

# **We Have Never Been Here Before: Understanding Contemporary Immigration**

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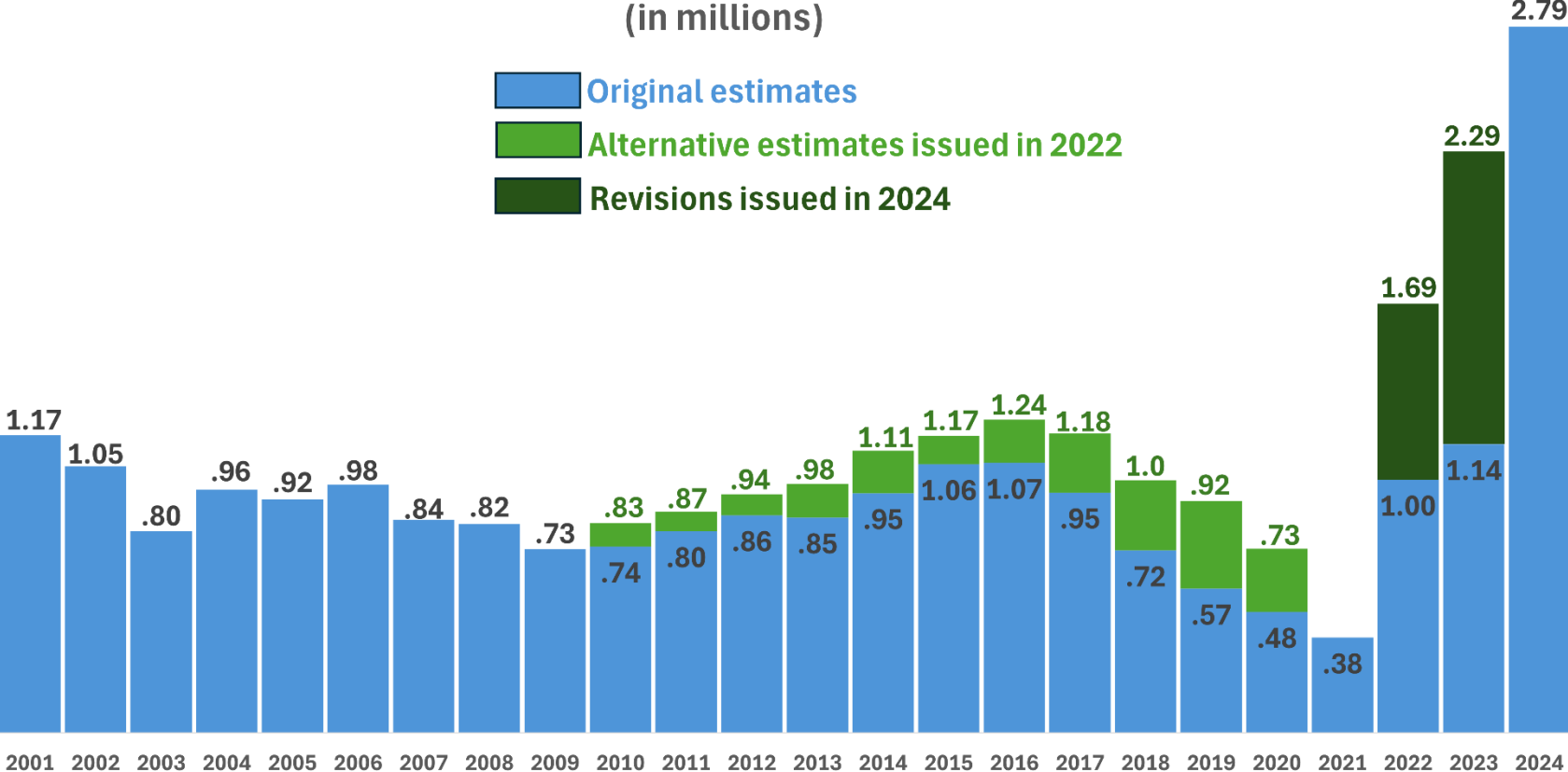


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# Figure 1

The Census Bureau has revised its estimate of net international migration upwards more than once, with revisions issued in 2024 being enormous.

(in millions)

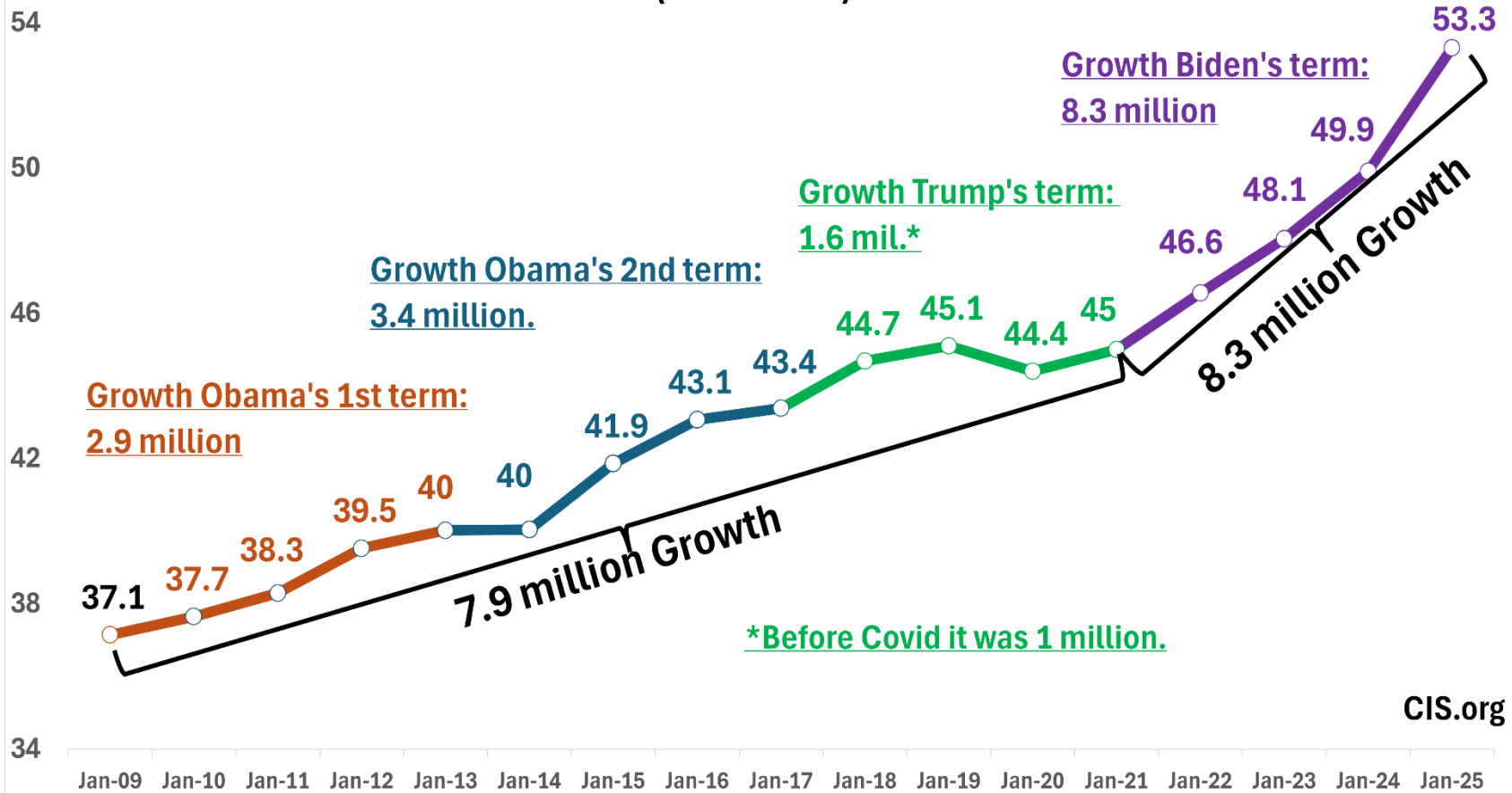


Source: Census Bureau's estimate of Net International Migration (NIM) 2022 to 2024 are from the Vintage 2024 population estimates, with revisions. Original NIM estimate for 2020 and 2021 are from the Vintage 2023 population estimates. Original NIM 2010 to 2020 are from the 2020 population estimates. Alternative NIM estimates are from the 2010 to 2020 Census Bureau blog on revised migration methodology released with the Vintage 2022 estimates. NIM for 2001 to 2009 are from the Annual Estimates for states and counties 2000 to 2010, issued March 2012. Migration is measured from July 1st of one year to June 30th of next, not calendar years.

