country for two decades.

**Table 21. Poverty and Health Insurance Coverage by Length of Time in the United States**

Years in U.S.	Poverty	In or Near Poverty <sup>1</sup>	Without Health Insurance	Average Age (years)
>65	13.8%	37.1%	1.9%	78.6
56-65	12.2%	34.6%	2.7%	74.3
51-55	8.9%	35.3%	4.1%	70.0
46-50	9.9%	28.5%	6.0%	65.9
41-45	12.9%	30.3%	7.7%	61.5
36-40	11.2%	30.7%	10.9%	56.0
34-35	11.3%	31.4%	13.1%	54.7
32-33	14.5%	37.1%	9.9%	54.2
30-31	13.5%	36.2%	13.7%	51.7
28-29	11.7%	32.7%	14.6%	50.7
26-27	13.9%	35.5%	17.5%	48.4
24-25	14.8%	40.1%	22.2%	47.3
22-23	18.0%	37.1%	20.0%	46.8
20-21	18.9%	42.6%	25.2%	45.1
18-19	19.2%	41.6%	22.6%	42.7
16-17	16.8%	43.4%	27.4%	41.0
14-15	19.8%	47.4%	31.1%	38.4
12-13	24.2%	48.1%	30.2%	36.9
10-11	24.3%	50.6%	28.3%	35.9
8-9	21.3%	46.4%	25.7%	34.3
6-7	20.9%	49.8%	21.7%	34.0
4-5	19.8%	45.4%	21.8%	31.3
<4	29.9%	50.3%	28.2%	30.0
Immigrants	18.5%	41.9%	21.4%	44.0
Natives <sup>2</sup>	13.5%	30.8%	8.8%	38.7

**Source:** Public-use file of the 2015 CPS ASEC.

In Table 7, the average age for natives and immigrants is slightly different because that table is based on the ACS, which includes those in institutions.

<sup>1</sup> Defined as less than 200% of the poverty threshold.

<sup>2</sup> Figures for natives exclude U.S.-born children <18 with immigrant fathers.

**Table 22. Welfare Use, Home Ownership, and Income by Length of Time in the U.S.**

Years in U.S.	Use of Any Welfare Program <sup>1,2</sup>	Home Ownership <sup>1</sup>	Average Total Income <sup>3</sup>
>65	23.1%	84.5%	\$37,760
56-65	18.7%	76.8%	\$37,977
51-55	26.5%	75.8%	\$35,097
46-50	24.2%	75.0%	\$40,892
41-45	27.4%	74.8%	\$40,769
36-40	36.4%	66.4%	\$40,897
34-35	38.6%	65.5%	\$40,767
32-33	40.2%	64.4%	\$38,334
30-31	42.8%	62.2%	\$42,229
28-29	44.5%	61.3%	\$39,237
26-27	48.9%	56.0%	\$41,566
24-25	46.1%	52.8%	\$35,373
22-23	45.2%	53.7%	\$35,772
20-21	48.9%	48.3%	\$36,949
18-19	51.1%	47.3%	\$30,687
16-17	51.0%	44.8%	\$36,706
14-15	47.1%	40.0%	\$29,234
12-13	51.7%	40.6%	\$32,097
10-11	51.7%	35.5%	\$28,194
8-9	47.2%	32.7%	\$30,187
6-7	41.8%	32.3%	\$29,204
4-5	39.2%	24.9%	\$26,810
<4	36.7%	14.2%	\$24,978
All Immigrants	42.4%	49.7%	\$34,112
Natives	26.9%	65.9%	\$40,334

**Source:** 2015 public use file of the CPS ASEC.

<sup>1</sup> Based on the nativity of the household head.

<sup>2</sup> See Table 12 for list of welfare programs.

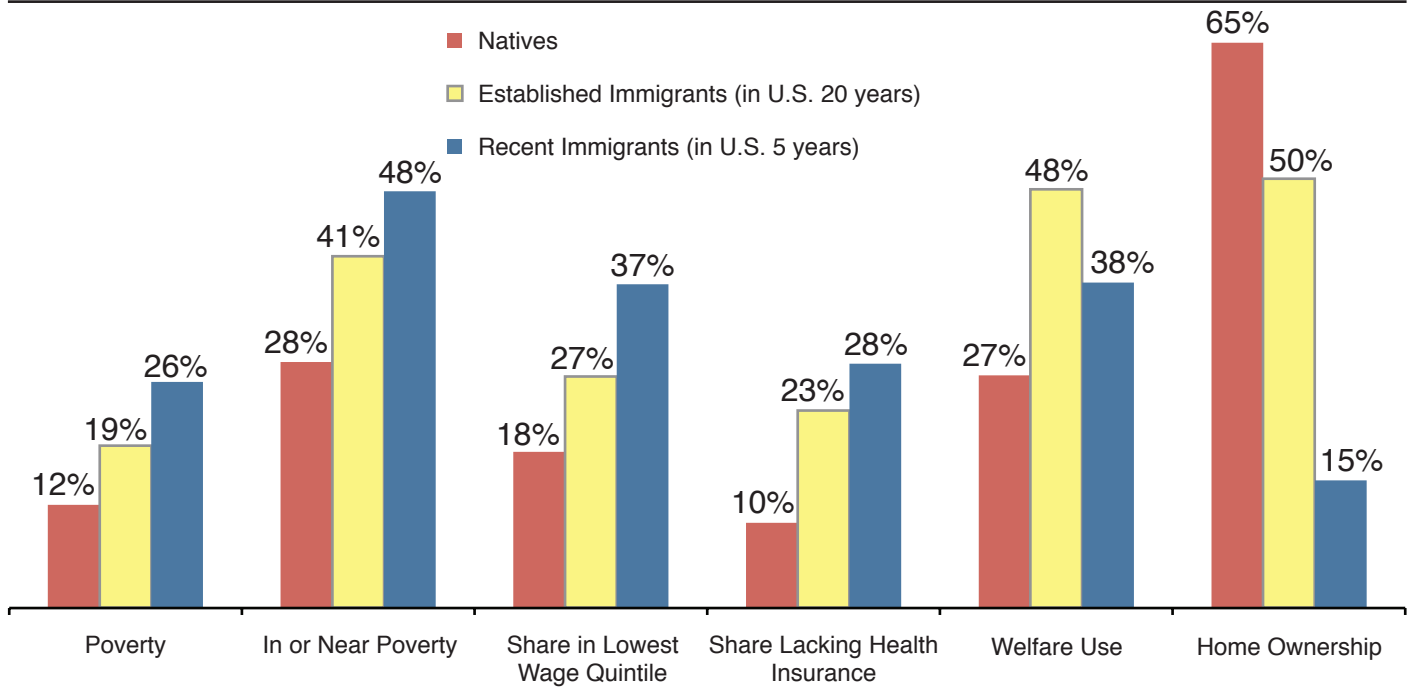
<sup>3</sup> Total income figures are only for individual adults 18+. Income is from all sources.

**Table 23. Ability to Speak English by Length of Time in the U.S.**

Years in U.S.	Not Well or at All	Well	Only English or Very Well
>64	12.1%	10.5%	77.4%
63-64	9.7%	12.4%	77.9%
61-62	13.0%	11.0%	76.0%
59-60	13.4%	13.9%	72.7%
57-58	11.3%	11.8%	76.9%
55-56	11.7%	14.5%	73.8%
53-54	15.6%	14.2%	70.2%
51-52	15.3%	14.8%	69.8%
49-50	16.9%	14.8%	68.3%
47-48	16.9%	17.0%	66.1%
45-46	19.5%	18.0%	62.5%
43-44	24.2%	18.3%	57.6%
41-42	21.5%	19.9%	58.6%
39-40	23.0%	21.0%	55.9%
37-38	22.7%	19.0%	58.3%
35-36	24.4%	21.5%	54.1%
33-34	27.9%	22.8%	49.3%
31-32	23.9%	21.2%	55.0%
29-30	27.0%	21.9%	51.2%
27-28	26.9%	21.9%	51.3%
25-26	27.6%	23.3%	49.2%
23-24	28.7%	22.2%	49.1%
21-22	27.5%	21.3%	51.2%
19-20	30.3%	22.1%	47.6%
17-18	28.7%	20.9%	50.5%
15-16	30.7%	20.8%	48.6%
13-14	31.8%	21.2%	47.0%
11-12	32.2%	19.5%	48.3%
9-10	34.1%	20.3%	45.6%
7-8	31.5%	20.2%	48.3%
5-6	31.4%	21.1%	47.5%
3-4	32.4%	23.7%	43.8%
<3	36.6%	23.6%	39.8%
All	28.7%	20.9%	50.4%

**Source:** 2014 public-use file of the ACS. Figures for are persons five years of age and older.

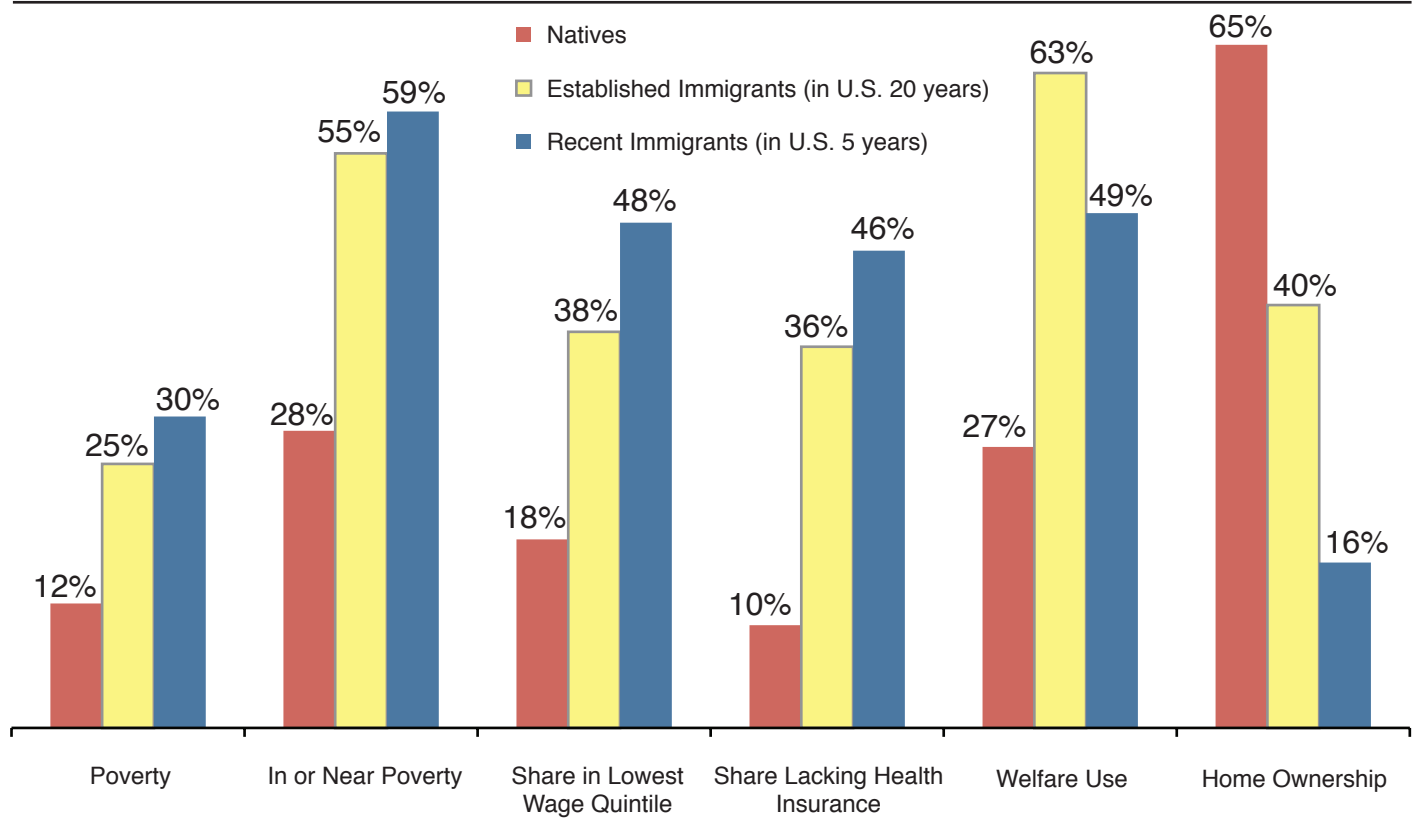
Figure 5. Immigrants make significant progress the longer they reside in the United States, but established immigrants still lag well behind natives.



**Source:** Except for home ownership, all figures are from the public-use file of the 2015 CPS ASEC. Home ownership is from the 2014 public-use file of the ACS. Poverty, earnings, and health insurance figures are for adults only. Quintile figures are for average weekly wages in 2014 for adults who indicated that they were employed full-time and year-round. Welfare use and home ownership are based on the nativity of the household head. See Table 12 for a list of welfare programs. Those in the 2015 CPS ASEC who have been in the country 20 years arrived 1992 to 1997; those in the 2014 ACS arrived 1993 to 1995.



Figure 6. Hispanic immigrants make significant progress the longer they reside in the United States, but even established Hispanic immigrants still lag well behind natives.



**Source:** Except for home ownership, all figures are from the public-use file of the 2015 CPS ASEC. Home ownership is from the 2014 public-use file of the ACS. Poverty, earnings, and health insurance figures are for adults only. Quintile figures are for average weekly wages in 2014 for adults who indicated that they were employed full-time and year-round. Welfare use and home ownership are based on the nativity of the household head. See Table 12 for a list of welfare programs. Those in the 2015 CPS ASEC who have been in the country 20 years arrived 1992 to 1997; those in the 2014 ACS arrived 1993 to 1995.

Table 24. Poverty and Income by Age

Age	In or Near Poverty <sup>1</sup>		Share in Lowest Wage Quintile <sup>2</sup>		Total Personal Income <sup>3</sup>	
	Immigrants	Natives	Immigrants	Natives	Immigrants	Natives
18 to 24	54.7%	38.6%	55.8%	51.1%	\$13,138	\$13,757
25 to 29	47.7%	33.0%	42.6%	21.3%	\$23,894	\$32,253
30 to 34	45.3%	29.0%	30.2%	16.2%	\$33,301	\$40,506
35 to 39	43.1%	26.3%	28.7%	14.8%	\$39,207	\$47,928
40 to 44	39.7%	23.7%	20.4%	13.6%	\$40,679	\$52,139
45 to 49	35.1%	22.6%	34.0%	14.6%	\$39,630	\$52,686
50 to 54	32.4%	23.1%	28.8%	13.5%	\$45,197	\$52,482
55 to 59	33.1%	22.9%	26.6%	12.0%	\$40,048	\$51,359
60 to 64	33.2%	25.2%	15.6%	11.9%	\$36,112	\$46,971
65+	45.4%	30.6%	25.3%	20.8%	\$27,731	\$36,011
Total <sup>3</sup>	41.3%	28.5%	29.5%	18.0%	\$34,226	\$40,290

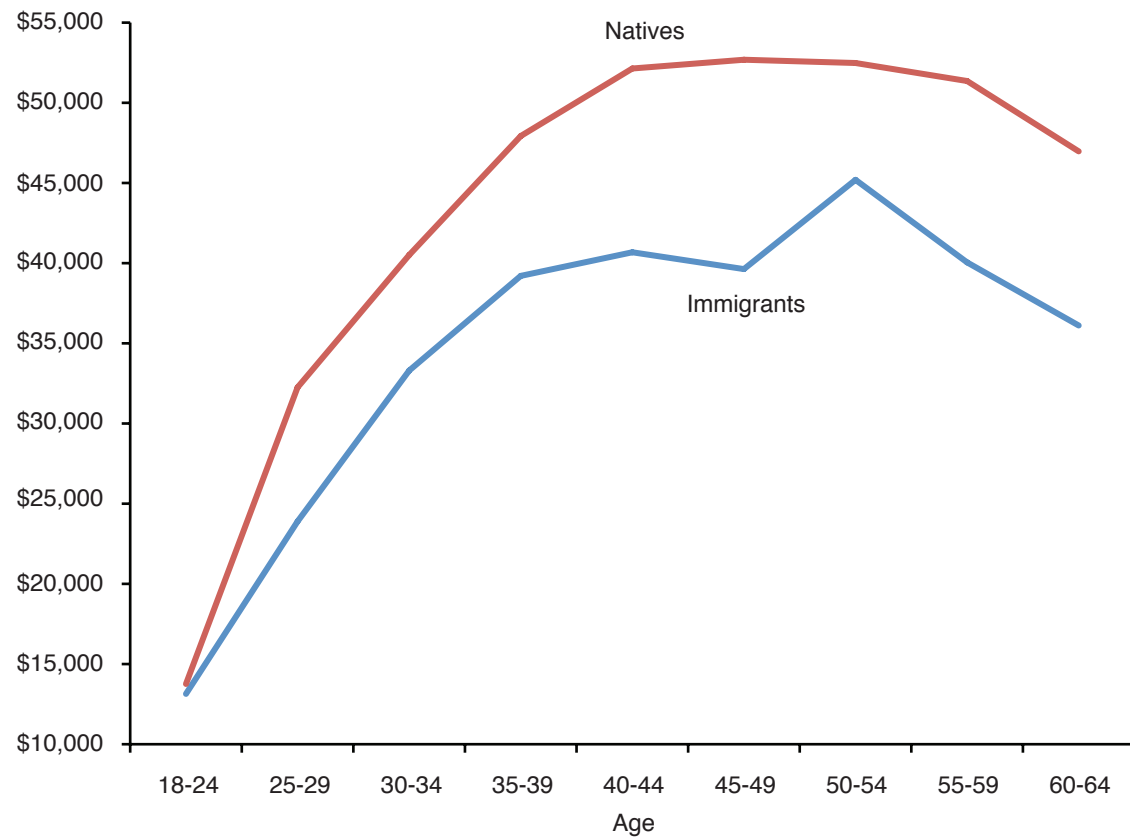
**Source:** Public-use files of the 2015 and 2014 CPS ASEC.

