Immigration Worldwide

Policies, Practices, and Trends

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United States

The Changing Face of the United States of America

Uma A. Segal

This "land of opportunities," the United States of America, has mixed, conflicting attitudes, perceptions, and responses to the presence of immigrants in general and immigrants from specific nations in particular. It is clear that for a large proportion of immigrants, a primary impetus is economic opportunity; likewise, several deliberations in the United States surround the economic impact of migration. Ongoing immigration debates juggle arguments regarding assets these newcomers bring to the country with those about drains they place on its infrastructure, and the United States remains divided on the net worth of immigration in the twenty-first century. Since the terror attacks of September 11, 2001, on the Pentagon in Washington, DC, and the World Trade Center in New York, suspicion of foreigners, particularly those of color, has developed exponentially, and xenophobia continues to be evident. It is in this climate of cultural chauvinism that on January 20, 2009, citizens of the United States placed in their highest office, the presidency, Barack Hussein Obama II, the son of a Kenyan immigrant. Yes, it is a land of opportunity.

Individuals and families from around the globe form a continuous stream of immigrants to the United States. The backlog of visa applications and waiting lists to enter the nation stretches to several years. Undocumented immigrants, both those who arrive without legal papers and those who overstay their visits, abound. Record numbers of refugees and asylees are admitted from countries in political turmoil. Disproportionately large numbers of entrants into the United States in recent years have been people of color from Asia, Africa, and Central and South America, and despite encountering a series of barriers, an overwhelming majority remains applying for permanent residence. Reasons for this ongoing influx are readily apparent, for in spite of the problems prevalent in the United States, it continues to be one of the most attractive nations in the world. There is much in the United States that native-born Americans take for granted and that is not available in many other countries, and there are several amenities, opportunities, possibilities, lifestyles, and freedoms in the United States that are not found together in any other nation.

In theory, and often in reality, this is a land of freedom, of equality, of opportunity, of a superior quality of life, of easy access to education, and of relatively few human rights violations. It is a land that, in the twenty-first century, is struggling toward multiculturalism and pluralism in its institutions and social outlook. It is a land

that, compared to several others, offers newcomers a relatively easy path through which to become integrated into its largesse. While the debate over the value of immigration persists, the fact is that it is a debate, and while immigration policies are not without discrimination and selectivity, they are more open now than ever before. Thus, despite both political and social perceptions of foreigners following the September 11, 2001, terror attacks, despite increased security measures and scrutiny of individuals, and despite some highly disturbing xenophobic backlash, new immigrants continue to arrive in the United States in record numbers. In addition, almost all of the vast numbers that entered years before value the quality of life this nation continues to allow them, for frequently, even when life in the United States is difficult, it is less so than it would have been in their countries of origin. Beginning with an overview of the impact of historical and current immigration legislation, this chapter presents the demographic profile of the country's foreign-born population, the mutual influences between immigrants and the nation's economic, social, political, and cultural environments, and implications of these phenomena.

Immigration Legislation

Immigration policy defines the parameters of those admitted into a country, identifying who may be allowed in and under what circumstances; it also specifies who should be prevented from coming. *Immigrant policy*, on the other hand, addresses issues of immigrant integration: Once they are in, how are these newcomers helped to integrate into society, and what resources may they access and with what stipulations.

The United States developed immigration legislation as early as the late nineteenth century, passing the Chinese Exclusion Act on May 6, 1882, and restricting, for the first time, the entry of people based on ethnicity. This was followed by several other regulatory measures and Acts[1] that circumscribed entry into the United States. The history of immigration to this country may be divided into seven periods during which legal measures controlled the categories of people allowed immigration (Kim, 1994:8–9).