# Figure 2

**Growth in the total foreign-born population in the U.S. was larger during Biden's 4 years than in the preceding 12 years.**

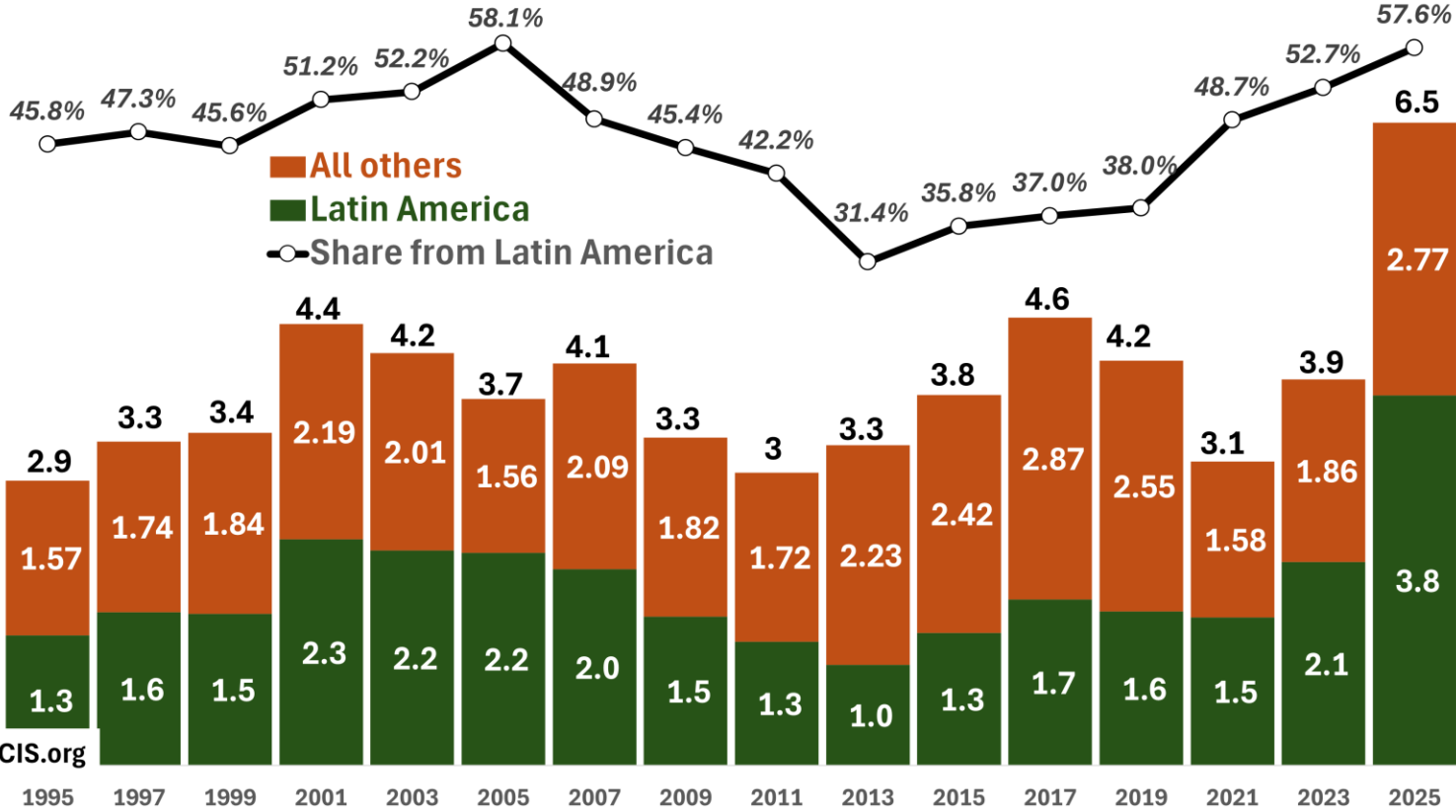
(in millions)



Source Public-use January Current Population Surveys 2009 to 2025.

# Figure 3

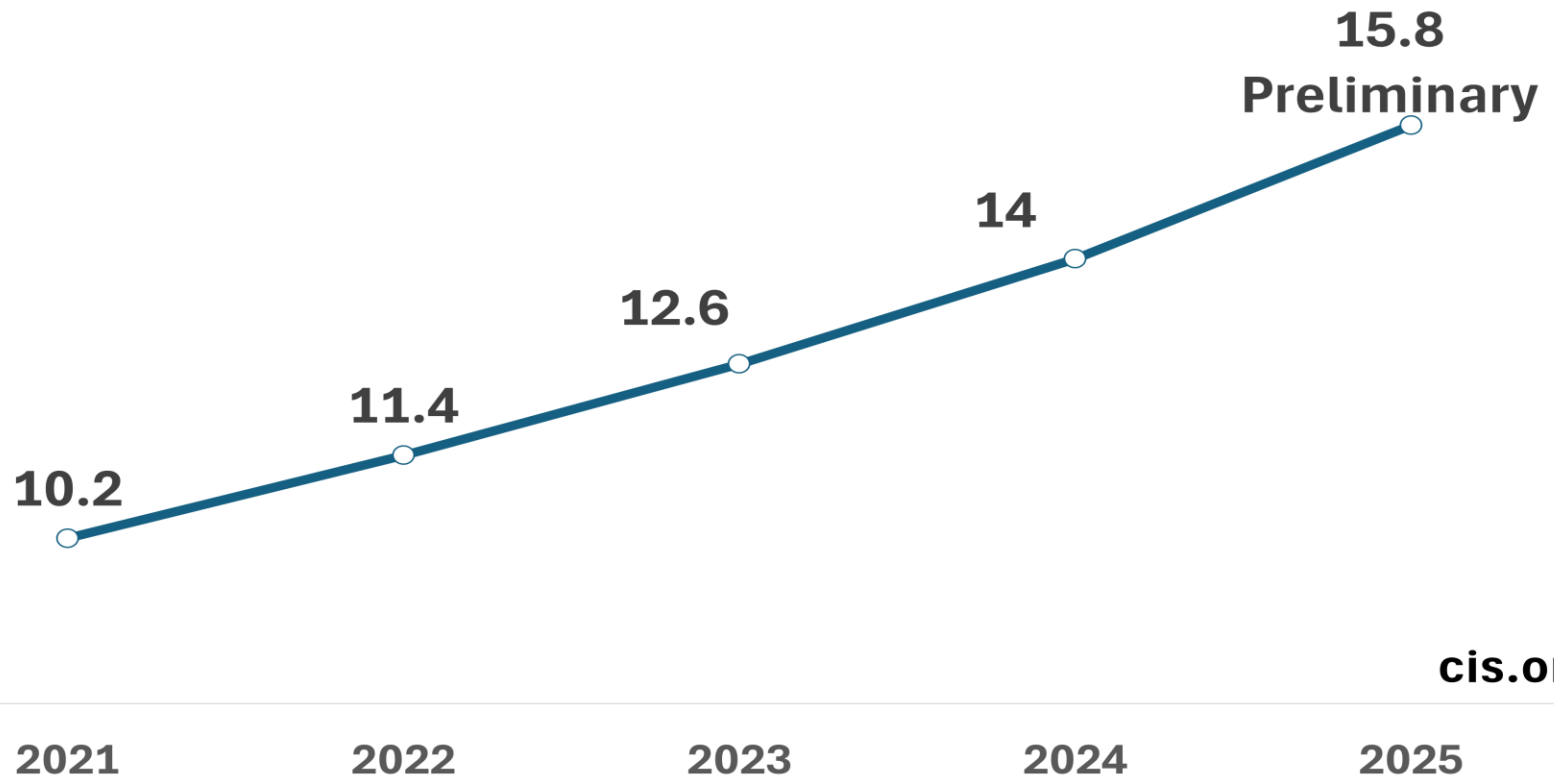
Share of new arrivals from Latin America has increased significantly and is the primary factor driving growth in foreign born.  
(in millions)



Source: Public-use January Current Population Survey (CPS). Based on responses to the year of entry question in the survey. In odd numbered years, new arrivals in the CPS includes the current year and the three prior years.

# Figure 4

**Estimated Illegal Immigrant Population in the United States  
based on the Current Population Survey, 2021 to 2025  
(in millions)**