<sup>1</sup> Those with incomes below 200 percent of the poverty threshold

<sup>2</sup> Quintile figures are for average weekly wages for individuals who indicated that they were employed full-time and full-year.

<sup>3</sup> Income is from all sources.

Figure 7. At every age immigrant income is lower than native income.



Source: Public-use files of the 2015 and 2014 CPS ASEC. Income is from all sources.

Table 25. Income by Age for 1980s and 1990s Immigrants in 2014-2015

Age	1990s Immigrants		1980s Immigrants		Natives	
	Average Income	In or Near Poverty	Average Income	In or Near Poverty	Average Income	In or Near Poverty
25 to 29	\$27,146	38.8%	\$26,307	30.6%	\$32,253	33.0%
30 to 34	\$35,693	44.7%	\$51,350	29.1%	\$40,506	29.0%
35 to 39	\$36,979	46.0%	\$43,549	37.2%	\$47,928	26.3%
40 to 44	\$40,774	41.7%	\$41,205	34.8%	\$52,139	23.7%
45 to 49	\$41,702	35.6%	\$37,717	37.4%	\$52,686	22.6%
50 to 54	\$41,533	31.5%	\$48,405	33.9%	\$52,482	23.1%
55 to 59	\$41,464	33.1%	\$43,473	28.3%	\$51,359	22.9%
60+	\$28,999	45.2%	\$30,609	43.1%	\$39,151	29.0%
All adults (25+)	\$37,090	40.4%	\$40,117	35.7%	\$44,448	26.9%

Source: Public-use files of the 2015 and 2014 CPS ASEC.

In or near poverty is defined as less than 200 percent of the poverty threshold. Income is from all sources.

## Hispanics by Generation

**Progress Across Generations.** While it is not the focus of this *Backgrounder*, it is possible to distinguish among natives by generation using the CPS. The CPS asks respondents about the country of birth of their mother and father. (The ACS does not include these questions.) While there is some debate about definition, the brief analysis below follows the common practice of referring to those born outside of the United States (immigrants) as the “first generation”; those born in the United States with either an immigrant father or mother as the “second generation”; and those born here with two U.S.-born parents as the “third generation-plus” or more simply as just the “third generation”.<sup>48</sup>

In the discussion that follows we focus on Hispanics because nearly 60 percent of all children with immigrant parents are Hispanic.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, how the descendants of Hispanic immigrants fare is one of the most important issues surrounding the current immigration debate. Moreover, the number of second-generation adults from most countries and for non-Hispanics in general is small in the CPS, making meaningful analysis by generation difficult.

Comparing generations is not as straightforward as it may seem. First there is the issue of how to count minor children, who are by definition a different generation than their parents, but who are nonetheless dependent on their parents. (There is the case of immigrant children who arrive with their parents, in which case they are both considered the first generation.) This must be addressed when doing comparisons across generations. For this reason, when we examine poverty or health insurance coverage we report statistics only for adults in the analysis that follows. Second, there is research showing that persons whose ancestors are from a Spanish-speaking country are less likely to identify as “Hispanic” the higher their income and education.<sup>50</sup> It is not entirely clear how much this issue matters. Mexicans are by far the largest Hispanic group and in the 2015 CPS, 98 percent of U.S.-born individuals with a Mexico-born father identified as Hispanic, as did 98 percent of those with a Mexico-born mother. Ultimately, the term “Hispanic,” like race, is a construct that relies on self-identification. So if individuals do not see themselves as Hispanic, it is difficult to argue that they are in fact “really” Hispanic. Moreover, unless Hispanic surnames are available, researchers using Census Bureau data have little choice but to rely on self-reported ethnicity, and we follow this practice.

It is important to keep in mind that by examining the generations at one point in time we are not comparing parents and their children or even grandparents. The parents of today’s second generation adults are generally not today’s immigrants. Instead, the parents of today’s second generation adults typically entered the country decades ago and have in most cases either passed away or have retired. The same is true of adults in the “third generation-plus” whose forbears, at the very least, entered many decades ago and in some cases centuries ago.<sup>51</sup> What the data from 2015 can tell us is how past waves have done up to the present time. They cannot tell us whether the descendants of today’s immigrants will follow the same pattern.

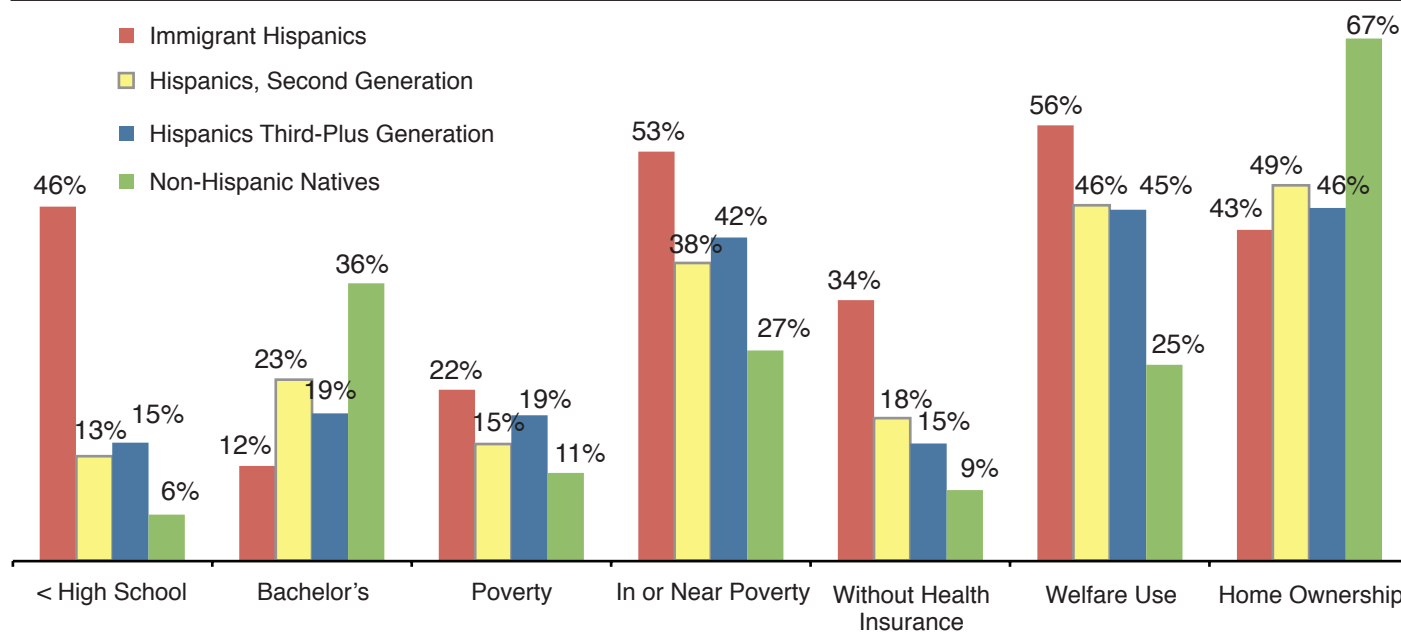
**Socioeconomic Status by Generation.** The first two sets of bars in Figure 8 show educational attainment for persons 25 to 65. The comparison is with non-Hispanic natives. As will be recalled from Tables 7 and 26, immigrants overall are much less likely than natives to have completed high school and are slightly less likely than natives to have at least a Bachelor’s degree. Figure 8 shows that this difference with natives is much more pronounced among Hispanic immigrants, who are much less likely to have completed high school or have a Bachelor’s degree.

Turning to the second generation, Figure 8 shows that those adult Hispanics with immigrant parents are much more likely to have completed high school than foreign-born Hispanics — 46 percent vs. 13 percent. The same is true of third-generation Hispanics. However, relative to non-Hispanic natives, the share of second- and third-generation Hispanics who have not completed high school (15 percent) is still over twice as high. Furthermore, the high school completion rate for the third generation is slightly lower than the second generation. This implies no progress between the second and third generation in this area.

Figure 8 also shows that the share of second- and third-generation Hispanics with at least a Bachelor’s degree is significantly higher than foreign-born Hispanics. However, it is still dramatically lower than for non-Hispanic natives. Only 23 percent of second generation Hispanics have a college degree, compared to 36 percent of non-Hispanic natives. And for third generation Hispanics, the share with a Bachelor’s degree is even lower, just 19 percent. Like the high school completion rate, this is an indication of no progress between the second and third generation for college completion. In fact, the data seems to imply some deterioration. This is very troubling given the importance of education in the modern American economy.

The third and fourth sets of bars in Figure 8 show the share of adults, 18 and older, living in poverty and the share in or near poverty. In or near poverty is defined as income below 200 percent of the poverty threshold. The bars show that U.S.-born

Figure 8. Native-born Hispanics are significantly better off than immigrant Hispanics, but still lag well behind non-Hispanic natives, even in the third generation.



**Source:** Public-use file of the 2015 CPS ASEC. First generation are themselves immigrants (foreign-born), second generation have at least one immigrant parent, and third generation have two U.S.-born parents. Figures for educational attainment are for persons 25 to 65. Figures for poverty and health insurance are for adults (18+) only. In or near poverty is defined as less than 200 percent of the poverty threshold. Welfare and home ownership are based on the generation of the household head.

Hispanic adults have somewhat lower poverty than foreign-born Hispanics. However, even through the third generation the share of Hispanic adults in poverty is significantly higher than the share of non-Hispanic natives. The same is true for the share with income under 200 percent of the poverty threshold. Equally important, the poverty rate for adults is no better for the third generation relative to the second. Again, this indicates no progress between the second and third generations.

The next set of bars shows the share of adults without health insurance. Like poverty, native-born Hispanics are much more likely than immigrants to have insurance. However, there is only modest progress between the second and third generation — from 18 percent to 15 percent. Both generations have high rates of Medicaid use; in 2015, 22 percent of second-generation adult Hispanics used the program, as did 21 percent in the third generation. This compares to 11.6 percent of non-Hispanic adult natives using Medicaid. Despite their much higher use of this program, U.S.-born Hispanics, both second and third generation, are still less likely to have health insurance than native-born non-Hispanics. The fifth set of bars shows welfare use. Welfare use is high for both Hispanic immigrants and for native-born Hispanics through the third generation. And as is the case with other measures in Figure 8, there seems to be no evidence of progress between the second and third generations.

Turning finally to home ownership, Figure 8 shows that it is slightly higher for U.S.-born Hispanics than foreign-born Hispanics — 43 percent vs. 47 percent. However, the rates are still dramatically lower than for non-Hispanic natives. Furthermore, there seems to be no intergenerational progress between the first and second generations. On the other hand, the 47 percent home ownership rate for U.S.-born Hispanics (both second and third generation) can be seen as high. However, as discussed earlier, home ownership is very common in the United States. With 67 percent of non-Hispanic household's owner-occupied, the 47 percent shown for Hispanic natives through the third generation is low in relative terms.

**Income by Generation.** Figure 9 reports earnings and total income; all figures are only for adults 18 and older. The income figures are lower than earnings because some adults, particularly those who do not work, may have little or no income and these individuals lower the average. The average earnings of adult Hispanic immigrants are \$17,649, or 55 percent lower than that of non-Hispanic natives. For the second generation it is \$15,114, or 44 percent lower. The average earnings of third generation Hispanics is \$12,371, or 33 percent lower than that of average native-born non-Hispanics. This is an indication of progress between the generations and some convergence toward the earnings level of non-Hispanics natives. But again, the

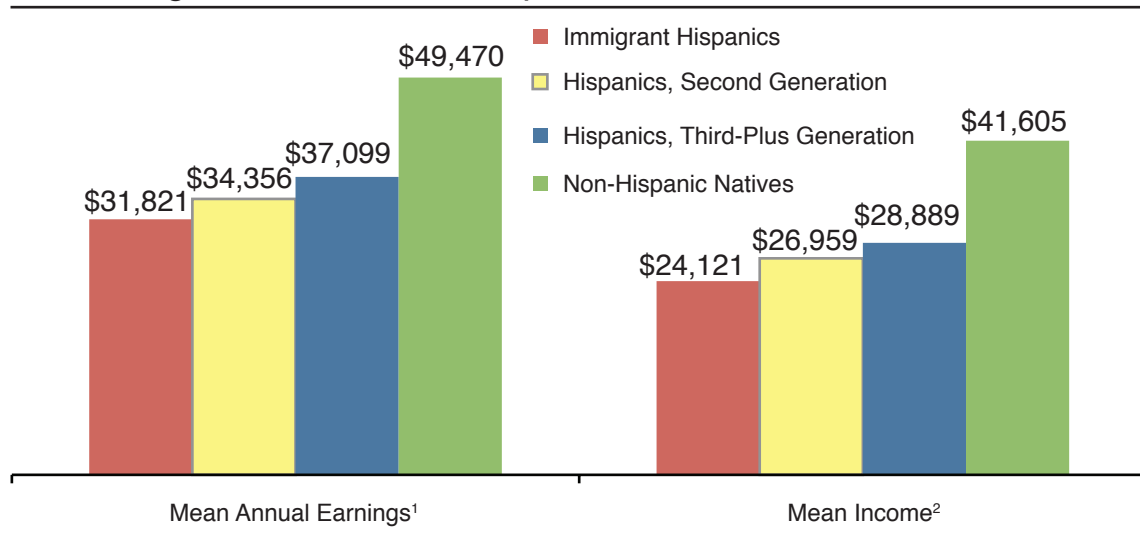
third generation still has significantly lower earnings than native-born non-Hispanics. While they are not shown in Figure 9, the difference between Hispanics and non-Hispanics in median earnings, rather than mean earnings, follows the exact same pattern.<sup>52</sup> Figure 9 also shows that average income follows the same pattern as earnings, with the gap between Hispanics and non-Hispanics being somewhat larger than for earnings.

One weakness of both Figure 8 and Figure 9 is that they do not fully control for age. A larger share of adult second- and third-generation Hispanics are young and this impacts income.<sup>53</sup> Table 26 reports earnings by age and generation. It also reports the share in or near poverty. Like other measures examined in this report, Table 26 shows that native-born Hispanics are much better off than immigrant Hispanics. But Table 26 also shows that second and third generation Hispanics have much lower earnings than non-Hispanic natives in the same age cohort. The same pattern holds for the share in or near poverty, defined as less than 200 percent of the poverty threshold. Figure 9 shows that the average earnings of third generation adult Hispanics is \$12,371 (33.3 percent) lower than native-born non-Hispanics. In Table 26 the average difference in earnings for third generation Hispanics across age cohorts compared to non-Hispanics natives of the same age is \$11,709, or about 28 percent lower. Table 26 indicates that some of the difference between the overall earnings of adult native-born Hispanics and non-Hispanics shown in Figure 9 is due to the relative youth of Hispanics. But most of the difference remains when age is controlled for. The same general pattern holds for second generation Hispanics. One other interesting finding in Table 26 is that the seeming progress from the second to third generations in earnings found in Figure 9 disappear once age is taken into account.