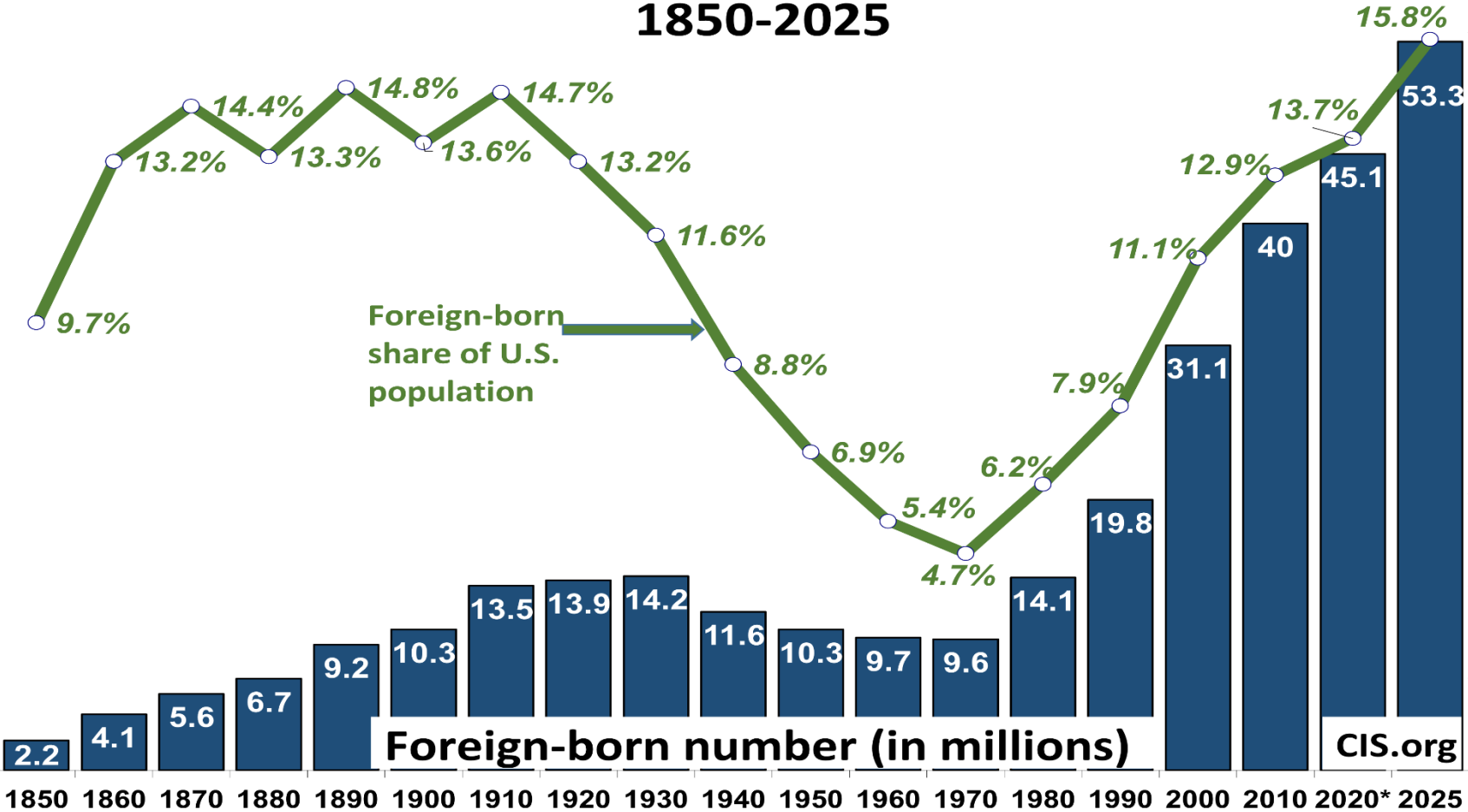
**cis.org**

Estimates based on CIS analysis of the public-use monthly Current Population Survey for January, February and March for 2021 to 2024.  
2025 estimate is based only on January data .

# Figure 5

The foreign-born number and share are higher now than at any time in American history.

1850-2025



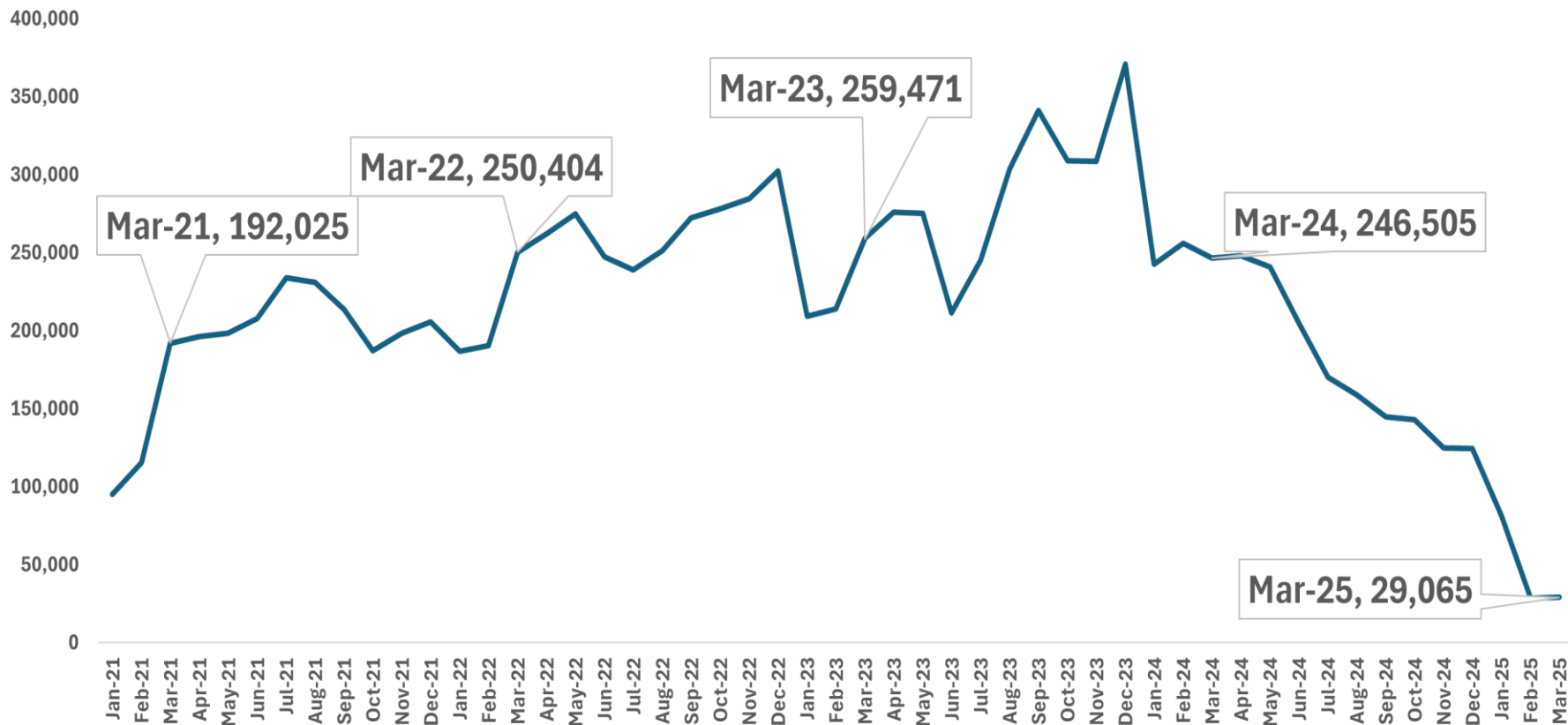
Source: Decennial Census for 1850 to 2000, American Community Survey for 2010 and 2020, January Current Population Survey for 2025. \*The 2020 ACS shows only 43.5 million foreign born residents -- 13.2% of the population. However the Census Bureau reports that it does not have confidence in the 2020 ACS due to pandemic related issues. Averaging the 2019 and 2021 ACS shows a foreign born number that was 45.1 million and 13.7% of the population.

# Unprecedented Scale Under Biden

- **By 2025 foreign-born share and percentage at record highs**
  - 1.1 million green cards annually
  - Total legal population ~38 million, 26 million naturalized citizens
  - Illegal population now ~16 million, up >50% under Biden
  - ~7 million inadmissible aliens released, ~2.1 million border got-aways
  - Unknown number of border crossers unseen, Visa overstays
  - >12 million legal and illegal arrivals under Biden
- **Immigrants are driving all or nearly all population growth**
  - In last 3 years, Net International Migration equaled 84% of pop. growth
  - Counting births to immigrants means they accounts for all pop. growth
- **Immigration begets more immigration**
  - Current size of foreign born creates enormous immigration pressure
  - The next 10, maybe 20 years, migration pressures will be very high

# Figure 6

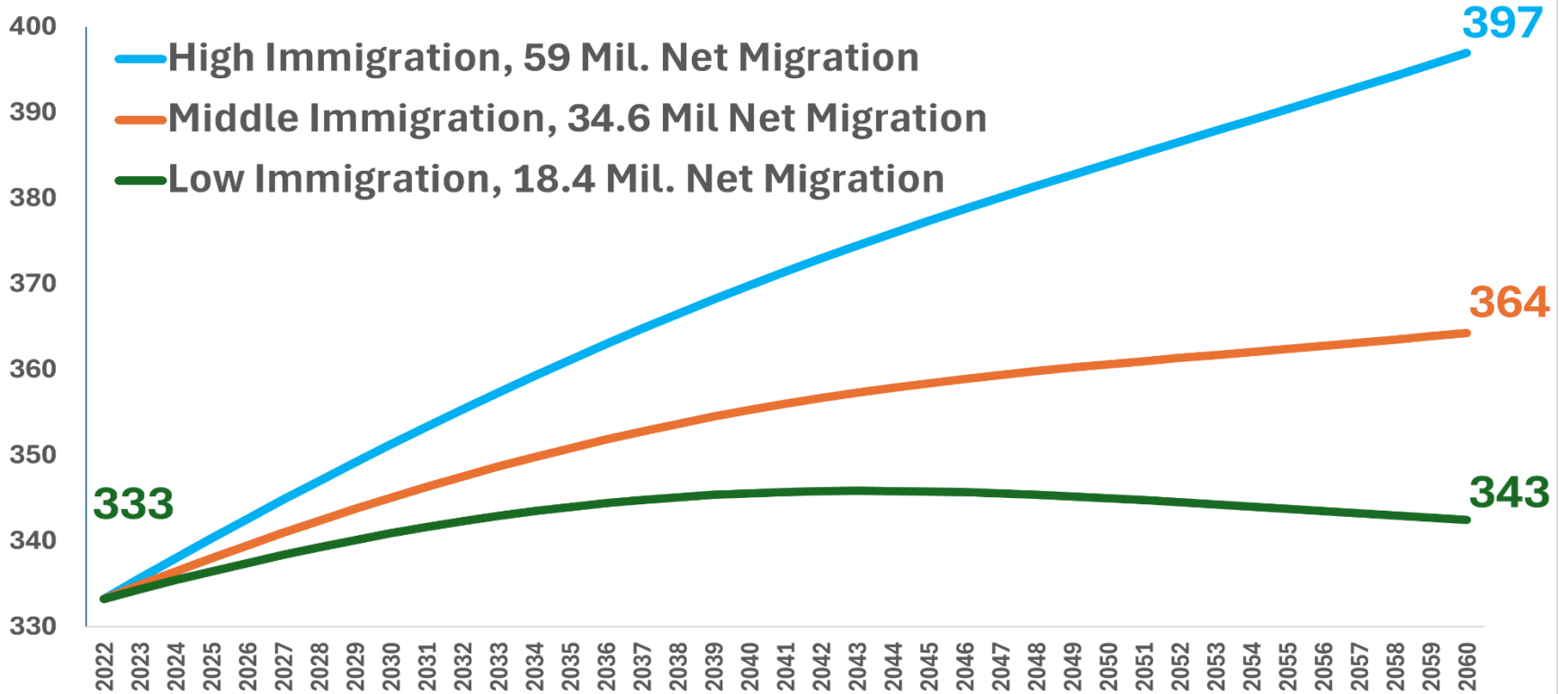
Nationwide border encounters exploded under Biden, then at the end of his administration dropped, and have fallen further under Trump



Source: U.S. Border Patrol and Office of Field Operations Encounters by Area of Responsibility and Component

# Figure 7

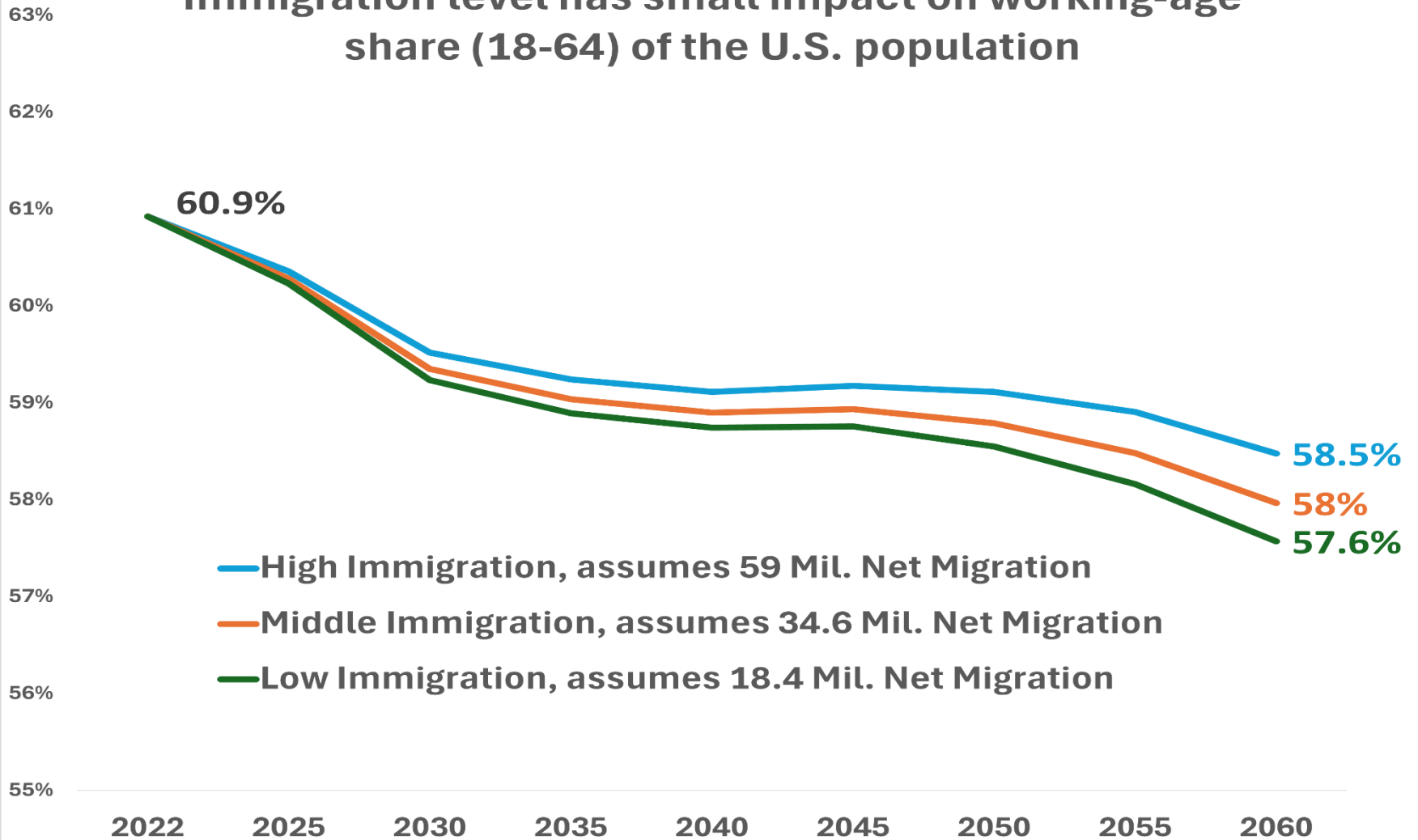
## Level of immigration has large impact on future size of U.S. population (in millions)



Census Bureau 2024 population projections.

# Figure 8

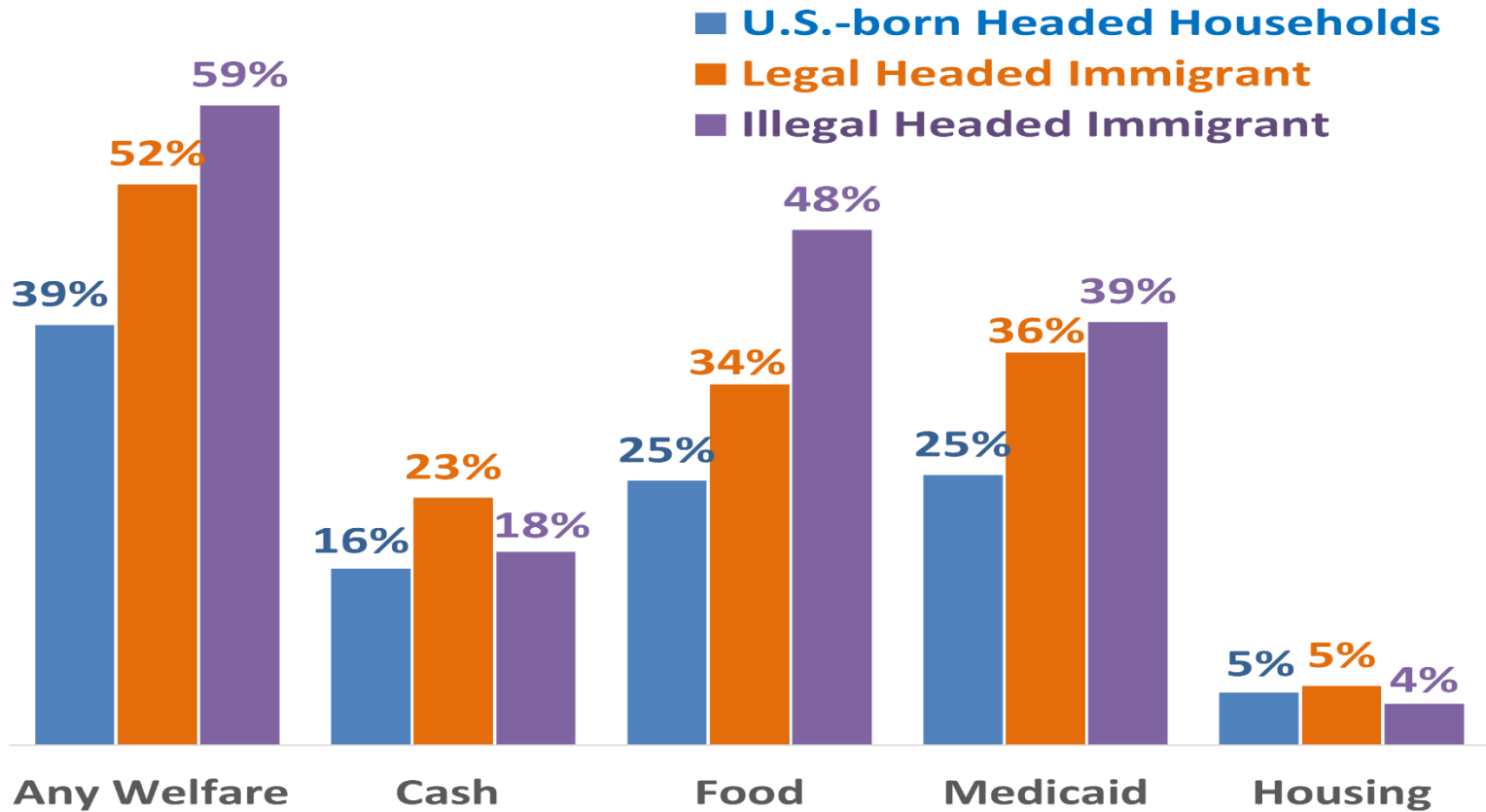
## Immigration level has small impact on working-age share (18-64) of the U.S. population



Census Bureau 2024 population projections.