As for the share in or near poverty, Figure 8 shows a 14.6 percentage point gap between third generation Hispanics and non-Hispanic natives overall. Table 26 shows that when age is controlled for, the difference averages 13 percentage points across the age cohorts. Thus, the much larger share of third generation Hispanics in or near poverty shown in Figure 8 remains even when age is taken into account. The overall conclusion from Table 26 is that, at least when it comes to average earnings and the share in or near poverty, the relative youthfulness of Hispanics natives does not explain the large difference with non-Hispanic natives.

**Generational Change, 1995-2014.** Figure 10 shows the share of Hispanics by generation living in or near poverty from 1994 to 2014. As was discussed earlier, in or near poverty (below 200 of poverty threshold) is an important measure because below this level, income taxes are generally not paid and it is where eligibility for many welfare and other means-tested programs

Figure 9. Hispanic earnings and income rises across generations, but still lag well behind non-Hispanic natives.



**Source:** 2015 public-use file of the CPS ASEC. First generation are themselves immigrants (foreign-born), second generation has either an immigrant father or mother, and the third generation has two U.S.-born parents.

<sup>1</sup> Earnings are income from work for adults (18+) who reported working at least part-time during 2014.

<sup>2</sup> Income figures are from all sources for adults.



**Table 26. Average Earnings and Share In or Near Poverty by Generation**

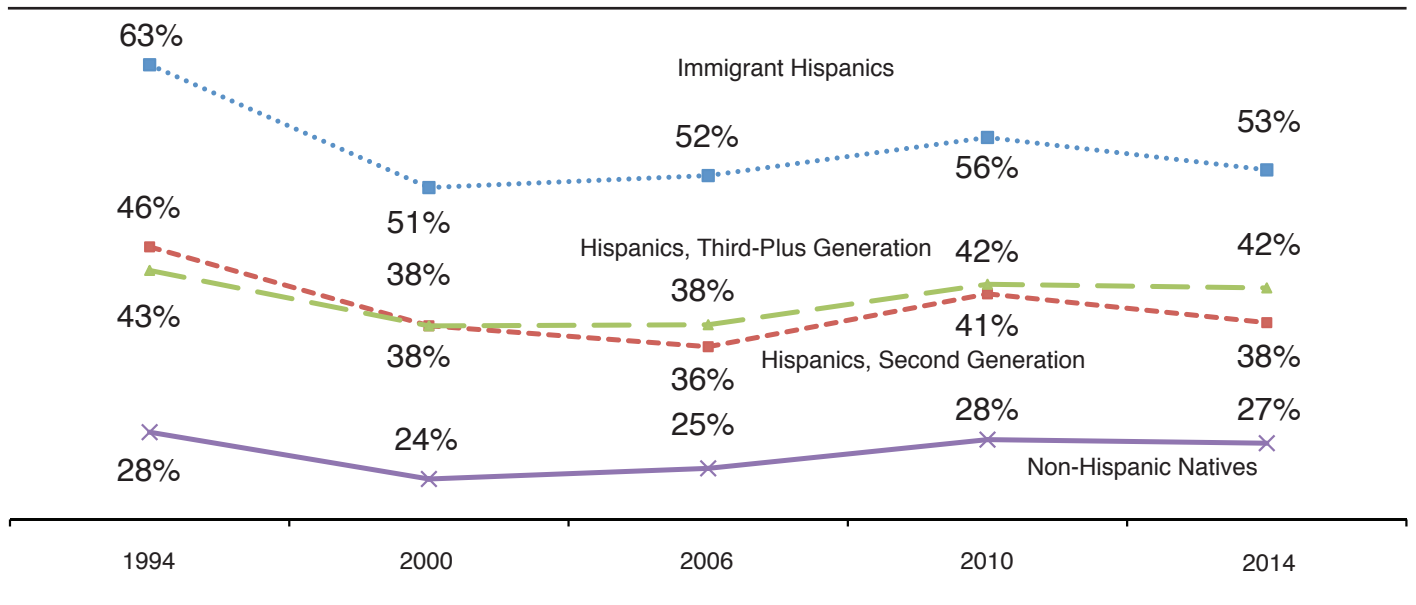
Age	Non-Hispanic Natives		Immigrant Hispanics		Second Generation Hispanics		Third-Plus Generation Hispanics	
	Average Income	In or Near Poverty	Average Income	In or Near Poverty	Average Income	In or Near Poverty	Average Income	In or Near Poverty
25-29	\$37,571	31.4%	\$25,669	58.7%	\$29,257	40.4%	\$37,029	45.3%
30-34	\$46,956	27.6%	\$30,630	63.5%	\$40,088	34.5%	\$38,732	41.0%
35-39	\$54,541	25.1%	\$29,957	59.9%	\$45,964	34.7%	\$39,944	37.8%
40-44	\$59,256	22.6%	\$31,592	55.7%	\$51,503	28.3%	\$45,085	37.7%
45-49	\$60,337	22.0%	\$33,348	46.3%	\$54,848	15.4%	\$43,143	34.7%
50-54	\$60,466	22.2%	\$36,572	41.4%	\$46,878	39.2%	\$43,637	33.1%
55-59	\$59,507	22.3%	\$36,546	47.0%	\$46,570	31.2%	\$49,103	34.6%

**Source:** 2014 and 2015 public-use files of the CPS ASEC. First generation are themselves immigrants (foreign-born), second generation have either an immigrant father or mother, and third-plus generations have two U.S.-born parents. Earnings are for those who reported working at least part-time during 2014 and 2015. In or near poverty is defined as less than 200 percent of the poverty threshold.

begins. The figure shows that for all generations there was significant improvement from 1994 to 2000. The economic expansion of the 1990s lowered the share of all Hispanics in or near poverty. Perhaps most important, it narrowed the gap with non-Hispanic natives. But since 2000 the share of U.S.-born Hispanics has barely converged with non-Hispanic natives. The gap between third-generation Hispanics and native-born non-Hispanics has remained virtually unchanged for 14 years. The second generation has done a little better since 2010. The gap between non-Hispanic natives and second-generation Hispanics has gotten back to the level (11 percentage points) it was in 2006, but it is still quite large.

The finding that native-born Hispanics do not close the gap with non-Hispanics even through the third generation is certainly not a new one. Other research has also found that while native-born Hispanics are better off than their foreign-born

**Figure 10. After falling significantly in the 1990s, the share of Hispanics in or near poverty shows little evidence of converging with non-Hispanics since 2000.**



**Source:** Public-use files of the 1995, 2001, 2007, 2011, and 2015 CPS ASEC, which asks about income in the prior calendar year. All figures are for adults (18+). The first generation are themselves immigrants (foreign-born), the second generation has at least one immigrant parent, and the third generation has two U.S.-born parents. In or near poverty defined as under 200 percent of the poverty threshold.

Hispanic counterparts, they are still significantly worse off than other natives.<sup>54</sup> There is no consensus about the causes of this situation, nor is there a consensus about how to remedy it.

A recent National Academy of Sciences (NAS) study acknowledged the lack of progress across generations among Hispanics, but pointed out that the problem is one primarily associated only with those of Mexican origin. For Hispanics such as those from Central America, the NAS study makes the case for “rapid educational integration”. And it is true that the children of immigrants from Central America are much more likely to have a college degree than natives whose forbearers came from Mexico. However, Central Americans were small in number and actually more educated on average than natives in 1970, so it is not surprising that many of the children of these immigrants graduated college. But by the 1980s the Central American immigrant population had exploded in size and had become and remains dramatically less educated than natives. Other immigrants from Latin America follow a similar pattern. It is not at all clear that the children of these much less educated and more numerous immigrants, most of whom are still only young adults or children, will do well in the United States.

Moreover, by some measures native-born Hispanics who are not of Mexican origin still struggle. For example, 40 percent of households headed by non-Mexican Hispanics (excluding Puerto Ricans) use at least one major welfare program. This is substantially higher than the 25 percent of non-Hispanic natives. (If Puerto Ricans are included, the rate is 48 percent.) The share of adult non-Mexican Hispanic natives (excluding Puerto Ricans) living in or near poverty is 26 percent higher than that of non-Hispanic natives. While many native-born Hispanics do well in the United States, many of both Mexican and non-Mexican origin struggle.

## Educational Attainment

**Education Level of Immigrants.** The statistics reviewed thus far indicate that a larger share of immigrants than natives have low incomes, lack health insurance, access means-tested programs, and in general have much lower socioeconomic status. As already mentioned, one of the primary reasons for this situation is that many immigrants arrive in the United States with relatively few years of schooling. Table 27 reports the education level of immigrants ages 25 to 65 by country and region. The table shows very significant differences between immigrants by sending country and region. Some immigrant groups are much less educated on average than natives, while immigrants from other countries are much more educated than natives. Immigrants from Mexico and the Western Hemisphere (excluding Canada) in general tend to be the least educated, while those from South Asia, East Asia, and Europe tend to be the most educated.

Looking back on Tables 10 through 19, we see that immigrants from those countries and regions that have the highest education levels tend to have the highest income and home ownership rates and lowest levels of poverty, welfare use, and uninsurance. Conversely, the least-educated immigrant groups tend to be the least prosperous. There is nothing particularly surprising about this finding.

It has been well known for some time that education is one of the best predictors of economic outcomes in modern America. In fact, the benefits of education have become more pronounced in recent decades. The arrival of large numbers of less-educated adult immigrants means that many will struggle in the United States. As we have seen, this does not mean that they make no progress over time. Nor does it mean that they will not find jobs. But it does mean that absent a change in U.S. immigration policy, immigration will continue to add workers disproportionately to the bottom end of the labor market, where wages are the lowest and unemployment the highest. It also means that immigration will add disproportionately to the overall size of the low-income population in the United States.

**Importance of Education.** The importance of education is shown very clearly in Table 28. The table reports income, poverty, health insurance coverage, and language skills for adults, and welfare use and home ownership based on the education of the household head. The table indicates that the least educated immigrants are much worse off than the average native. For example, the poverty rate for adult immigrants without a high school education (28.5 percent) is over 2.5 times the rate for adult natives overall (11.9 percent). For adult immigrants with only a high school education it is 50 percent larger than the overall native rate — 17.7 percent vs. 11.9 percent. However, immigrants with a college degree have a poverty rate that is somewhat lower than the rate overall for natives — 9.2 percent vs. 11.9 percent. The share of households headed by an immigrant who has not graduated high school using at least one major welfare program is more than two times that of native households overall. And for households headed by immigrants with only a high school education, it is still nearly double the rate for natives overall. But for households headed by immigrants who have at least a bachelor’s degree, welfare use is lower than for the overall rate for native households. Table 28 indicates just what would be expected: The least-educated im-

**Table 27. Educational Attainment for Persons 25 to 65**

	<b>Less than High School</b>	<b>High School Only</b>	<b>Some College</b>	<b>Bachelor's Degree or Higher</b>
Guatemala	56.5%	22.4%	14.9%	6.2%
Mexico	55.4%	25.7%	12.9%	6.0%
Honduras	49.7%	27.2%	15.5%	7.7%
El Salvador	51.2%	26.8%	14.9%	7.1%
Ecuador	28.4%	30.0%	23.6%	18.0%
Dominican Republic	30.4%	28.7%	24.5%	16.4%
Vietnam	26.3%	22.3%	24.2%	27.1%
Haiti	20.5%	30.6%	32.1%	16.8%
Cuba	16.8%	36.5%	23.8%	23.0%
China	19.5%	17.5%	12.7%	50.2%
Peru	7.7%	28.8%	34.5%	29.0%
Brazil	10.4%	30.4%	21.8%	37.3%
Jamaica	12.4%	31.5%	29.6%	26.5%
Colombia	12.0%	26.8%	28.2%	33.1%
Pakistan	13.1%	14.7%	18.8%	53.5%
Poland	6.2%	30.4%	27.7%	35.7%
Korea	4.4%	18.7%	22.6%	54.4%
Ukraine	3.3%	16.9%	24.3%	55.6%
Philippines	5.1%	14.5%	30.2%	50.2%
India	6.0%	7.1%	8.2%	78.7%
Iran	4.8%	15.5%	22.2%	57.5%
Russia	2.6%	12.8%	19.5%	65.1%
United Kingdom	3.2%	16.1%	27.5%	53.2%
Canada	4.9%	14.4%	27.7%	53.0%
Japan	2.5%	14.4%	25.1%	58.1%
Germany	5.4%	22.0%	29.9%	42.7%
Mexico	55.4%	25.7%	12.9%	6.0%
Central America	47.7%	26.1%	17.2%	9.0%
Caribbean	19.3%	31.6%	27.5%	21.6%
South America	13.4%	27.9%	27.3%	31.4%
Middle East	10.3%	19.1%	21.2%	49.5%
East/Southeast Asia	14.2%	17.6%	22.1%	46.1%
Sub-Saharan Africa	11.7%	19.5%	29.7%	39.1%
Europe	6.9%	21.8%	24.3%	46.9%
South Asia	9.1%	9.9%	11.2%	69.8%
All Immigrants	28.2%	22.6%	19.5%	29.6%
Hispanic	46.2%	26.4%	16.4%	10.9%
White	8.3%	21.3%	23.9%	46.6%
Black	13.6%	26.3%	30.8%	29.3%
Asian	12.8%	15.4%	18.9%	52.9%
All Natives	8.0%	27.2%	32.9%	31.9%
Hispanic	16.2%	29.1%	34.9%	19.8%
White	6.2%	26.3%	32.2%	35.3%
Black	12.7%	32.3%	35.5%	19.5%
Asian	4.2%	13.8%	26.0%	56.0%

**Source:** Public-use file of the 2014 ACS. Figures for blacks, Asians, and whites are for those who chose only one race. Hispanics can be of any race(s) and are excluded from other categories.

migrants do much worse than natives, who are on average more educated. In contrast, the most-educated immigrants do a good deal better than the average native.

Table 28 confirms the common sense observation that education is a key determinant of economic outcomes. Thus, one of the main reasons immigrants are much poorer than natives on average is that, as shown in Table 27, a much larger share of immigrants have low levels of education. This results in their having much higher rates of poverty, uninsurance, and welfare use and lower income and home ownership. While not surprising, it is very relevant to immigration policy. It means, for example, if we would like immigrants who arrive in the future to have higher incomes and lower poverty and welfare use, then allowing in fewer immigrants who have modest levels of education could do a lot to accomplish that goal. Of course, there are many other competing goals of immigration policy, so creating a more-educated stream of immigrants is only one set of policy options that could be pursued.