# Figure 9

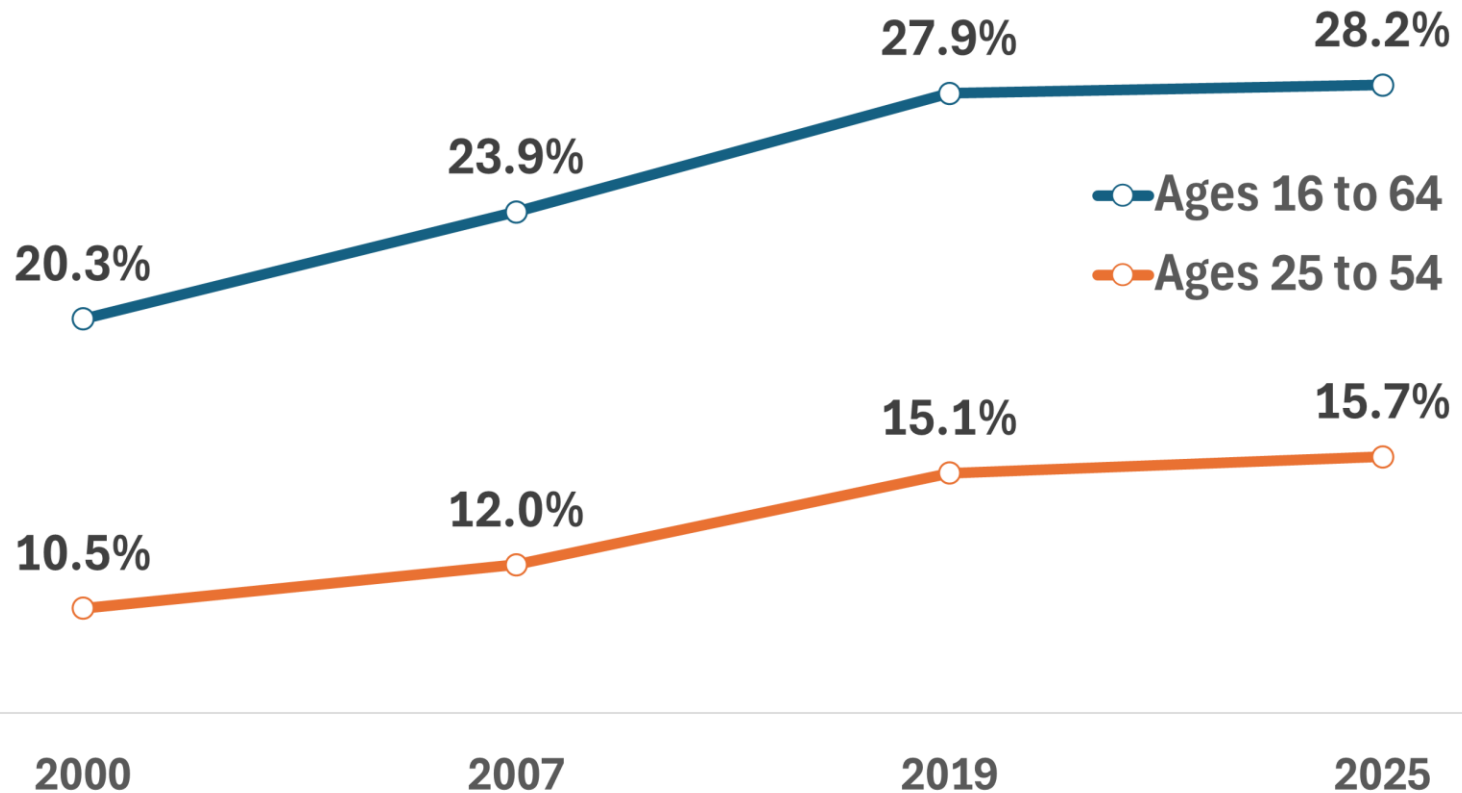
Both legal and Illegal Immigrant households have higher welfare use than the U.S.-born.



Source: Public use file of the 2022 Survey of Income and Program Participation. Cash includes TANF, SSI and the EITC. Food Assistance includes Food Stamps, WIC and free and reduced priced lunch/breakfast. [www.cis.org](http://www.cis.org)

# Figure 10

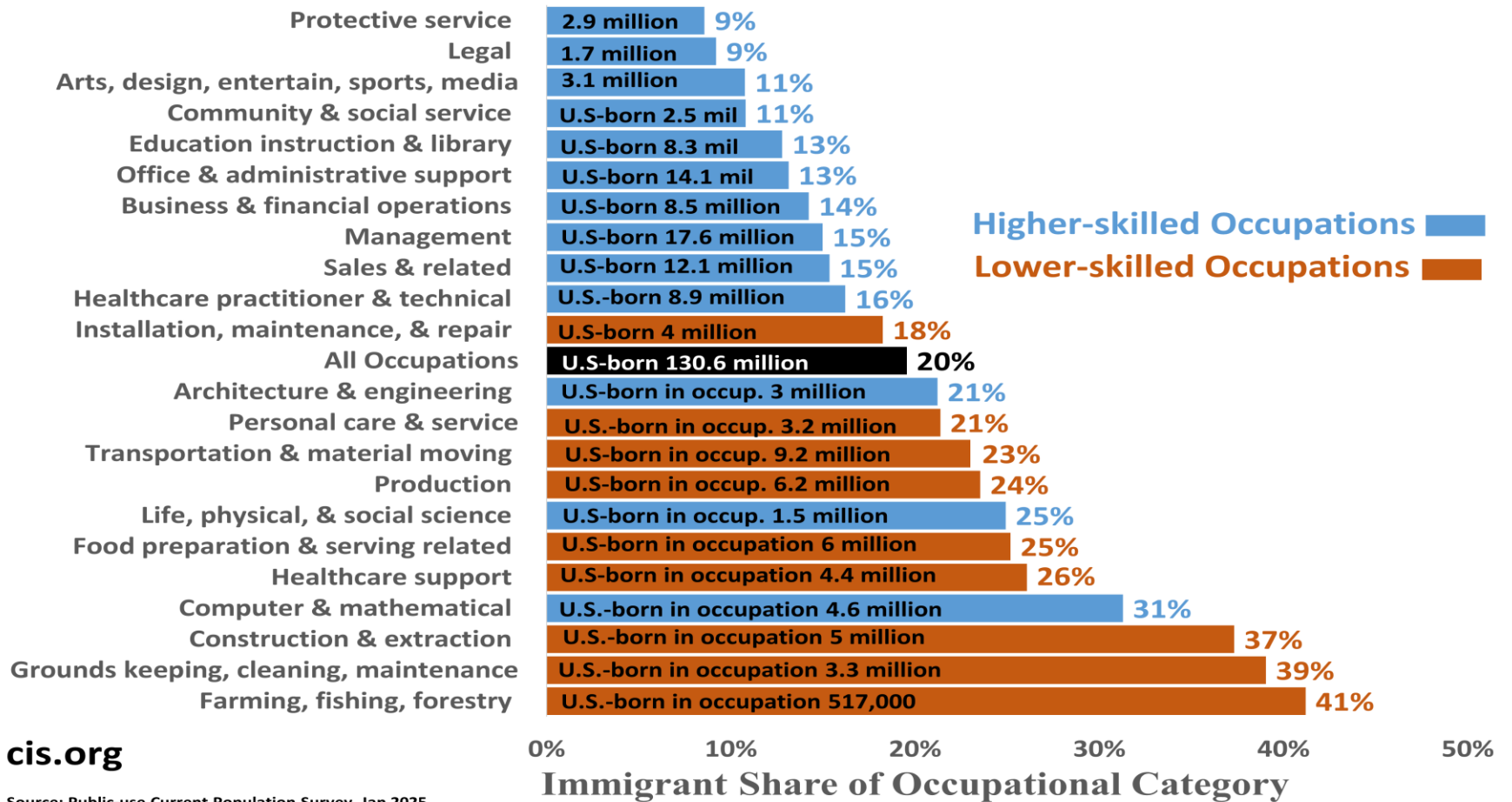
**Comparing peaks in the business cycle shows a significant increase in U.S.-born men without a bachelor's not in the labor force.**



Source: Public use January Current Population Survey 2000, 2007, 2019, and 2025.

# Figure 11

Occupational categories with the highest immigrant shares in 2025 tend to be lower-skilled, though the millions of U.S.-born workers doing such jobs still constitute the majority of workers.



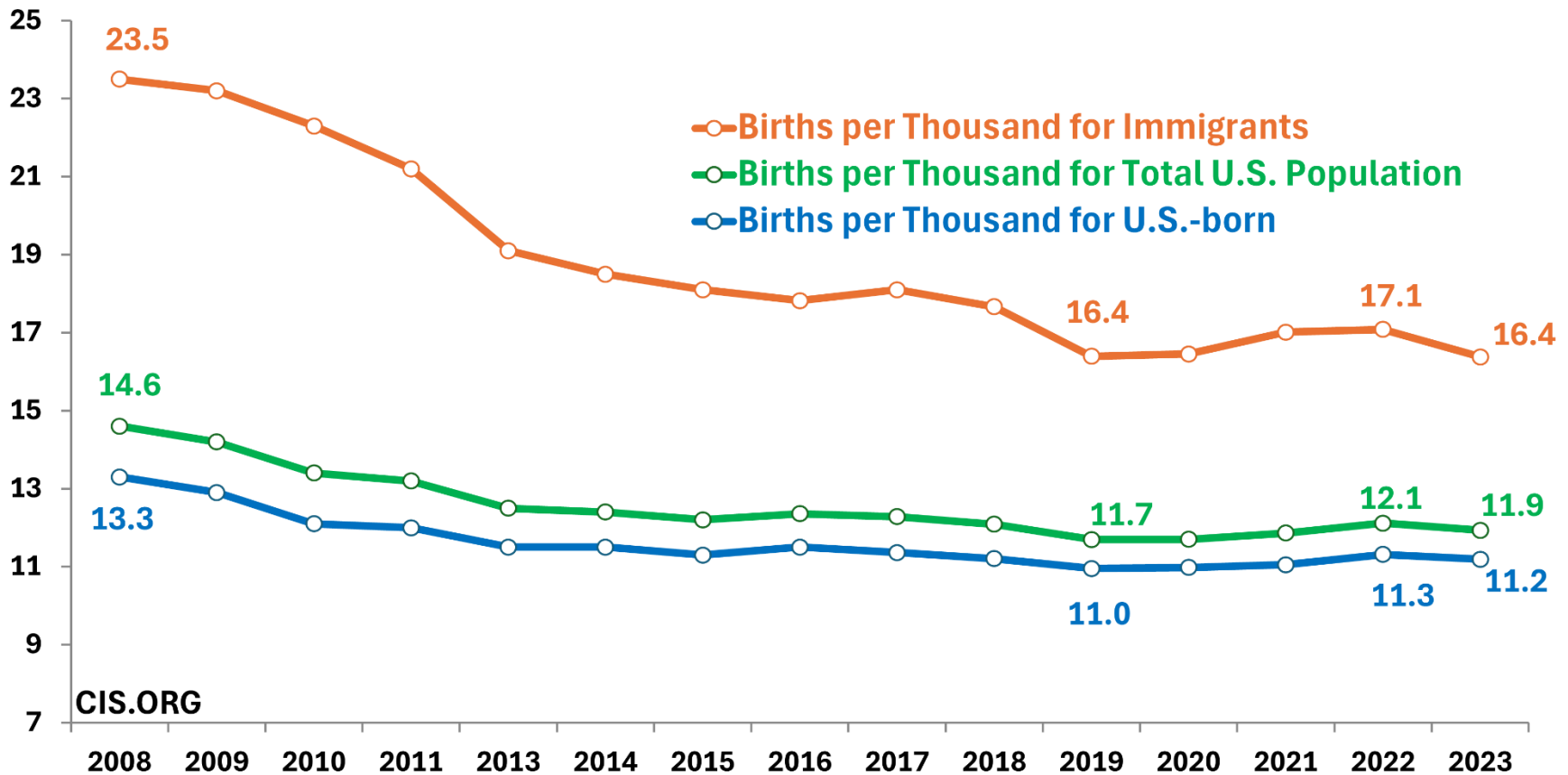
# Reasons for Concern

- **Immigration driving nearly all population growth**
  - Do we want to be a much larger more densely settled country?
- **Numbers may overwhelm the assimilation process**
  - Never been here before as a country
  - 31% of public-school students now have an immigrant parent
  - We can't agree on what we want from immigrants
    - Is it Louis Brandeis (1915), “interests and affections” must be “deeply rooted here” and “brought into complete harmony with our ideals” **OR** Immigrants should retain much of their culture & allegiances
- **Large share have modest levels of education**
  - Many less-educated Americans are not in labor force
  - Adds significantly to low-income population
  - Strains social services
- **Huge foreign-born population creates enormous pressure for more immigration: sociologically, politically, economically**

**END**

# Figure 12

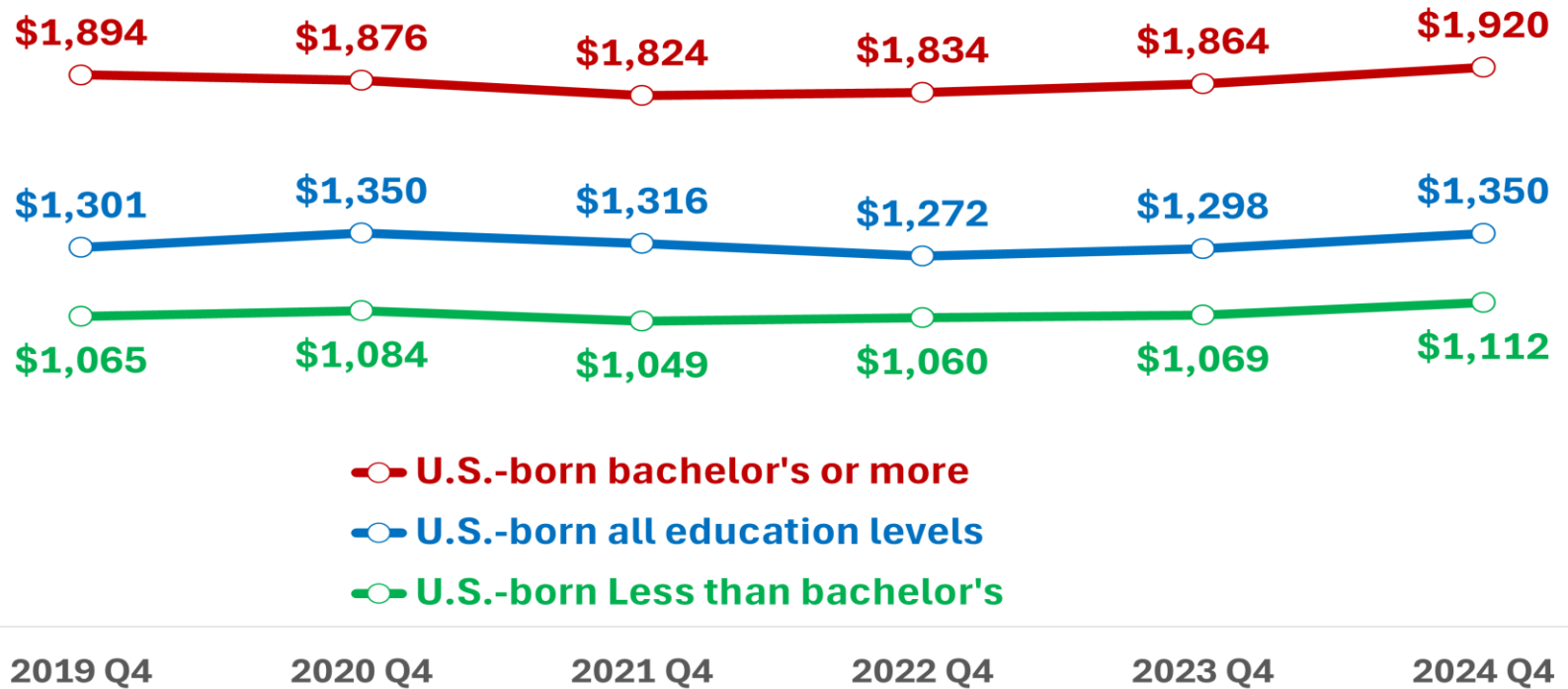
**Immigrants Only Slightly Increase Births Per Thousand for the Total U.S. Population**  
Long-term, the birth rate of immigrants has declined more than for the U.S.-born



Source: Public-use file of the 2008 to the 2023 American Community Survey, except 2012. The Census Bureau reports a problem with the fertility variable in 2012.