**Immigrants and Native by Education.** While the differences in socioeconomic status with natives shown in Table 28 are large, comparing immigrants and natives with the same education shows that, with some exceptions, immigrant adults tend to do somewhat worse. However, the differences within educational categories are, for the most part, not enormous. Equally important, differences by education are much less than are the overall differences between immigrants and natives. For example, the table shows that adult immigrant poverty overall is 17.7 percent, 5.8 percentage points higher than the rate for adult natives overall. But looking at the four educational categories in Table 28 shows an average difference of 2.8 percentage

**Table 28. Socio-Economic Status by Education and Time in the United States**

	Adults 18+				Households			CPS Average Age 18+
	Average Total Income	Poverty	In or Near Poverty	Without Health Insurance	Only English or Speaks It Very Well	Welfare Use	Home Ownership	
<b>All Education Levels</b>								
Native	\$40,334	11.9%	28.4%	9.8%	98.6%	26.9%	65.3%	47.2
Immigrant	\$34,112	17.7%	41.0%	21.7%	49.1%	42.4%	50.8%	46.0
Recent immigrants ≤ 5 Yrs.	\$25,563	26.1%	48.1%	28.2%	39.7%	37.6%	14.7%	35.3
Immigrants in U.S. 20 Yrs.	\$34,550	18.7%	40.7%	22.8%	48.9%	48.4%	49.6%	44.9
<b>Less than High School</b>								
Native	\$16,075	29.1%	58.6%	14.5%	95.1%	52.8%	51.8%	47.9
Immigrant	\$16,820	28.5%	63.4%	34.6%	20.3%	63.0%	41.9%	47.6
Recent immigrants ≤ 5 Yrs.	\$14,059	37.6%	69.5%	46.2%	14.3%	63.2%	12.1%	38.1
Immigrants in U.S. 20 Yrs.	\$17,625	30.5%	63.5%	36.5%	19.5%	66.6%	38.9%	47.3
<b>High School Only</b>								
Native	\$27,844	14.7%	36.0%	12.6%	98.6%	33.2%	63.0%	49.0
Immigrant	\$24,235	17.7%	45.4%	25.2%	44.4%	51.7%	45.9%	46.3
Recent immigrants ≤ 5 Yrs.	\$14,566	27.9%	53.6%	34.1%	28.9%	52.1%	18.9%	36.1
Immigrants in U.S. 20 Yrs.	\$24,009	19.3%	47.9%	26.2%	45.7%	57.8%	43.1%	43.5
<b>Some College</b>								
Native	\$33,899	11.0%	28.0%	10.0%	99.0%	28.4%	62.0%	44.4
Immigrant	\$28,153	15.1%	36.2%	16.7%	63.6%	40.1%	53.3%	42.8
Recent immigrants ≤ 5 Yrs.	\$15,350	30.1%	53.4%	23.6%	44.9%	39.8%	15.2%	31.9
Immigrants in U.S. 20 Yrs.	\$26,267	15.6%	36.5%	19.7%	66.0%	48.9%	51.3%	40.1
<b>Bachelor's or More</b>								
Native	\$67,240	4.6%	11.6%	5.4%	99.3%	12.9%	74.0%	47.9
Immigrant	\$61,815	9.2%	19.6%	9.7%	73.0%	21.8%	59.6%	46.2
Recent immigrants ≤ 5 Yrs.	\$41,268	17.6%	32.1%	17.6%	57.2%	23.6%	14.0%	34.7
Immigrants in U.S. 20 Yrs.	\$64,929	8.9%	15.4%	8.9%	74.0%	26.2%	64.4%	46.7

With the exception of language and home ownership, all figures are from the public-use file of the 2015 CPS ASEC. Home ownership and language skills are from the 2014 public-use file of the ACS. Poverty, income, and health insurance figures are for adults only. Welfare use and home ownership are based on the nativity of the household head. Welfare programs include TANF, SSI, WIC, food stamps, free/reduced lunch, public/subsidized housing, and Medicaid. Persons in the United States for 20 years in the 2015 CPS ACES arrived 1992 to 1997; those in the 2014 ACS arrived 1993 to 1995.

points. Thus it can be said that roughly half the difference in poverty between immigrants and natives is caused by the lower educational attainment of immigrants.

**Education and Progress over Time.** In addition to overall figures, Table 28 provides statistics for immigrants in the country for fewer than five years and for immigrants in the country for 20 years by educational attainment. As already discussed at length in this report, immigrants who have been in the country longer are much better off than newer arrivals. Table 28 shows this is true for all educational categories. Even the least-educated immigrants in the country for 20 years are far better off than their newly arrived counterparts. Income, poverty, home ownership, insurance coverage, and language skills all improve with time. Welfare use is the lone exception. It does not decline with time. Putting aside welfare use, if all that matters is progress over time, then Table 28 shows that progress over time is a characteristic of immigrants, regardless of education.

However, Table 28 also shows that the least-educated immigrants who have been in the country for two decades have dramatically higher poverty, uninsurance, and welfare use as well as dramatically lower home ownership and income. The poverty rate for immigrants who lack a high school education and have been in the country for 20 years is more than 2.5 times that of natives and the share in or near poverty is well more than double. Of these least-educated, long-time immigrant residents, 64 percent live in or near poverty. More than a third do not have health insurance and two-thirds use at least one major welfare program. Immigrants with less than a high school education who have been in the country for 20 years are dramatically worse off than natives, even though they are better off than their newly arrived counterparts.

The situation is better for those with a high school education who are long-time residents, but the differences with natives are still very large. The average income of those with only a high school education who have been here for 20 years is still only 60 percent that of natives. The share in poverty is 63 percent higher and the share without health insurance is more than two and one half times higher than the average native. Well more than half (58 percent) of households headed by an immigrant with only a high school education who has been in the country for 20 years access the welfare system. Well-established immigrants who have only a high school education are clearly better off than well-established immigrant high school dropouts, but they are still much worse off than the average native.

Immigrants with some college who have been in the United States for 20 years are much closer to the average for natives. While income lags that of natives, long-time resident immigrants with some college are similar to natives in poverty and near poverty. Health insurance coverage is still half that of natives and welfare use is also well above that of natives. As for college graduates, the situation is reverse that of the lower educational categories. Immigrants with at least a bachelor's degree who have been in the country for 20 years have much higher incomes than the average native, as well as much lower rates of poverty. Health insurance coverage is similar to natives, as is home ownership.

Even newly arrived college graduates are relatively prosperous. Table 28 shows that the average income of immigrant college graduates in the country for five or fewer years is slightly higher than the average for all natives. Poverty tends to be relatively high for newly arrived college graduates, but the share in or near poverty is similar to natives. The results in Table 28 are relevant to immigration policy because they indicate that low socioeconomic status is not always associated with new arrivals. Newly arrived immigrant college graduates do relatively well in the United States. Thus, it is wrong to think that low income or high welfare use is simply unavoidable among new immigrants. The most educated immigrants are relatively prosperous even when they have been in the country for only a few years.

That educational attainment matters a great deal to economic success in the United States is expected. The question for policy makers and the public is whether this fact should be given more weight in formulating immigration policy.

## Characteristics By State

In this section we examine characteristics of immigrants and natives by state. Consistent with the other tables in this analysis we use the CPS to measure income, poverty, health insurance, and welfare use. In order to obtain more statistically robust estimates at the state level we use a combined two-year sample of the March CPS 2014-2015. Elsewhere in this *Background*, such as in Tables 10, 11, 12, and 26, we examined these and other issues at the national level based on only the March 2015 CPS. Thus, the national totals in the earlier tables will not exactly match the national totals found in the state tables. However, the differences between the national figures using only the 2015 CPS and a combined two-year sample are quite small. The state figures for educational attainment, public school enrollment, home ownership, and household crowding are based on the 2014 ACS and will match national totals found elsewhere in this report.



**Household Income, Home Ownership.** The first two columns of Table 29 report *average* household income in the top immigrant-receiving states. The second two columns report the more commonly used *median* household incomes of immigrant and native households. The states are ranked based on how much higher the native median income is than the immigrant median income. While native median household income is higher than immigrant median income in almost every top immigrant-receiving state, this is not true everywhere. In Georgia, median household income of immigrants is higher than natives and in Virginia the median household income of immigrant households is roughly the same as native households.

The difference in median household income between immigrant and native households tends to be much larger when divided by household size to create per capita median incomes. (Per capita median income is calculated by dividing total household income by the number of people in the household.) Even in Georgia and Virginia the per capita median income of immigrant households is 20 percent and 39 percent lower, respectively, than that of natives. In some states the difference with natives is much larger. In Arizona, Colorado, Texas, California, Nevada, North Carolina, New Jersey, Minnesota, New York, Washington, and Massachusetts the per capita household income of natives is at least 50 percent higher than that of immigrants. The per capita figures indicate that immigrant households are a good deal poorer than native household once household size is taken into account.

The last two columns in Table 29 show the share of immigrant and native households that are owner-occupied. In nine of the top immigrant receiving states the gap between immigrant and native home ownership is 10 percentage points or more. However, it is interesting to note that in Nevada and Arizona, where immigrant household income tends to be lower than native households, and as we will see poverty and welfare use tend to be much higher, home ownership rates are much closer than in many of the other top immigrant-receiving states.

**Public Schools.** Immigration has a very significant impact on public schools in many states. Table A3 in the appendix shows the number of public school students from immigrant and native households in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Immigrants comprised the largest share of public school students in California, Nevada, New York, Texas, New Jersey, Florida, Hawaii, and Arizona. In these states more than one in four primary and secondary public school students is from an immigrant household.

Table A3 also shows the share of public school students in immigrant and native households in poverty. Nationally, 29.3 percent of public school students from immigrant households are in poverty. Of all public school students in poverty, 30.5

State	Average Household Income		Median Household Income		Persons per Household		Per-Person Median Household Income		Home Ownership	
	Immigrant	Native	Immigrant	Native	Immigrant	Native	Immigrant	Native	Immigrant	Native
Arizona	\$42,452	\$72,101	\$30,261	\$56,188	3.0	2.4	\$10,080	\$23,119	56.0%	62.0%
Colorado	\$64,652	\$92,348	\$47,277	\$66,817	3.4	2.3	\$13,912	\$28,459	50.5%	65.7%
Massachusetts	\$79,031	\$94,861	\$50,918	\$65,763	2.8	2.4	\$17,931	\$27,703	46.2%	64.9%
Texas	\$61,724	\$76,050	\$41,992	\$55,122	3.2	2.5	\$13,097	\$22,221	55.6%	62.6%
New Jersey	\$84,777	\$93,402	\$55,662	\$68,762	3.0	2.4	\$18,642	\$28,303	49.8%	68.0%
Minnesota	\$77,178	\$85,640	\$54,936	\$67,389	3.4	2.4	\$16,103	\$28,141	46.9%	74.2%
Maryland	\$94,748	\$98,264	\$62,761	\$74,410	2.9	2.5	\$21,698	\$29,520	57.0%	67.8%
Nevada	\$58,653	\$69,954	\$41,757	\$52,820	3.1	2.3	\$13,424	\$22,979	50.8%	54.7%
New York	\$75,009	\$81,552	\$44,327	\$54,985	2.8	2.3	\$15,829	\$24,101	37.9%	58.3%
California	\$80,827	\$89,716	\$53,239	\$63,809	3.2	2.5	\$16,614	\$25,272	47.7%	56.7%
Washington	\$75,648	\$83,640	\$54,102	\$62,062	3.3	2.4	\$16,443	\$25,910	52.6%	63.4%
Florida	\$63,085	\$69,544	\$42,513	\$48,409	2.7	2.3	\$15,545	\$21,215	57.0%	66.1%
North Carolina	\$64,769	\$65,476	\$41,641	\$46,834	3.3	2.4	\$12,579	\$19,717	50.2%	65.6%
Illinois	\$73,543	\$78,364	\$52,770	\$54,573	3.1	2.3	\$17,241	\$23,472	59.4%	66.9%
Virginia	\$88,259	\$88,158	\$65,474	\$65,994	3.3	2.4	\$19,658	\$27,344	56.0%	66.7%
Georgia	\$69,528	\$70,125	\$50,452	\$48,249	3.0	2.4	\$16,863	\$20,214	54.9%	63.3%
Nation	\$72,786	\$76,035	\$47,975	\$54,913	3.1	2.4	\$15,694	\$22,914	50.8%	65.3%

Source: Income and household size are from the public-use files of the 2015 and 2014 CPS ASEC. Home ownership is from the 2014 public-use file of the ACS.

percent are from immigrant households. In California, 58.3 percent of public school students in poverty are from immigrant households, as are 49.5 percent in Nevada, 46 percent in Texas, and 42.7 percent in New Jersey. Even in some states not traditionally thought of as being heavily impacted by immigration, a very large share of public school students in poverty come from immigrant households. For example, 33.7 percent of public school students in Rhode Island in poverty are from immigrant households, as are 35.2 percent in Utah, and 31.4 percent in Minnesota. Immigration has had a very large impact on the number of low-income public school students in the country and in many states.

Table A4 in the appendix shows the number and share of public school students by state who speak a language other than English. In 16 states, one out of five students lives in a household where a language other than English is spoken at home. In California and Texas, 46 percent and 38 percent, respectively, of all public school students live in such households. This does not necessarily mean that all of these students do not speak English well. But it does mean that school systems across the country will have to provide appropriate language instruction for some significant share of these students. Tables A3 and A4 show that immigration has added a very large number of students to the public school system, many of whom speak a language other than English.

Table A5 in the appendix shows the average number of students per 100 households for all 50 states plus the District of Columbia. Like the national numbers already shown in Table 20, in almost every state there are many more public school students per immigrant household than per native household. In fact, Table A5 shows that in 32 states (including the District of Columbia) the number of students per immigrant household is 50 percent larger than for native households. Among the top immigrant-receiving states, in North Carolina, Colorado, and Nevada the number of public school student per immigrant household is over twice that of native households.

Table 29 shows that immigrant household income tends to be a good deal less than native household income for most of the top immigrant-receiving states. For example, in Arizona the median household income of immigrant households is 86 percent less than that of native households and the mean household income is 70 percent less. Table A5 shows that immigrant households have 83 percent more public school students than native-headed households in Arizona. Even in Georgia, where immigrant household income is slightly higher than native household income, the average immigrant household still has 91 percent more public school students compared to native households. Since households are the primary unit by which taxes are assessed and collected, the relatively low income of immigrant households coupled with the much greater demand they create for public education means that in many parts of the country there will be a significant increase in school enrollment without a corresponding increase in the local tax base.

**Overcrowded Households.** Table A6 in the appendix shows household overcrowding by state. Table A6 shows household crowding is much more common among immigrant households than native households — 11.6 percent vs. 1.9 percent. Because overcrowding is so much more common among immigrant households, they account for a much larger share of all overcrowded households. As Table A6 shows, nationally 14.6 percent of all households are headed by an immigrant, yet immigrant-headed households account for 51 percent of all overcrowded households. In California, immigrant households account for 69.2 percent of all overcrowded households, even though they are 32.5 percent of all households.

It may not be surprising that immigrant households account for a very large share of overcrowded households in states such as New York (65.8 percent), New Jersey (64.5 percent), Texas (53.3 percent), Nevada (54.9 percent), and Arizona (42 percent). What is more surprising is that they are 56.8 percent of overcrowded households in Maryland, 43.9 percent in Nebraska, and 52.6 percent in Minnesota. Immigration has added significantly to the stock of overcrowded households in many states, including some that are not traditionally seen as heavily impacted by immigration. In all, immigrant households account for one-third or more of overcrowded households in 24 states plus the District of Columbia.

**Poverty and Near Poverty by State.** Table 30 reports the percentage and number of immigrants and their U.S.-born children who live in poverty compared to natives and their children. As in the other tables in this report, the figures for immigrants include the U.S.-born minor children (under age 18) of immigrant fathers. While the foreign-born tend to have much higher poverty rates in the top receiving states, in Nevada, Maryland, and Illinois in particular the difference with natives is not that large. In contrast, immigrants and their children tend to have much higher rates of poverty in Arizona, Colorado, Minnesota, North Carolina, and Texas. Turning to the share in or near poverty, (defined as below 200 percent of the poverty threshold), with the exception of Virginia, immigrants and their young children have much higher rates of poverty/near poverty than natives in the top states of immigrant settlement. As already discussed, those with incomes below this amount usually do not pay income taxes, and they typically become eligible for means-tested programs.