# Figure 13

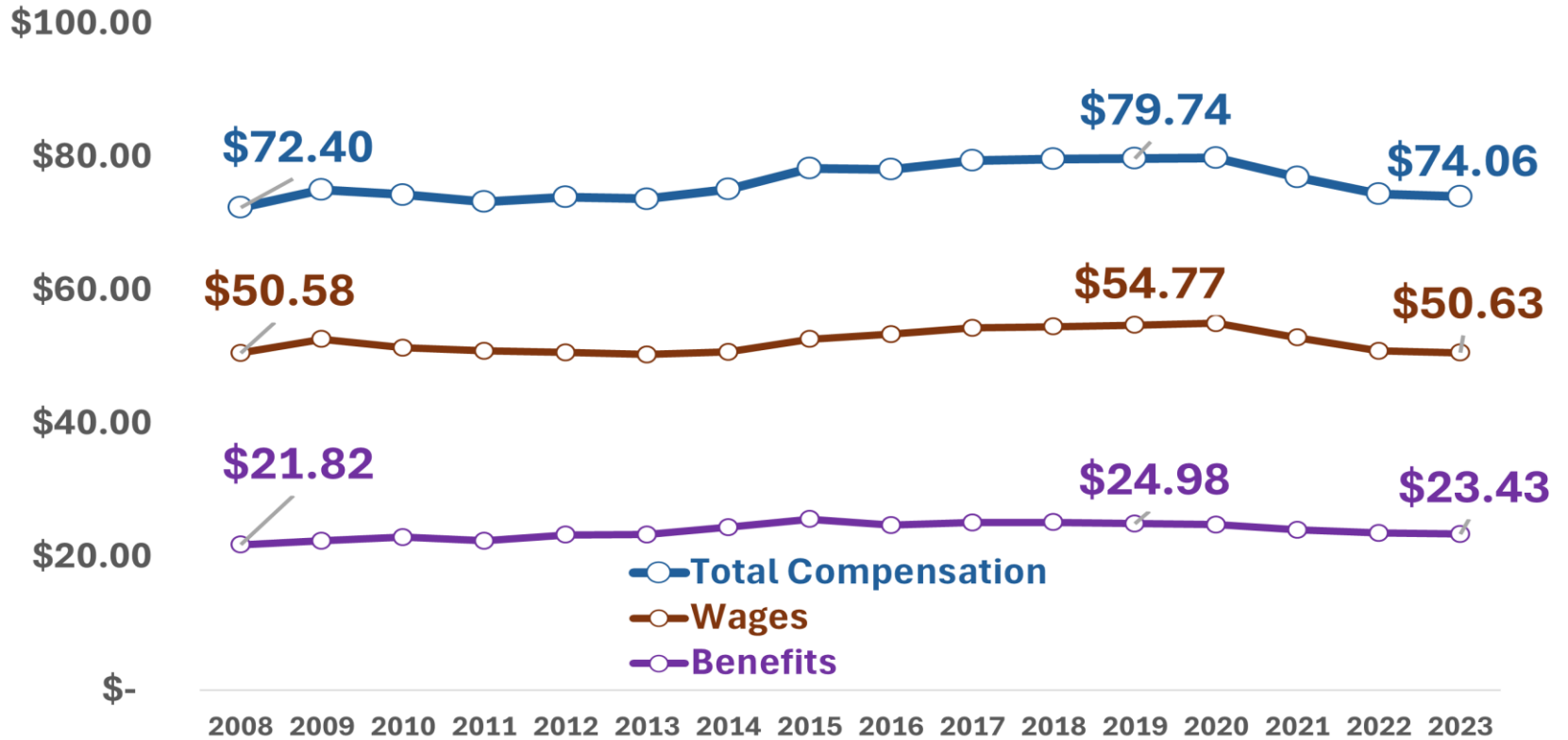
Trends in median weekly earnings for U.S.-born men show no clear evidence of labor shortage  
(in 2024 dollars)



Source: Public-use Current Population Survey from the fourth quarter of 2019 to 2024. Workers are ages 16 and older working at least 35 hours a week.

# Figure 14

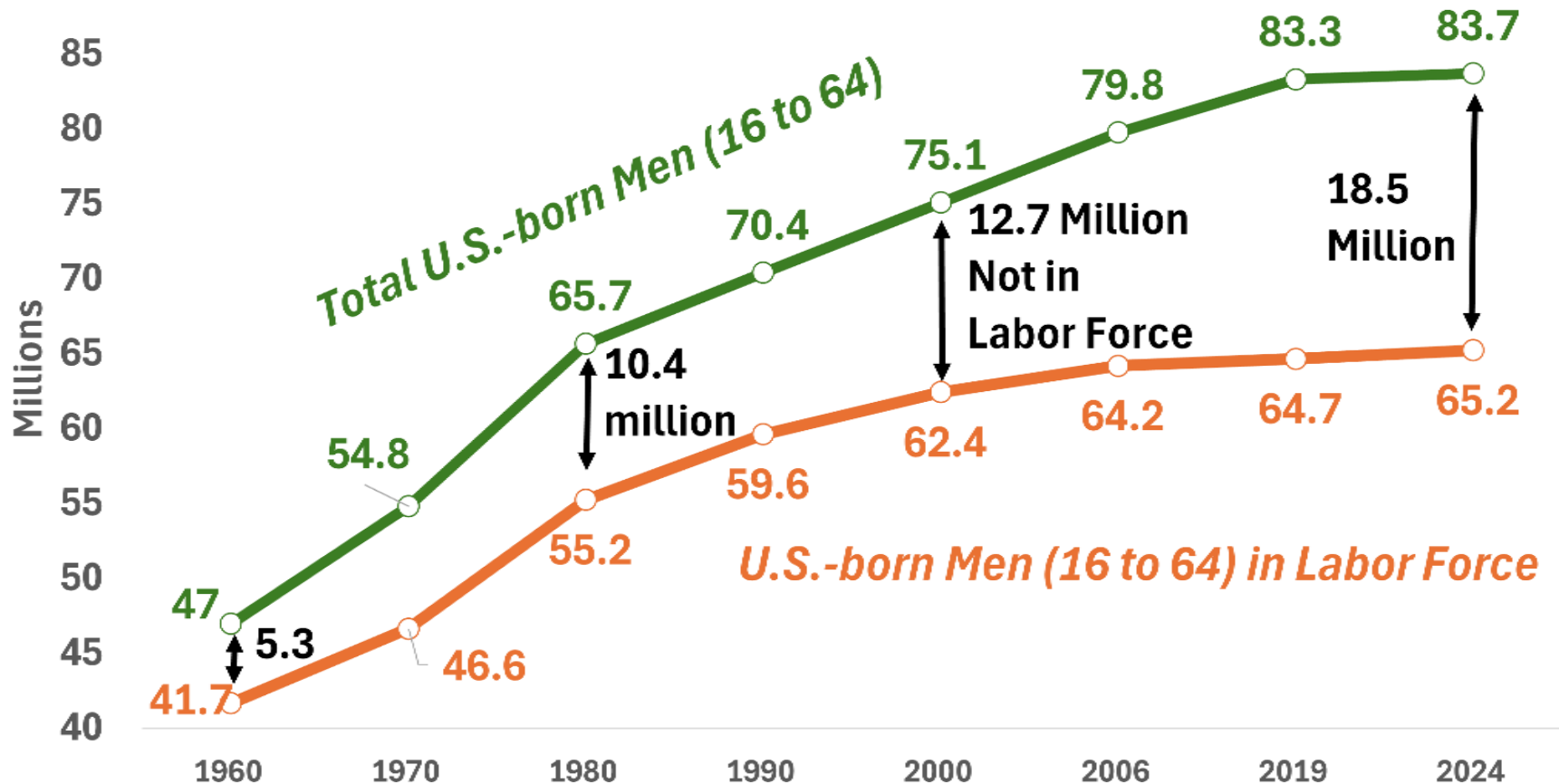
Hourly wages and benefits for STEM workers have been flat for more than a decade.  
(in 2023 dollars)



Source: Employer Costs for Employee Compensation Survey (custom data request by CIS to BLS)

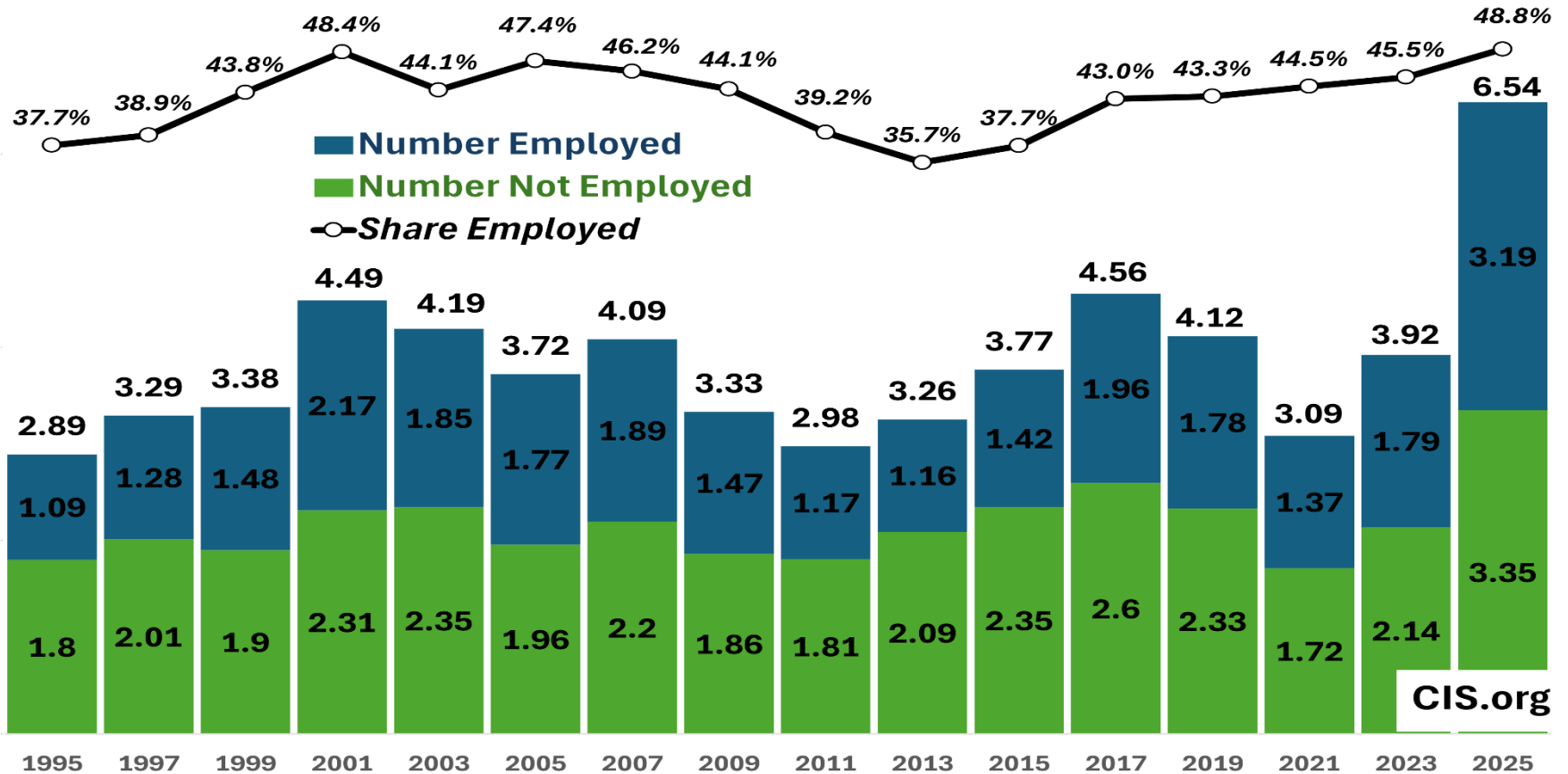
# Figure 15

The number of U.S.-born men (16 to 64) in the labor force has not kept pace with their population growth, causing a huge increase in the number not in the labor force