**Table 30. Poverty and Near Poverty by State (thousands)**

State	In Poverty				In or Near Poverty <sup>1</sup>			
	Immigrants and Their Children <sup>2</sup>		Natives and Their Children <sup>3</sup>		Immigrants and Their Children <sup>2</sup>		Natives and Their Children <sup>3</sup>	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
Arizona	36.9%	523	14.7%	763	64.6%	916	31.5%	1,633
North Carolina	30.1%	324	14.1%	1,225	53.6%	576	33.7%	2,924
Colorado	24.3%	185	9.4%	430	54.5%	415	23.3%	1,066
Texas	24.0%	1,499	14.3%	2,894	52.5%	3,270	33.4%	6,751
Georgia	23.1%	333	16.8%	1,417	47.1%	680	34.8%	2,940
Minnesota	20.8%	145	8.0%	373	41.4%	288	21.4%	1,002
Florida	19.7%	967	14.4%	2,115	45.1%	2,212	34.1%	5,004
Washington	19.4%	252	10.4%	592	42.5%	554	26.6%	1,511
New York	19.3%	1,055	14.2%	1,991	44.4%	2,431	31.2%	4,366
California	19.1%	2,565	13.5%	3,369	43.5%	5,841	29.5%	7,364
Massachusetts	18.2%	267	11.3%	593	41.0%	602	24.7%	1,290
Nevada	17.9%	128	15.0%	311	49.2%	352	33.6%	699
Illinois	17.1%	368	13.0%	1,370	43.8%	943	29.2%	3,083
New Jersey	16.8%	403	8.3%	534	35.4%	850	21.4%	1,374
Virginia	14.3%	171	9.3%	653	31.4%	374	22.9%	1,612
Maryland	13.2%	150	9.4%	454	33.6%	381	21.1%	1,016
Total	20.8%	11,529	13.5%	34,934	45.7%	25,402	30.8%	79,788

**Source:** Public-use files of the 2015 and 2014 CPS ASEC.

<sup>1</sup> In or near-poverty defined as income under 200 percent of the poverty threshold.

<sup>2</sup> Includes the U.S.-born children under age 18 of immigrant fathers.

<sup>3</sup> Excludes the U.S.-born children under age 18 of immigrant fathers.

**Table 31. Health Insurance Coverage by State (thousands)**

State	Uninsured				Uninsured or on Medicaid			
	Immigrants and Their Children <sup>1</sup>		Natives and Their Children <sup>2</sup>		Immigrants and Their Children <sup>1</sup>		Natives and Their Children <sup>2</sup>	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
Georgia	32.3%	467	13.6%	1,149	49.0%	708	30.0%	2,536
Texas	31.9%	1,991	14.8%	2,996	55.4%	3,450	30.2%	6,108
Nevada	24.2%	173	11.9%	249	44.4%	318	26.8%	560
Florida	24.1%	1,184	13.9%	2,041	44.4%	2,180	31.2%	4,593
Arizona	22.1%	314	12.4%	643	56.0%	794	31.6%	1,634
North Carolina	21.3%	229	10.8%	938	48.8%	525	26.5%	2,304
Colorado	20.7%	158	10.2%	467	47.2%	360	24.2%	1,107
Virginia	20.2%	241	9.4%	665	32.3%	385	18.2%	1,286
Illinois	18.3%	395	6.7%	712	44.8%	965	24.7%	2,609
Washington	17.7%	230	9.2%	525	45.4%	591	26.2%	1,487
New Jersey	17.4%	417	8.3%	534	39.3%	944	22.1%	1,421
Maryland	16.3%	185	8.1%	389	35.2%	400	20.9%	1,005
California	16.2%	2,183	9.4%	2,364	46.3%	6,227	29.6%	7,412
New York	13.9%	764	7.0%	984	46.4%	2,556	28.6%	4,018
Minnesota	12.9%	90	6.3%	294	42.2%	294	18.5%	868
Massachusetts	6.9%	101	2.5%	129	38.2%	561	22.3%	1,164
Total	20.2%	11,239	10.0%	25,975	46.6%	25,912	27.1%	70,179

**Source:** Public-use files of the 2015 and 2014 CPS ASEC.

<sup>1</sup> Includes the U.S.-born children under age 18 of immigrant fathers.

<sup>2</sup> Excludes the U.S.-born children under 18 of immigrant fathers.

**Health Insurance Coverage by State.** Table 31 shows the share of immigrants and their children without health insurance by state. With the exception of Massachusetts, the difference between immigrant and native insurance coverage rates is large. Excluding Massachusetts, in 9 of the states, immigrant rates of uninsurance are double those of natives.

The impact of immigration on the health care system as a whole can also be seen when we consider the share of immigrants and their minor children who are either uninsured or enrolled in Medicaid, which is shown in the last columns of Table 31. Based on the 2014-2015 CPS, the share of immigrants and their children on Medicaid or without health insurance is 47 percent.<sup>55</sup> In comparison, 27 percent of natives and their young children are uninsured or on Medicaid. In Texas and Arizona, more than half of immigrants and their children are uninsured or on Medicaid. Excluding Massachusetts, in nine of the states over 40 percent of immigrants and their children are either uninsured or on Medicaid. The impact of immigration on the health care system in these states and the nation is clearly very large. It is worth noting that by subtracting the share on Medicaid or uninsured from the share who are uninsured the percentage on Medicaid alone can be calculated. In all of the states listed in Table 31, immigrants and their children are more likely to be on Medicaid than natives and their children.

**Table 32. Immigrants and Their U.S.-Born Children as a Share of Total Population, Poverty Population, and Uninsured Population**

State	Share of Total Population	Share of Poverty Population	Share of Uninsured
California	35.0%	43.2%	48.0%
New York	28.2%	34.6%	43.7%
New Jersey	27.2%	43.0%	43.8%
Nevada	25.5%	29.2%	41.0%
Florida	25.0%	31.4%	36.7%
Texas	23.6%	34.1%	39.9%
Massachusetts	21.9%	31.0%	43.9%
Arizona	21.5%	40.7%	32.8%
Maryland	19.1%	24.8%	32.2%
Washington	18.7%	29.9%	30.5%
Illinois	16.9%	21.2%	35.7%
Georgia	14.6%	19.0%	28.9%
Virginia	14.4%	20.8%	26.6%
Colorado	14.3%	30.1%	25.3%
Minnesota	12.9%	28.0%	23.4%
North Carolina	11.0%	20.9%	19.6%
Total	17.7%	24.8%	30.2%

**Source:** Public-use files of the 2015 and 2014 CPS ASEC. Figures include U.S.-born children (under 18) of immigrant fathers.

Earlier in this report we observed that immigration has a very large impact on the nation's health care system. Table 32 shows the share of each state's population comprised of immigrants and their minor children and their share of the uninsured and those in poverty. The table reads as follows: Immigrants and their minor children comprise 35 percent of California's overall population and they are 43 percent of those in poverty. They are also 48 percent of the uninsured in the Golden State. Table 32 shows that immigrants tend to be a much larger share of the poor and uninsured in these states than they are of the overall population.

**Welfare Use by State.** Table 33 shows the percentage of immigrant- and native-headed households using at least one major welfare program. Programs included are TANF, SSI, general assistance, food stamps, WIC, free/subsidized school lunch, public/rent subsidized housing, and Medicaid. As we saw in Table 12, the biggest difference in program use is for Medicaid and food assistance programs. For state governments, Medicaid is a particular concern because between one-third to one-half of the program's costs are typically borne by state taxpayers. The largest percentage-point differences in overall welfare use for immigrant and native welfare use are found in Minnesota, Colorado, Arizona, North Carolina, and Massachusetts. The smallest differences are in Georgia and Virginia.

**Estimated State and Federal Income Tax.** In addition to welfare use, Table 33 also shows estimated income tax payments for immigrant and native households. Based on the characteristics of immigrant families and individuals, the Census Bureau estimates tax liability. That is, what should be paid in income taxes given income, dependents, home ownership, etc. This estimate does not have any information about tax compliance. It is only an estimate of what should be paid if the law is followed. Figures for state and federal tax are shown in the far right of Table 33. In terms of state income tax, native households have higher tax liability than immigrants in every state but North Carolina. But the differences are not that large in some states.

In terms of federal income tax, the difference with natives is much larger. On average, native households have federal income tax liability that is 56 percent higher. This report has shown that immigrant households have higher rates of welfare use and public school enrollment. And immigrants and their children are much more likely to lack health insurance. Perhaps most important, immigrant households are much larger on average than native households. These facts coupled with lower average income tax liability raise the clear possibility that immigrant households are a significant net fiscal drain. However,



several things must be kept in mind. First, the tax estimates are not actual tax payments or even self-reported tax payments; they are Census Bureau derived estimates. Tax compliance rates are likely to differ significantly for immigrant and native households, particularly for illegal immigrant households, which are included in the data. Second, state and federal income taxes are not the only taxes collected by government. Third, welfare and education are by no means the only sources of expenditures for states or the federal government. In short, the tax estimates and the other information in this report are not a balance sheet of taxes vs. expenditures. But the information is consistent with the very real possibility that immigrant households are on balance a net fiscal drain.

**Education Levels by State.** Table 34 shows the education level of immigrants and natives (ages 25 to 65) in the top immigrant-receiving states. As has already been discussed at length, a much larger share of immigrants have not completed high school compared to natives. This is also the case in every state in Table 34. The largest percentage-point difference is in Texas, followed by Arizona, Colorado, North Carolina, California, and Nevada. The gap is smallest in Florida, New Jersey, Virginia, Massachusetts, Maryland, and New York. At the high end of the educational distribution the situation is somewhat different. In states such as Colorado, Arizona, and California immigrants are much less likely to have at least a bachelor's degree. However, in a number of states immigrants are as likely or even more likely to have completed college, including Virginia, Maryland, Georgia, Washington, New Jersey, and Florida. Looking back on Tables 29 to 33, they show that in general states where immigrant educational attainment is lowest relative to natives the gap with natives in socioeconomic status tends to be the highest. In contrast, where immigrants are more educated, the gap is much smaller.

**State Workforce.** Table 35 shows workforce characteristics by state. The first column shows the number of immigrant workers in each state in 2014-2015. The second column shows the number of immigrant workers in the state who arrived in 2000 or later. The third column shows the share of all workers in the state who are foreign-born. Thus, the table reads as follows: Based on 2014 and 2015 data, there were 5,874,000 immigrant workers in California, 1,802,000 of whom arrived in 2000 or later. Overall, 33.4 percent of all workers in the state were immigrants. The fourth column shows the number of natives (18 to 65) not working, the fifth column shows the percentage of natives (18 to 65) working in 2014-15, and the sixth column shows the share of natives (18 to 65) working back in 2000-01. Thus, in California 5,546,000 natives ages 18 to 65 were not working in 2014-2015. Overall, 66.7 percent of natives in this age group held a job. The sixth column shows that for California at the beginning of the last decade, 74.1 percent of natives in this age group worked. The last three columns in

**Table 33. Welfare Use and Tax Liability for Immigrant- and Native-Headed Households**

State	Use of any Major Welfare Programs		Cash Assistance		Food Assistance		Medicaid		Est. Avg. State Income Tax Liability		Est. Avg. Federal Income Tax Liability	
	Immigrant	Native	Immigrant	Native	Immigrant	Native	Immigrant	Native	Immigrant	Native	Immigrant	Native
New York	48.7%	30.9%	10.5%	8.4%	29.5%	18.4%	38.5%	23.7%	\$3,174	\$3,318	\$9,454	\$11,448
Arizona	48.5%	25.5%	3.7%	3.6%	31.1%	16.9%	38.7%	19.9%	\$438	\$884	\$2,196	\$8,433
Minnesota	48.4%	21.6%	11.7%	4.6%	35.8%	10.9%	36.1%	15.2%	\$2,013	\$2,521	\$8,156	\$11,068
Massachusetts	47.8%	28.5%	6.0%	7.5%	29.1%	13.1%	37.0%	23.8%	\$2,947	\$3,807	\$9,705	\$14,381
North Carolina	47.6%	26.5%	1.6%	5.2%	34.0%	18.2%	38.3%	18.8%	\$3,597	\$3,499	\$5,927	\$7,064
California	44.1%	27.7%	10.1%	7.8%	24.4%	13.5%	36.6%	22.3%	\$2,105	\$2,620	\$9,658	\$12,471
Colorado	43.5%	20.1%	2.7%	4.3%	27.6%	8.9%	34.5%	15.4%	\$1,443	\$2,541	\$4,925	\$13,750
Texas	42.7%	26.4%	2.8%	6.0%	32.7%	17.6%	33.0%	19.1%	No Tax	No Tax	\$5,929	\$9,651
Washington	39.6%	26.2%	5.5%	5.1%	28.2%	16.6%	32.7%	18.7%	No Tax	No Tax	\$8,387	\$11,089
Nevada	39.5%	21.7%	2.5%	4.2%	29.2%	14.1%	25.6%	15.5%	No Tax	No Tax	\$4,606	\$8,074
Florida	38.9%	24.4%	5.5%	5.0%	26.7%	15.6%	28.7%	18.3%	No Tax	No Tax	\$6,759	\$8,470
Illinois	35.8%	24.1%	2.8%	3.7%	23.5%	15.7%	29.7%	18.2%	\$3,018	\$3,277	\$7,154	\$10,193
Georgia	34.6%	28.1%	2.0%	4.6%	25.3%	18.9%	24.9%	19.1%	\$2,163	\$2,221	\$7,491	\$8,756
New Jersey	34.4%	22.5%	6.7%	6.6%	20.3%	11.1%	28.0%	17.1%	\$2,473	\$2,838	\$11,063	\$13,115
Maryland	33.2%	21.9%	2.6%	5.1%	17.3%	12.4%	24.6%	15.9%	\$2,761	\$2,855	\$13,761	\$14,334
Virginia	25.0%	16.5%	1.0%	4.1%	17.7%	10.8%	19.2%	11.2%	\$2,589	\$2,648	\$10,954	\$11,830
Nation	41.8%	26.3%	6.4%	6.0%	26.9%	16.4%	33.1%	19.4%	n/a	n/a	\$8,237	\$9,578

**Source:** Public-use files of the 2015 and 2014 CPS ASEC. For a list of welfare programs see Table 12. Tax liability is calculated by the Census Bureau based on income and characteristics in the prior calendar year. Welfare programs include: Cash; TANF, SSI, state general assistance; Food; food stamps (SNAP), free/reduced price school lunch, and WIC; Medicaid; and Housing Programs. Housing programs are not shown separately.



**Table 34. Educational Attainment for Adults Ages 25 to 65 by State**

State	Less than High School		High School Only		Some College		Bachelor's Degree or More	
	Immigrants	Natives	Immigrants	Natives	Immigrants	Natives	Immigrants	Natives
Texas	40.1%	9.2%	21.1%	25.8%	15.7%	34.6%	23.1%	30.4%
Arizona	37.7%	7.9%	22.5%	23.7%	19.5%	39.1%	20.3%	29.3%
North Carolina	35.7%	9.2%	20.7%	25.7%	16.9%	34.7%	26.8%	30.4%
Colorado	33.8%	5.1%	21.8%	20.7%	17.5%	33.3%	27.0%	40.9%
California	33.3%	7.5%	20.1%	21.0%	19.6%	36.2%	27.0%	35.3%
Nevada	31.8%	8.2%	26.7%	28.8%	22.6%	38.6%	18.9%	24.3%
Georgia	28.7%	10.3%	22.1%	28.1%	19.2%	31.2%	30.1%	30.3%
Illinois	25.3%	6.5%	24.6%	24.6%	19.2%	32.7%	30.9%	36.2%
Minnesota	24.6%	4.0%	19.4%	23.8%	21.8%	36.1%	34.2%	36.1%
Washington	23.4%	6.1%	20.0%	22.0%	23.2%	37.8%	33.3%	34.1%
New York	22.9%	7.6%	25.5%	24.5%	20.2%	28.6%	31.4%	39.4%
Maryland	20.1%	6.4%	19.1%	25.4%	19.3%	29.0%	41.5%	39.1%
Virginia	19.9%	7.6%	20.1%	24.3%	18.5%	30.1%	41.4%	38.0%
Massachusetts	19.3%	5.8%	23.9%	22.7%	18.3%	25.8%	38.5%	45.7%
Florida	19.0%	8.7%	28.7%	28.6%	25.5%	34.2%	26.7%	28.5%
New Jersey	16.9%	5.7%	25.4%	26.9%	19.1%	27.0%	38.7%	40.3%
Nation	28.2%	8.0%	22.6%	27.2%	19.5%	32.9%	29.6%	31.9%

**Source:** Public-use file of the 2014 ACS.

the table show the same information as columns four, five, and six, except that the figures are only for young natives (18 to 29) with no more than a high school education. This includes high school dropouts and those who have graduated high school but have no additional schooling. They are reported separately because they are the group most likely to be in competition with immigrants for jobs at the bottom end of the labor market.

Table 35 shows that immigrants make up a large share of workers in almost all of these states. In California, immigrants are more than a third of workers, and they are roughly a quarter of all workers in New Jersey, New York, Nevada, and Florida and about a fifth of workers in Texas, Massachusetts, Maryland, and Arizona. The table also shows that in all of these states there are very large populations of working-age native-born people who are not employed. For example, in California, New Jersey, New York, Nevada, Florida, Texas, Maryland, Arizona, Washington, Massachusetts, and Illinois there are more than one million working-age natives not employed. If we compare the number of natives not working to the number of post-2000 immigrants it shows that in almost every state the number of natives (18 to 65) not working is at least three times the number of newly arrived immigrants. And in many states the ratio is even larger.

Those who are not working are either unemployed, which means they have looked for a job in the last four months, or they are not looking for work. In total there are 29.4 million adult working-age (18 to 65) natives not employed in the 16 states shown in Table 35. There are an additional 21.3 million working-age natives not working in other states. Of those who are not employed, some are discouraged workers who would like to work but have not looked in the last four weeks and so are not counted as officially unemployed. Some of those not working are disabled, some are parents taking care of young children, and others are college students who could work but do not wish to do so. (There are virtually no college students in columns 7, 8, and 9 at the right of Table 35 because those attending college have at least some education beyond high school, and are therefore not included.) It would be a mistake to think that all of those not working want to work or are even able to do so. But even if only one in five of the 50.7 million working age natives not employed got a job, it would be larger than the almost 10 million new immigrant workers added in the last 14 years. Put a different way, if employment rates nationally for working-age natives simply returned to 2000-2001 levels (75.2 percent), then 9.8 million more natives would be working in 2014-2015.

The starkest finding in Table 35 is the dramatic deterioration in the employment rate of working-age natives. On average, their employment rates are almost six percentage points lower in 2014-2015 in these states than they were in 2000-2001. This is a very large decline because, unlike unemployment rates, employment rates do not swing dramatically. A six percentage-point decline is a very large change. Even more striking is the decline in the employment rate of young (18 to 29) less-educated natives. On average, the share holding a job in this group is almost 12 percentage points lower in these states in 2014-2015 than in 2000-2001. Employment rates were already relatively low for this group, so the decline is that much more

Table 35. Employment of Immigrants and Natives in Top Immigrant-Receiving States

State	Column 1 Number of Immigrant Workers, 2015	Column 2 Number of Post-2000 Immigrant Workers, 2015	Column 3 Immigrant Share of Workers, 2015	Column 4 Number of Natives 18 to 65 Not Working, 2015	Column 5 Share of Natives 18 to 65 Working, 2015	Column 6 Share of Natives 18 to 65 Working, 2000	Column 7 Number of Less-Educated Natives 18 to 29 Not Working, 2015 <sup>1</sup>	Column 8 Share of Less-Educated Natives 18 to 29 Working, 2015 <sup>1</sup>	Column 9 Share of Less-Educated Natives 18 to 29 Working, 2000 <sup>1</sup>
California	5,874	1,802	33.4%	5,546	66.7%	74.1%	1,088	49.4%	64.4%
New Jersey	1,127	523	26.6%	1,278	69.2%	76.3%	190	50.1%	66.4%
New York	2,393	858	26.5%	3,020	67.2%	70.9%	488	45.4%	54.5%
Nevada	332	125	25.8%	419	68.3%	75.0%	80	57.2%	69.4%
Florida	2,221	944	25.3%	3,125	66.1%	75.4%	584	51.5%	71.8%
Texas	2,731	1,110	22.1%	3,887	70.1%	74.7%	723	58.1%	60.6%
Maryland	577	253	19.5%	849	72.3%	79.8%	131	54.0%	64.2%
Arizona	548	196	19.2%	1,091	66.7%	72.7%	219	48.0%	68.7%
Washington	544	196	16.4%	1,168	69.2%	74.1%	197	51.0%	63.0%
Massachusetts	658	302	20.0%	928	72.3%	76.9%	119	52.4%	62.4%
Illinois	993	390	16.6%	1,915	71.0%	75.9%	286	55.5%	62.9%
Virginia	574	251	13.9%	1,290	71.9%	76.2%	172	58.9%	62.8%
Georgia	724	423	16.0%	1,717	67.5%	75.2%	304	50.4%	66.3%
Colorado	349	147	12.8%	764	74.4%	78.1%	98	65.0%	67.0%
North Carolina	444	193	10.0%	1,728	68.4%	75.4%	310	48.0%	70.4%
Minnesota	308	175	10.9%	654	78.1%	82.6%	84	62.0%	70.3%
Nation	24,652	9,998	16.8%	50,661	69.3%	75.2%	8,667	53.4%	65.9%

Source: For 2000, public-use files of the 2000 and 2001 CPS ASEC; files for 2015 are from the 2015 and 2014 CPS ASEC.

<sup>1</sup> Less-educated defined as having no education beyond high school.

disconcerting. In Arizona, North Carolina, and California fewer than half of these individuals had a job in 2014 and 2015. In these same states, in 2000 and 2001 roughly two-thirds of this demographic held a job.

Although not shown in Table 35, the dramatic deterioration in employment among natives began before the recession. The share of 18- to 65-year-olds working was 72.9 percent in 2006/2007, lower than the 75.2 percent at the start of the decade, even though March of 2006/2007 represents the peak of the last economic expansion. More striking, the share of young, less-educated natives working was 61.1 percent in the 2006/2007 period, compared to 65.9 at the start of the decade. Clearly the current downturn caused a massive decline in work among this population. But, the decline began well before the Great Recession.

Table 35 shows that immigrants comprise a large share of workers in many states. But these same states also have very large numbers of native-born people not holding a job. If immigration is curtailed in the future, there certainly seems to be a very large pool of potential workers for employers to draw upon. Of course, as mentioned above, many people not working do not wish to work. But again, if employment rates nationally for working-age natives simply returned to 2000-2001 levels, then 10 million more natives would be working, which is more than all of the new immigrant workers allowed into the country in the prior 14 years — legally and illegally.

## Conclusion

The latest data collected by the Census Bureau shows that 18.7 million immigrants arrived in the country from 2000 to 2014. Just between 2010 and 2014, 5.6 million immigrant arrived in the United States. The more than one million immigrants settling in the country each year have a very significant effect on many areas of American life. New immigration plus births to immigrants added more than eight million people to the U.S. population between 2010 and 2014, accounting for the overwhelming majority of population growth. Immigrants account for more than one in eight U.S. residents. Children from immigrant households now account for nearly one in four public school students, almost one-third of children in poverty, and one-third without health insurance, creating enormous challenges for the nation's schools, health care system, and physical infrastructure. The large share of immigrants who arrive as adults with relatively few years of schooling is the primary reason so many live in poverty, use welfare programs, and lack health insurance.

Despite the fact that a large share of immigrants have few years of schooling and low incomes, most immigrants do work. In fact, the share of immigrant men holding a job is higher than native-born men, though the share among women is lower. Moreover, the evidence examined in this report and other research makes clear that immigrants make significant progress the longer they reside in the United States. This is even true for the least educated. Unfortunately, this progress still leaves them on average well behind natives in most measures of socio-economic status even after they have been in the United States for decades. The share of adult immigrants who have lived in the United States for 20 years who are in poverty or lacking health insurance is at least 50 percent higher than for adult natives. And the share of households headed by long-time immigrant residents using one or more welfare programs is nearly twice that of native households.

At the same time that immigration policy has significantly increased the number of immigrant workers, especially those with modest levels of education, there has been a significant decline in the share of natives holding jobs, particularly among the less-educated. Data from 2000/2001 shows 66 percent of young natives with no education beyond high school held a job; in 2014/2015 it was just 53 percent. It is very difficult to find any evidence of a shortage of less-educated workers in the United States. Some may argue that immigrants only do jobs that American do not want, but an analysis by occupations shows that the vast majority of workers in almost every job are U.S-born, including three-fourths of janitors and about two-thirds of construction labors and meat processors.

A central question for immigration policy is: Should we continue to allow in so many people with little education — increasing potential job competition for the poorest American workers and growing the population in need of government assistance? Setting aside the lower socioeconomic status of immigrants, no nation has ever attempted to incorporate nearly 60 million newcomers and their young children. Those concerned about sprawl, traffic, pollution, and how these things impact the quality life in the United States argue that an ever larger population caused by U.S. immigration is contributing to these problems. Supporters of population growth, on the other hand, argue that it may create greater opportunities for businesses, workers, and consumers. However one approaches population increase, it is clear that immigration has become the determinant factor in U.S. population growth.

While there is no question that immigration has an enormous impact on the future size of the population, it is equally clear that immigration does not make the nation significantly more youthful. In 2014, 13 percent of both immigrants and natives are of over age 65. As we also show, excluding all 17.3 million immigrants living in the country in 2014 who arrived in 2000 or later plus all their U.S.-born children has little impact on the nation's age structure.

Whatever one's view of immigration, it is important to understand that its effect on America represents a choice. Selection criteria can be altered, as can the total number of people allowed into the country legally. Moreover, the level of resources devoted to reducing illegal immigration can also be reduced or increased.

The goal of this *Backgrounder* has been to provide information about the impact of immigration on American society to better inform the policy discussion about what kind of immigration policy should be adopted in the future. Absent a change in policy, 12 to 15 million additional legal and illegal immigrants will likely settle in the United States in just the next 10 years. Thus, immigration's impact will continue to grow if current trends are allowed to continue.

# Appendix

**Table A1. Immigrant Share by State 1980-2014**

State	2014	2010	2000	1990	1980
California	27.1%	27.2%	26.2%	21.7%	15.1%
New York	22.6%	22.2%	20.4%	15.9%	13.6%
New Jersey	21.9%	21.0%	17.5%	12.5%	10.3%
Florida	20.0%	19.4%	16.7%	12.9%	10.9%
Nevada	19.4%	18.8%	15.8%	8.7%	6.7%
Hawaii	17.6%	18.2%	17.5%	14.7%	14.2%
Texas	16.8%	16.4%	13.9%	9.0%	6.0%
Massachusetts	15.7%	15.0%	12.2%	9.5%	8.7%
Maryland	14.9%	13.9%	9.8%	6.6%	4.6%
D.C.	14.0%	13.5%	12.9%	9.7%	6.4%
Illinois	13.9%	13.7%	12.3%	8.3%	7.2%
Connecticut	13.7%	13.6%	10.9%	8.5%	8.6%
Arizona	13.7%	13.4%	12.8%	7.6%	6.0%
Rhode Island	13.4%	12.8%	11.4%	9.5%	8.9%
Washington	13.4%	13.1%	10.4%	6.6%	5.8%
Virginia	12.1%	11.4%	8.1%	5.0%	3.3%
Colorado	10.0%	9.8%	8.6%	4.3%	3.9%
Oregon	9.9%	9.8%	8.5%	4.9%	4.1%
New Mexico	9.9%	9.9%	8.2%	5.3%	4.0%
Georgia	9.9%	9.7%	7.1%	2.7%	1.7%
Delaware	8.6%	8.0%	5.7%	3.3%	3.2%
Utah	8.5%	8.0%	7.1%	3.4%	3.5%
Minnesota	7.8%	7.1%	5.3%	2.6%	2.6%
North Carolina	7.7%	7.5%	5.3%	1.7%	1.3%
Alaska	7.4%	6.9%	5.9%	4.5%	4.0%
Kansas	7.0%	6.5%	5.0%	2.5%	2.0%
Nebraska	6.7%	6.1%	4.4%	1.8%	2.0%
Pennsylvania	6.4%	5.8%	4.1%	3.1%	3.4%
Michigan	6.4%	6.0%	5.3%	3.8%	4.5%
New Hampshire	6.0%	5.3%	4.4%	3.7%	4.4%
Idaho	6.0%	5.5%	5.0%	2.9%	2.5%
Oklahoma	5.8%	5.5%	3.8%	2.1%	1.9%
Iowa	4.9%	4.6%	3.1%	1.6%	1.6%
Tennessee	4.9%	4.5%	2.8%	1.2%	1.1%
Wisconsin	4.9%	4.5%	3.6%	2.5%	2.7%
Indiana	4.8%	4.6%	3.1%	1.7%	1.9%
South Carolina	4.7%	4.7%	2.9%	1.4%	1.5%
Arkansas	4.7%	4.5%	2.8%	1.1%	1.0%
Louisiana	4.2%	3.8%	2.6%	2.1%	2.0%
Ohio	4.2%	4.1%	3.0%	2.4%	2.8%
Vermont	4.1%	4.4%	3.8%	3.1%	4.1%
Wyoming	3.8%	2.8%	2.3%	1.7%	2.0%
Maine	3.7%	3.4%	2.9%	3.0%	3.9%
Missouri	3.7%	3.9%	2.7%	1.6%	1.7%
Kentucky	3.7%	3.2%	2.0%	0.9%	0.9%
North Dakota	3.3%	2.5%	1.9%	1.5%	2.3%
Alabama	3.2%	3.5%	2.0%	1.1%	1.0%
South Dakota	2.9%	2.7%	1.8%	1.1%	1.4%
Montana	2.3%	2.0%	1.8%	1.7%	2.3%
Mississippi	2.2%	2.1%	1.4%	0.8%	0.9%
West Virginia	1.4%	1.2%	1.1%	0.9%	1.1%
Nation	13.3%	12.9%	11.1%	7.9%	6.2%

**Source:** 1980, 1990, and 2000 decennial Census and 2010 and 2014 ACS from American FactFinder.



**Table A2. Citizenship and Number in Immigrant Households by State (thousands)**

State	2014 Pct. Immigrants Who Are Citizens	2014 No. Persons in Immigrant Households	2014 Pct. Persons in Immigrant Households	1980 No. Persons in Immigrant Households	1980 Pct. Persons in Immigrant Households
California	49.0%	15,283	39.4%	4,544	19.2%
New York	54.1%	5,975	30.3%	3,043	17.3%
New Jersey	54.4%	2,598	29.1%	956	13.0%
Nevada	45.3%	781	27.5%	65	8.0%
Florida	53.8%	5,126	25.8%	1,228	12.6%
Texas	34.9%	6,716	24.9%	1,175	8.2%
Hawaii	56.9%	310	21.9%	164	16.9%
Massachusetts	52.3%	1,352	20.0%	626	10.9%
Maryland	48.8%	1,177	19.7%	230	5.5%
Illinois	49.4%	2,510	19.5%	1,077	9.4%
Arizona	39.0%	1,288	19.1%	211	7.8%
Washington	46.3%	1,237	17.5%	271	6.6%
Rhode Island	51.6%	184	17.5%	105	11.1%
Connecticut	48.0%	626	17.4%	345	11.1%
D.C.	38.6%	109	16.5%	42	6.6%
Virginia	49.4%	1,299	15.6%	192	3.6%
New Mexico	36.8%	310	14.9%	64	4.9%
Georgia	41.3%	1,418	14.0%	94	1.7%
Colorado	39.8%	734	13.7%	134	4.6%
Oregon	40.6%	534	13.5%	120	4.6%
Delaware	48.8%	111	11.8%	21	3.6%
Utah	38.0%	345	11.7%	65	4.4%
North Carolina	35.3%	1,069	10.7%	80	1.4%
Minnesota	50.3%	584	10.7%	118	2.9%
Kansas	37.9%	283	9.7%	53	2.3%
Nebraska	35.1%	162	8.6%	36	2.3%
Alaska	56.0%	63	8.5%	16	4.0%
Idaho	36.2%	138	8.4%	30	3.1%
Michigan	51.6%	822	8.3%	529	5.7%
Pennsylvania	51.1%	1,027	8.0%	489	4.1%
Oklahoma	32.4%	282	7.3%	60	2.0%
New Hampshire	55.0%	94	7.1%	47	5.1%
Arkansas	30.2%	206	6.9%	23	1.0%
Tennessee	36.0%	416	6.3%	50	1.1%
Indiana	38.7%	408	6.2%	122	2.2%
South Carolina	37.9%	299	6.2%	45	1.4%
Wisconsin	44.5%	353	6.1%	153	3.3%
Iowa	35.7%	190	6.1%	53	1.8%
Ohio	49.9%	586	5.1%	370	3.4%
Louisiana	40.1%	229	4.9%	95	2.3%
Wyoming	34.6%	28	4.8%	11	2.4%
Missouri	45.8%	285	4.7%	98	2.0%
Kentucky	36.3%	191	4.3%	35	1.0%
Maine	53.2%	53	4.0%	48	4.3%
Alabama	34.8%	189	3.9%	38	1.0%
North Dakota	38.9%	28	3.8%	16	2.5%
Vermont	52.2%	24	3.8%	27	5.2%
South Dakota	45.9%	32	3.8%	12	1.8%
Montana	47.8%	27	2.6%	21	2.6%
Mississippi	35.8%	76	2.5%	22	0.9%
West Virginia	49.8%	29	1.6%	25	1.3%
Nation	47.1%	58,197	18.3%	17,496	7.7%

**Source:** Citizenship rate based on 2014 ACS from American Factfinder at Census.gov. Persons in immigrant households are from the public use files of the 2014 ACS and 1980 Census.