# Figure 16

**About half of newly arrived immigrants in 2025 are employed.  
(in millions)**

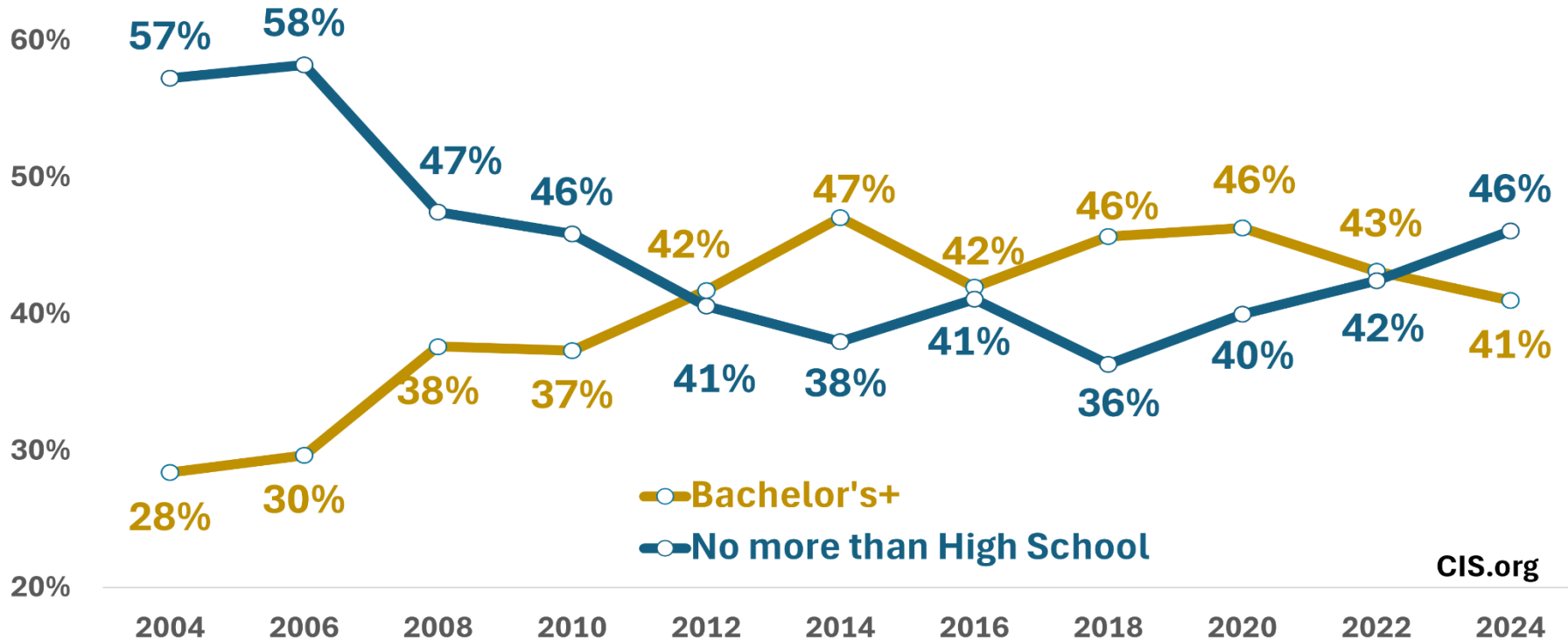


CIS.org

Source: Public-use Current Population Survey (CPS) January 1995 to January 2025. Based on responses to the year of entry question in the survey. In odd numbered years new arrivals in the CPS include the current year and 3 prior years.

# Figure 17

The education level of newly arrived immigrants improved significantly after 2004, but has deteriorated post Covid.

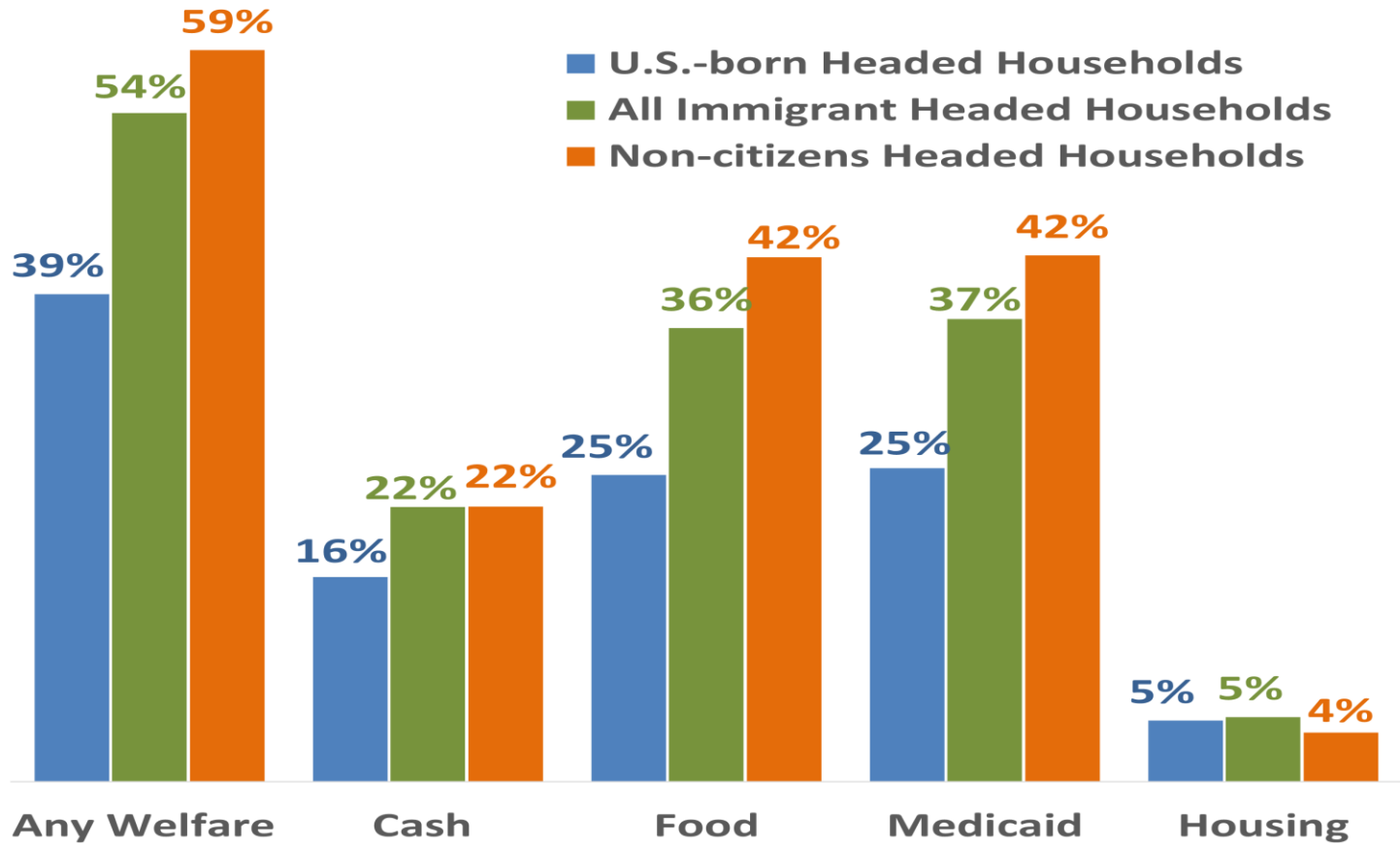


CIS.org

Source: Public-use Oct/Nov/Dec Current Population Survey (CPS). Figures are for adults 18 and older. In even numbered years new arrivals in the CPS includes the current year and the two prior years. Those with some college are not included in this figure.

# Figure 18

Immigrants overall, as well as non-citizens, have higher use of welfare than the U.S.-born



Source: Public use file of the 2022 Survey of Income and Program Participation. Cash includes TANF, SSI and the EITC. Food Assistance includes Food Stamps, WIC and free and reduced priced lunch/breakfast.

# Figure 19

Welfare use varies enormously by education level.