**Table A3. Public School Enrollment and Poverty for Students from Immigrant and Native Households**

State	Number of Public School Students in Immigrant Households	Immigrant Share of Public School Population	Share of Public School Students in Immigrant Households in Poverty <sup>1</sup>	Share of Public School Students in Native Households in Poverty <sup>1</sup>	Public School Students from Immigrant Households as Share of All Students in Poverty <sup>1</sup>
Alabama	35,339	4.9%	52.3%	27.0%	9.0%
Alaska	9,352	7.4%	26.8%	15.5%	11.9%
Arizona	279,817	25.3%	39.9%	19.3%	41.0%
Arkansas	46,188	9.8%	31.6%	25.7%	11.8%
California	2,876,020	47.2%	29.4%	18.8%	58.3%
Colorado	170,168	20.2%	29.2%	12.1%	37.8%
Connecticut	108,007	20.3%	16.4%	13.7%	23.5%
Delaware	16,405	12.8%	17.2%	19.3%	11.6%
D.C.	13,800	22.2%	26.0%	32.8%	18.5%
Florida	779,156	29.1%	28.4%	22.3%	34.4%
Georgia	320,522	18.9%	32.9%	25.4%	23.3%
Hawaii	46,119	26.4%	17.7%	17.3%	26.8%
Idaho	35,299	11.9%	34.3%	16.1%	22.4%
Illinois	478,135	24.2%	23.3%	20.1%	27.0%
Indiana	76,485	7.4%	32.4%	20.3%	11.4%
Iowa	37,762	7.9%	20.7%	15.9%	10.1%
Kansas	66,077	14.0%	35.2%	14.9%	27.7%
Kentucky	37,244	5.6%	45.7%	24.0%	10.3%
Louisiana	33,711	5.0%	34.5%	28.8%	5.9%
Maine	7,109	4.0%	29.3%	18.1%	6.0%
Maryland	211,042	24.7%	13.9%	13.5%	25.3%
Massachusetts	206,538	21.9%	23.4%	13.0%	33.7%
Michigan	155,038	10.4%	27.3%	21.1%	13.1%
Minnesota	125,567	15.0%	29.1%	11.2%	31.4%
Mississippi	13,581	2.8%	15.8%	32.7%	1.4%
Missouri	52,820	5.9%	31.1%	19.5%	9.1%
Montana	3,505	2.4%	7.9%	19.7%	1.0%
Nebraska	37,969	12.5%	30.8%	15.4%	21.9%
Nevada	168,942	37.2%	27.0%	16.3%	49.5%
New Hampshire	13,955	7.5%	19.5%	12.7%	11.1%
New Jersey	441,091	32.7%	20.9%	13.7%	42.7%
New Mexico	67,851	20.5%	38.9%	27.4%	26.9%
New York	881,224	33.4%	27.2%	19.1%	41.7%
North Carolina	253,239	16.5%	36.5%	21.9%	24.7%
North Dakota	5,621	5.3%	23.7%	13.1%	9.3%
Ohio	101,203	6.0%	31.0%	21.5%	8.4%
Oklahoma	66,082	10.2%	35.1%	20.4%	16.5%
Oregon	114,958	20.4%	31.4%	16.1%	33.6%
Pennsylvania	160,563	9.4%	25.1%	18.5%	12.3%
Rhode Island	31,353	23.4%	28.6%	17.1%	33.7%
South Carolina	59,229	8.1%	37.1%	26.2%	11.1%
South Dakota	4,708	3.5%	35.1%	16.9%	7.0%
Tennessee	84,185	8.8%	49.1%	24.6%	16.2%
Texas	1,537,958	31.7%	35.9%	19.6%	46.0%
Utah	86,312	14.1%	34.2%	10.3%	35.2%
Vermont	2,877	3.4%	4.3%	12.8%	1.2%
Virginia	242,566	19.7%	17.8%	15.6%	21.8%
Washington	249,647	23.6%	22.0%	15.3%	30.9%
West Virginia	4,986	1.9%	40.9%	22.9%	3.3%
Wisconsin	69,843	8.3%	31.1%	14.8%	15.9%
Wyoming	5,285	5.8%	41.2%	10.3%	19.9%
Total	10,932,453	22.5%	29.3%	19.5%	30.5%

**Source:** 2014 public-use file of the ACS. Figures are based on on the nativity of the household head.

<sup>1</sup> Poverty population excludes some public school students who are primarily in foster care.

**Table A4. Public School Enrollment and Language of Students from Immigrant and Native Households**

State	Number of Students in Public School Who Speak Language Other than English	Share of Students in Public School Who Speak Language Other than English at Home	Share of All Public School Students in Immigrant Households Who Speak Language Other than English	Share of All Public School Students in Native Households Who Speak Language Other than English	Public School Students from Immigrant Households as a Share of All Students Who Speak a Language Other than English
Alabama	37,315	5.1%	75.6%	1.5%	71.6%
Alaska	22,941	18.1%	72.0%	13.8%	29.4%
Arizona	327,688	29.6%	82.0%	11.9%	70.0%
Arkansas	47,027	10.0%	84.5%	1.9%	83.0%
California	2,797,104	45.9%	79.2%	16.1%	81.4%
Colorado	184,927	21.9%	84.2%	6.2%	77.5%
Connecticut	113,583	21.4%	62.6%	10.9%	59.5%
Delaware	17,230	13.4%	67.2%	5.6%	64.0%
D.C.	11,988	19.3%	66.4%	5.8%	76.5%
Florida	770,881	28.8%	70.6%	11.6%	71.3%
Georgia	274,884	16.2%	73.2%	2.9%	85.3%
Hawaii	38,426	22.0%	49.5%	12.1%	59.4%
Idaho	35,866	12.1%	77.3%	3.3%	76.1%
Illinois	495,137	25.0%	80.0%	7.5%	77.3%
Indiana	88,972	8.7%	79.1%	3.0%	68.0%
Iowa	41,974	8.8%	75.2%	3.1%	67.7%
Kansas	67,196	14.2%	78.7%	3.7%	77.4%
Kentucky	39,508	6.0%	73.3%	2.0%	69.1%
Louisiana	42,139	6.3%	75.6%	2.6%	60.5%
Maine	9,819	5.5%	49.3%	3.7%	35.7%
Maryland	143,493	16.8%	56.8%	3.7%	83.5%
Massachusetts	206,130	21.9%	66.2%	9.5%	66.3%
Michigan	153,134	10.3%	69.0%	3.5%	69.8%
Minnesota	120,584	14.4%	74.0%	3.9%	77.1%
Mississippi	17,493	3.6%	70.1%	1.7%	54.4%
Missouri	52,277	5.8%	69.5%	1.9%	70.2%
Montana	5,341	3.6%	29.9%	3.0%	19.6%
Nebraska	42,319	13.9%	86.2%	3.6%	77.3%
Nevada	156,831	34.5%	77.0%	9.4%	82.9%
New Hampshire	10,256	5.5%	48.2%	2.1%	65.5%
New Jersey	400,223	29.7%	70.3%	10.0%	77.5%
New Mexico	116,821	35.3%	88.9%	21.5%	51.6%
New York	774,789	29.3%	68.1%	9.9%	77.4%
North Carolina	242,795	15.8%	79.3%	3.3%	82.7%
North Dakota	5,020	4.8%	50.5%	2.2%	56.6%
Ohio	101,449	6.0%	63.4%	2.3%	63.2%
Oklahoma	80,832	12.5%	86.3%	4.1%	70.5%
Oregon	118,907	21.1%	81.2%	5.7%	78.5%
Pennsylvania	181,565	10.6%	66.2%	4.9%	58.6%
Rhode Island	29,858	22.3%	72.2%	7.0%	75.9%
South Carolina	61,666	8.5%	72.3%	2.8%	69.5%
South Dakota	7,504	5.6%	78.3%	2.9%	49.1%
Tennessee	88,370	9.2%	75.4%	2.8%	71.8%
Texas	1,833,824	37.8%	84.8%	16.0%	71.1%
Utah	92,617	15.2%	77.2%	5.0%	71.9%
Vermont	5,193	6.2%	87.0%	3.3%	48.2%
Virginia	205,670	16.7%	67.8%	4.2%	79.9%
Washington	242,826	23.0%	77.9%	6.0%	80.1%
West Virginia	6,846	2.6%	66.7%	1.3%	48.6%
Wisconsin	92,386	10.9%	81.1%	4.6%	61.3%
Wyoming	6,086	6.7%	67.2%	2.9%	58.4%
Total	11,067,710	22.8%	76.1%	7.3%	75.2%

**Source:** 2014 public-use file of the ACS. Figures are based on on the nativity of the household head.

**Table A5. Average Number of Public School Students in Immigrant and Native Households**

State	Public Students per 100 Immigrant Households	Public Students per 100 Native Households	Difference in Average Number of Students per Household
Utah	95	63	49%
Idaho	88	47	85%
North Carolina	83	37	125%
Oklahoma	83	42	97%
Texas	82	45	84%
Georgia	82	43	91%
Nebraska	80	38	109%
Kansas	80	40	101%
Arkansas	79	40	100%
Colorado	78	37	111%
Nevada	76	36	113%
New Mexico	75	39	91%
Arizona	74	40	83%
Oregon	73	32	125%
Minnesota	71	36	96%
California	69	37	86%
Tennessee	67	37	83%
Washington	65	35	86%
South Carolina	65	39	69%
Iowa	65	37	74%
Wisconsin	64	35	82%
Illinois	64	37	72%
Virginia	63	37	73%
Maryland	61	35	74%
Indiana	61	40	53%
Alabama	61	39	56%
Michigan	60	37	60%
Missouri	58	37	56%
Kentucky	58	38	53%
North Dakota	57	34	70%
Hawaii	56	35	58%
Mississippi	55	44	26%
New Jersey	55	38	45%
Connecticut	52	37	42%
Alaska	52	51	2%
Rhode Island	51	29	72%
Florida	49	33	48%
South Dakota	49	40	22%
Wyoming	48	39	25%
Ohio	48	36	33%
Pennsylvania	48	34	42%
West Virginia	47	36	32%
Louisiana	47	39	23%
Delaware	47	35	33%
Massachusetts	47	35	36%
New York	47	33	44%
New Hampshire	41	35	15%
Vermont	37	33	14%
Montana	35	36	-2%
D.C.	35	20	71%
Maine	34	32	4%
Total	64	38	70%

**Source:** Based on Center for Immigration Studies analysis of the 2014 public-use files of the American Community Survey. Figures are based on the nativity of the household head.

**Table A6. Overcrowding in Immigrant and Native Households**

State	Share of Immigrant Households Overcrowded	Share of Native Households Overcrowded	Immigrant Households as a Share of Overcrowded Households	Immigrant Share of All Households
South Dakota	19.3%	1.7%	25.2%	2.9%
California	17.3%	3.7%	69.2%	32.5%
Hawaii	15.8%	6.6%	35.1%	18.4%
Utah	13.8%	2.3%	40.2%	9.9%
Iowa	13.7%	1.1%	38.2%	4.7%
Oregon	13.2%	2.1%	41.6%	10.2%
Minnesota	13.1%	1.1%	52.6%	8.3%
Nebraska	13.1%	1.1%	43.9%	6.4%
North Carolina	13.0%	1.7%	40.0%	8.1%
Texas	12.8%	2.8%	53.3%	20.1%
New York	12.7%	2.3%	65.8%	25.8%
Arizona	12.1%	3.1%	42.0%	15.6%
D.C.	12.0%	1.7%	54.5%	14.3%
Wyoming	11.8%	1.3%	30.4%	4.7%
Colorado	11.4%	1.6%	45.2%	10.7%
Washington	11.3%	1.6%	53.3%	14.2%
Oklahoma	11.2%	2.3%	22.0%	5.5%
Tennessee	11.1%	1.8%	24.6%	5.0%
Idaho	10.7%	2.0%	28.1%	6.8%
Nevada	10.4%	2.4%	54.9%	21.7%
Alabama	10.1%	1.5%	18.4%	3.2%
Arkansas	10.0%	1.9%	21.8%	5.1%
Louisiana	9.8%	2.2%	16.1%	4.2%
North Dakota	9.8%	1.8%	15.1%	3.2%
New Mexico	9.6%	2.7%	32.5%	11.9%
Vermont	9.1%	1.4%	16.3%	3.0%
Illinois	9.0%	1.5%	53.1%	15.7%
Wisconsin	8.9%	1.1%	29.3%	4.7%
Indiana	8.7%	1.6%	22.5%	5.0%
Kentucky	8.6%	1.6%	17.0%	3.8%
Georgia	8.5%	1.6%	38.8%	10.9%
West Virginia	8.3%	1.4%	7.8%	1.4%
Maryland	8.1%	1.2%	56.8%	15.9%
Kansas	8.0%	1.4%	31.8%	7.5%
South Carolina	7.8%	1.6%	20.8%	5.0%
Virginia	7.7%	1.1%	50.3%	12.4%
Missouri	7.7%	1.4%	18.0%	3.9%
Alaska	7.6%	5.5%	9.7%	7.3%
New Jersey	7.5%	1.4%	64.5%	25.1%
Maine	7.0%	1.3%	17.7%	3.8%
Florida	7.0%	1.9%	50.4%	21.7%
Mississippi	6.5%	2.6%	5.4%	2.2%
Massachusetts	6.4%	1.1%	55.4%	17.2%
Rhode Island	5.9%	0.9%	53.2%	15.1%
Connecticut	5.6%	1.0%	49.1%	15.3%
Delaware	5.2%	1.0%	37.2%	9.9%
Michigan	5.2%	1.2%	23.3%	6.8%
Ohio	4.9%	1.1%	18.0%	4.5%
Pennsylvania	4.3%	1.1%	22.7%	6.8%
New Hampshire	4.1%	1.4%	16.9%	6.6%
Montana	2.6%	2.1%	3.0%	2.4%
Total	11.6%	1.9%	51.0%	14.6%

**Source:** 2014 public-use files of the ACS.  
 Overcrowded is defined as more than one person per room, excluding bathrooms, porches, balconies, foyers, halls, or unfinished basements.



# End Notes

<sup>1</sup> The Census Bureau projects that from 2016 to 2025 net immigration (the difference between the number coming and going) will total 12.8 million. It also projects that by 2035 net immigration will total 26.3 million. The number of new arrivals will be higher as several hundred thousand immigrants return to their home countries each year. See Table 1 of the Census Bureau [National Population Projections](#) from 2014.

<sup>2</sup> In 2014, the Census Bureau implemented changes to the CPS designed primarily to better capture income. The 2014 data includes the old questions for 5/8 of the sample, while 3/8 of the sample used the new questions that are compatible with the 2015 CPS.

<sup>3</sup> “Immigrant” does not include those born abroad of American parents or those born in outlying territories of the United States such as Puerto Rico.

<sup>4</sup> The survey questions are complex and having a live person ask the questions almost certainly improves data quality. In contrast, most respondents to the ACS mail in their questionnaire and never actually speak to a Census Bureau employee. Moreover, respondents remain in the CPS for several months at a time and this, too, means that a relationship with the Bureau is developed during the time the household is surveyed.

<sup>5</sup> For the post-1980 immigrant population, the Department of Homeland Security estimates a 5 percent undercount in the CPS. See DHS publication: [“Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: January 2011”](#). The Pew Hispanic Center comes to a similar conclusion in their analysis of the Current Population Survey. See [“Trends in Unauthorized Immigration: Undocumented Inflow Now Trails Legal Inflow”](#), October 2008.

<sup>6</sup> Bryan Baker and Nancy Rytin, [“Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: January 2013”](#), Department of Homeland Security, March 2013. Table 2 shows a 1.85 million undercount among post-1980 immigrants in the 2011 ACS. This is equal to about 5 percent of the post-2011 foreign-born population.

<sup>7</sup> In 1890, the immigrant share was 14.77 percent and in 1910 the figure was 14.70 percent. See Campbell Gibson and Kay Jung, “Historical Census Statistics on the Foreign-Born Population of the United States: 1850-2000”, Census Bureau Population Division Working Paper No. 81, February 2006. In 2023 the Census projects the foreign-born share of the population will be 14.79 percent. The projections also indicate that the share will continue to increase, reaching 15.82 percent by 2030, 17.13 percent by 2040, and 18.77 percent by 2060. See Table 2 of the Census Bureau [National Population Projections](#) from 2014.

<sup>8</sup> The figures for total immigrant population in 2000 are from the decennial census, not the ACS, because the Census is generally considered a better source of data on the foreign-born for that year.

<sup>9</sup> See for example, Steven A. Camarota, [“Immigration and Economic Stagnation: An Examination of Trends 2000 to 2010”](#), Center for Immigration Studies *Background*, November 2010. See also Steven A. Camarota, [“Homeward Bound: Recent Immigration Enforcement and the Decline in the Illegal Alien Population”](#), Center for Immigration Studies *Background*, July 2008; and Steven A. Camarota and Karen Zeigler, [“A Shifting Tide: Recent Trends in the Illegal Immigrant Population”](#), Center for Immigration Studies *Background*, July 2009.

<sup>10</sup> It may also be worth pointing out some seeming incongruity in the Census Bureau data itself reported in Figures 2 and 3. At times during the last 14 years, growth in the foreign-born population relative to new arrivals seems to be out of line. There are breaks in the continuity of the ACS data due to changes in weighting and the full implementation of the survey. Nevertheless, even taking into account the discontinuity in the data, it is difficult to reconcile some of the results in Figures 2 and 3. For example, new arrivals were very high in 2000 based on the year of arrival data (Figure 3) from the 2001 ACS, but there is little growth in foreign-born between 2000 and 2001 (Figure 2). However, the 2000 total foreign-born number is from the decennial Census, while the 2001 total and the arrival data for that year are from the ACS. The ACS was not fully implemented in 2001, and the survey differs from the Census in other ways that may explain why high levels of new immigration in 2000 did not produce high growth in the immigrant population. Another seeming incongruity is the high growth from 2004 to 2005 of 1.4 million even though new arrivals in 2004 were 1.35 million. However, it must be remembered that

the ACS reflects a July 1 estimate of the U.S. population, including the foreign-born. So individual year-of-arrival data, which corresponds to calendar year, does not directly compare to growth from July 1 to July 1 of each year. Moreover, the ACS was not fully implemented until 2005 and individuals in group quarters were not included in the ACS until 2006. These factors also impact year-over-year comparisons. All of these issues create important breaks in the continuity of the data. Finally, we are not sure how immigrants returning to the United States after spending time outside of the country respond to year-of-arrival question. This “re-immigration” adds further ambiguity to any analysis using the year-of-arrival question.

<sup>11</sup> For example, an immigrant who came in 1995, went home in 2008, and returned in 2011 might report their year of arrival as 1995. In this circumstance they could contribute to growth in the immigrant population without showing up as a new arrival.

<sup>12</sup> Because the public-use ACS file reports individual year of arrival, it is a straightforward matter to calculate the average length of time immigrants have been in the country in 2014.

<sup>13</sup> The figures for Tables 3 and 4 come from a Center for Immigration Studies analysis of the 2014 public-use file of the American Community Survey, which shows 42,235,749 immigrants. However, the public-use ACS, while designed to be representative of the ACS data used internally by the Census Bureau, the source for American FactFinder, does not exactly match the internal file, hence the 156,000 (0.37 percent) difference in the totals found in Tables 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

<sup>14</sup> Countries that can be identified in the public-use 2014 ACS file and for which there were actually respondents by region are as follows: **Central America:** Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama. **South America:** Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela, and South America not specified. **South Asia:** Afghanistan, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, and Nepal. **East Asia:** China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, Burma, Asia not specified. **Europe:** Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, England, Scotland, United Kingdom, Ireland, Belgium, France, Netherlands, Switzerland, Albania, Greece, Macedonia, Italy, Portugal, Azores, Spain, Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia, Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia, Montenegro, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Byelorussia, Moldova, Ukraine, Armenia, Georgia, Russia, USSR not specified, and Europe not specified. **Caribbean:** Bermuda, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Antigua-Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Trinidad and Tobago, and Caribbean and West Indies and Americas not specified. **Middle East:** Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Iran, Iraq, Israel/Palestine, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Syria, Turkey, Yemen, Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Libya, Sudan, and North Africa not specified. **Sub-Saharan Africa:** Cape Verde, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Eritrea, Cameroon, South Africa, Zaire, Congo, Zambia, Togo, Gambia, and Africa and Western and Eastern Africa not specified.

<sup>15</sup> This number is different from the 5.6 million arrivals shown in Figure 3 because 5.2 million represents the number who arrived and are still in the country in 2014.

<sup>16</sup> Using the characteristics of the household head and the children’s age, we estimate based on the ACS that there were 3.608 million children born in the United States to immigrants over this time period. Of these births, 206,258 were to an immigrant who arrived in 2010 or later. All of these children were living in the United States in 2014.

<sup>17</sup> It may also be helpful to think about the limitations of using just growth in the immigrant population by considering the fact that if one million immigrants enter the country each year, at some point one million immigrants will eventually die a year, assuming no out-migration. This would mean that the arrival of one million new immigrants roughly equaled deaths and thus there is no growth in the foreign-born population. But of course the U.S. population would in fact be much larger with the arrival of one million new immigrants regardless of mortality.

<sup>18</sup> For a discussion of the decline in immigrant education relative to natives, see Steven A. Camarota, [“The Slowing Progress of Immigrants: An Examination of Income, Home Ownership, and Citizenship, 1970-2000”](#), Center for Immigration Studies *Background*, March 2001.

<sup>19</sup> This figure refers to persons aged 18 or older who are in the workforce. To be in the workforce one has to be either employed or actively looking for work. Persons not working but actively looking for work are considered unemployed.

<sup>20</sup> The median figures in Table 7 and all subsequent tables, including those for households, are calculated using the Census Bureau method of grouping data into \$2,500 cells. While the median figures in this *Backgrounder* very closely match median figures published by the Census Bureau, they may not exactly match in all cases because the bureau re-codes income figures in the public-use file of the CPS in order to protect anonymity.

<sup>21</sup> Of the 11.8 million children born to immigrants between 2000 and 2014, 3.9 million were births to immigrants who actually arrived in the is time period. The remainder of the births were to immigrants who arrived earlier. All figures are for those born to immigrants in the United States who were in the country in 2014.

<sup>22</sup> It should be noted that the public-use file of the ACS only provides ages as a whole number, no decimals or months are provided. Perhaps if age was reported in more detail, it would make a larger difference in median age.

<sup>23</sup> For a more technical definition of the Total Fertility Rate see United Nations Statistics Division [definition](#) of TFR.

<sup>24</sup> The TFR for natives is actually 1.778, and the overall TFR is actually 1.854, so the difference is .08.

<sup>25</sup> Carl P. Schmertmann, “Immigrants’ Ages and the Structure of Stationary Populations with Below-Replacement Fertility”, *Demography*, Vol. 29, No. 4, November 1992.

<sup>26</sup> The 2000 Census Bureau population projections mentioned above can be found [here](#).

<sup>27</sup> Stephen Tordella, Steven Camarota, Tom Godfrey, and Nancy Wemmerus Rosene, “[Evaluating the Role of Immigration in U.S. Population Projections](#)”, presented at the annual meeting of the Population Association of America, May 2012. Using the Census Bureau’s projections as a baseline, the paper shows that immigration between 2010 and 2060 would add roughly 140 million residents to the U.S. population. However, immigration would only increase the share of the population in 2060 that was of working age (16 to 65) from 58.5 percent of the population (without immigration) to 59.9 percent. (See Figures 4 and 5 in that report.)

<sup>28</sup> It should be noted that the unemployment rate cannot be calculated by comparing the difference between those with a job and those in the labor force because the Bureau of Labor Statistics calculates unemployment by dividing those actively looking for a job by the labor force. In contrast, the share holding a job or the share in the labor force are based on the entire 18- to 65-year-old population.

<sup>29</sup> Like official U.S. government poverty statistics, the poverty statistics in this report do not include persons under age 15 unrelated to the household’s head. This excludes about 400,000 children, who are mostly in foster care.

<sup>30</sup> Figures for natives exclude the young (under 18) U.S.-born children of immigrant fathers.

<sup>31</sup> Countries that can be identified in the public-use 2015 CPS ASEC and for which there were actually respondents by region are as follows: **Central America:** Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama. **South America:** Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela, South America not specified. **South Asia:** Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka. **East Asia:** Myanmar (Burma), Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, South Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, Asia not specified. **Europe:** Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Azores, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Yugoslavia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine, USSR, Montenegro, Europe not specified. **Caribbean:** Bermuda, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts-Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, West Indies not specified. **Middle East:** Azerbaijan, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Yemen, Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan. **Sub-Saharan Africa:** Cameroon, Cape Verde, Congo, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Africa Not Specified.

<sup>32</sup> See Sarita A. Mohanty, Steffie Woolhandler, David U. Himmelstein, Susmita Pati, Olveen Carrasquillo, and David H. Bor, “Health Care Expenditures of Immigrants in the United States: A Nationally Representative Analysis”, *American Journal of Public Health*, Vol. 95, No. 8, August 2005.

<sup>33</sup> Steven A. Camarota, [“Immigrants in the United States A Profile of America’s Foreign-Born Population”](#), Center for Immigration Studies *Background*, 2012, p. 29.

<sup>34</sup> Figures for immigrants include the U.S.-born child (under 18) of immigrant fathers. Figures for natives exclude these children.

<sup>35</sup> See, for example, Figures 20-1, 20-2, and 20-3 in Dianne A. Schmidley, [“Profiles of the Foreign-born Population in the United States 2000”](#), U.S. Census Bureau, Series P23-206, December 2001.

<sup>36</sup> John L. Czajka and Gabrielle Denmead, [“Income Data for Policy Analysis: A Comparative Assessment of Eight Surveys”](#), prepared for Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), December 2008.

<sup>37</sup> Laura Wheaton, [“Underreporting of Means-Tested Transfer Programs in the CPS and SIPP”](#), Proceedings of the American Statistical Association, Social Statistics Section, 2007. Jamie Rubenstein Taber and Brett O’Hara, [“The Case of the Missing Medicaid Enrollees: Identifying the Magnitude and Causes of the Medicaid Undercount in the SIPP”](#), U.S. Census Bureau paper presented at the annual APPAM conference, 2014.

<sup>38</sup> Steven A. Camarota, [“Welfare Use by Immigrant and Native Households”](#), Center for Immigration Studies *Background*, September 2015. See Table A1.

<sup>39</sup> The Additional Child Tax Credit can also be referred to as the refundable portion of the Child Tax Credit. Table 12 reports those who are eligible for cash from the government, not just a refund of money they paid as taxes.

<sup>40</sup> Refugee-sending countries are Albania, the former Yugoslavia, the former USSR, Afghanistan, Iraq, Cuba, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Burma, Somalia, Sudan, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Nicaragua, Nepal, Kosovo, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Latvia, Lithuania, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Russia, Ukraine, and Moldova

<sup>41</sup> See Kevin S. Blake, Rebecca L. Kellerson, and Aleksandra Simic, [“Measuring Overcrowding in Housing”](#), prepared for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Policy Development and Research, 2007. It is worth noting that, for reasons that are not entirely clear, there has been a significant decline in household overcrowding. There is debate about how much of this decline is due to changes in data collection and how much is a real decline. But this issue does not affect the analysis in this report because we are only examining figures for a single year.

<sup>42</sup> To calculate household size we exclude all those in group quarters such as prisons, nursing homes, and college dorms.

<sup>43</sup> Calculations of home ownership exclude those in group quarters.

<sup>44</sup> All immigrants in the ACS are asked what year they came to the United States. For the purposes of this analysis, 20 years is defined in the 2014 ACS as having entered the country in 1993, 1994, or 1995. We average three years together in order to obtain a more robust estimate.

<sup>45</sup> The March Current Population Survey (CPS) from 2014 shows that 22.5 percent of school-age children have an immigrant father and the March CPS for 2015 shows 22.9 percent of the school-age population has an immigrant father. Both the ACS and CPS produce very similar results; however we use the ACS because, unlike the March CPS, it distinguishes between public and private school. Another advantage of the ACS is that it includes a question on language that is an important issue in public education.

<sup>46</sup> As is the case in other tables, the figures for natives exclude the U.S.-born children under age 18 of immigrant fathers.

<sup>47</sup> Poverty, earnings, health insurance, and welfare use are based on the March 2015 CPS. Those in the country five or fewer years arrived in 2010 or later. Those in the United States for 20 years in 2015 arrived from 1992 to 1997. By 2015, on average these immigrants have lived in the United States for 20.4 years. As already discussed, respondents are grouped by multiple-year cohorts of arrival by the Census Bureau in the public-use file. There is no way in the public-use CPS to look at only those who arrived in 1995 who would have been in the country for 20 years exactly in 2015. Looking at immigrants who arrived 1992 to 1997 also has the advantage of providing a larger sample. Home ownership is based on the ACS, and those in the country for 20 years arrived in 1993, 1994, or 1995. In the public-use ACS individual years of arrival are reported.

<sup>48</sup> It is not possible to identify generations beyond the third with the CPS, so all those with two U.S.-born parents constitute the “third generation plus”, regardless of where their grandparents were born.

<sup>49</sup> The 2015 CPS shows that, of U.S.-born children under age 18 with an immigrant father, 59 percent are Hispanic.

<sup>50</sup> See Brian Duncan and Stephen J. Trejo, “Ancestry versus Ethnicity: The Complexity and Selectivity of Mexican Identification in the United States”, pp. 31-66 in Amelie F. Constant, Konstantinos Tatsiramos, and Klaus F. Zimmermann, eds., *Ethnicity and Labor Market Outcomes* (Research in Labor Economics, Volume 29). And Brian Duncan and Stephen J. Trejo, “Who Remains Mexican? Selective Ethnic Attrition and the Intergenerational Progress of Mexican Americans”, pp. 285-320 in David Leal and Stephen Trejo, eds., *Latinos and the Economy: Integration and Impact in Schools, Labor Markets, and Beyond*, New York: Springer, 2011.

<sup>51</sup> A modest share of the “third generation plus” are descendants of people living in Texas or the American Southwest when it was part of the Spanish Empire or Mexico.

<sup>52</sup> The median earnings of foreign-born Hispanics is \$24,217, or 66 percent that of non-Hispanic natives (\$36,556); for second generation Hispanics it is \$26,055 or 71 percent that of non-Hispanic natives; and it is \$29,749, or 81 percent that of non-Hispanic natives for third-generation Hispanics.

<sup>53</sup> The average age of adult second-generation Hispanics in the 2015 CPS is 34.1 years and for the third generation plus it is 41.1 years. This compares to the average age of 48.1 years for adult U.S.-born non-Hispanics.

<sup>54</sup> In his work, Harvard economist George Borjas has emphasized that large initial differences in human capital among the immigrant generation can persist through into the next generations. See for example, George J. Borjas, “The Intergenerational Mobility of Immigrants”, *Journal of Labor Economics*, 1993, and George Borjas, [“Making It in America: Social Mobility in the Immigrant Population”](#), National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper 12088, 2006. See also Stephen J. Trejo, “Why Do Mexican Americans Earn Low Wages?” *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 105, No. 6, December 1997, and Gretchen Livingston and Joan R. Kahn, “An American Dream Unfulfilled: The Limited Mobility of Mexican Americans”, *Social Science Quarterly*, Volume 83, Issue 4, December 2002.

<sup>55</sup> As reported earlier in this study, 45 percent are on Medicaid or are uninsured based on the 2015 CPS alone. This is very similar to the 47 percent shown when using a combined sample of the 2014 and 2015 CPS.