1. *The colonial period (1609–1775)*: most immigrants were from the British Isles and the colonies had little effective control.
2. *The American Revolutionary period (1776–1840)*: European immigration slowed because of war and general "antiforeign" feelings.
3. *The "old" immigration period (1841–1882)*: local governments recruited people from Northern Europe. Chinese could also immigrate with little difficulty.
4. *The regulation period (1882–1920)*: Chinese were excluded from immigrating, but major entry occured from Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe.
5. *The restriction and exclusion period (1921–1952)*: A quota system restricted immigration from Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe, and all Asians were excluded from admission and from eligibility for U.S. citizenship.
6. *The partial liberalization period (1952–1965)*: Asians were assigned the same quota as those from Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe, and also allowed naturalization.
7. *The liberalized policy period (1965–present)*: the quota policy was repealed to allow entry to immigrants from Third World (and all) countries.

The Immigration and Nationality Act

The October 3, 1965, amendments to the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act had a major and permanent impact on U.S. immigration, dramatically altering the traditional immigrant origins and numbers. Prior to 1965 and the liberalization of immigration laws, the majority of entrants into the United States were from European countries. Under President Johnson's guidance, Congress moved to base immigration criteria on occupation rather than national origin. When the 1965 amendments: (1) abolished national origins quota; (2) established preferences for relatives of citizens and permanent residents; (3) exempted immediate relatives of citizens

and some special groups (certain ministers of religion, former employees of U.S. government abroad, etc.); and (4) expanded limits of world coverage to a 20,000-per-country limit, the influx of newcomers from non-European countries was, and continues to be, unprecedented. While minor modifications are frequently made to the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, and the number of worldwide quotas occasionally changes, it remains the primary force directing immigration. Now the numbers of immigrants admitted legally are: (1) fixed by law; (2) limited only by demands for those considered eligible; and (3) restricted by processing constraints (Gordon, 2005). The 2009 fiscal year limits are for the categories below:[2]

Family Sponsored Immigrants (226,000 annual numbers)

1. Unmarried adult sons and daughters of citizens (23,400 annually)
2. Spouses and unmarried sons and unmarried daughters of permanent resident aliens (114,200)
3. Married sons and married daughters of citizens (23,400)
4. Adult brothers and sisters of citizens (65,000)

Employment-Based Immigrants (140,000 annually)

1. Priority workers (40,040)
   a. Aliens with extraordinary ability
   b. Professors and researchers
   c. Certain multinational executives and managers
2. Members of the professions holding advanced degrees (40,040)
3. Skilled workers, professionals, and other workers (40,040)
4. Special immigrants, usually refugees adjusting their status (9,940)
5. Employment creators, "investors" (9,940)

Diversity (55,000 annually, effective 1995)
Non-preferential immigrants ineligible under the other categories

A large number of legal immigrants are those not subject to these numerical limits—relatives of U.S. citizens, children adopted from abroad, and children born abroad to permanent residents. These can be as many as 500,000. An interesting addition to immigration quotas is the "investor program" that issues approximately 10,000 visas annually to those who are willing to invest between $500,000 and one million dollars in the United States. In reality, immigrant numbers are substantially greater as those already in the United States may "adjust" their status (i.e., from student, visitor) to immigrant. Table 3-1 provides a general view of immigrant visas issued to people outside the U.S.; these numbers include neither status adjustments during that period nor those not subject to these limits (i.e. relatives of U.S. citizens).

Several immigration-related legislation or actions, however, since the beginning of the liberalization period, have affected diverse populations in a variety of ways, from entry

Table 3-1. Immigrant Visas Issued at Foreign Service Posts (2004–2008)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Immigrant Categories					
Immediate Relatives	151,724	180,432	224,187	219,323	238,848
Special Immigrants	675	782	766	1,648	2,558
Vietnam Amerasian immigrants	37	119	96	69	77
Family Sponsored Preference	152,454	146,279	139,753	151,128	169,896
Employment-Based Preference	28,656	21,290	15,706	19,685	13,461
Armed Forces Special Immigrants	7	4	0	2	2
DV Diversity Transition	45,849	46,099	44,349	38,762	45,246
Schedule A Worker	0	7,242	24,208	3,757	0
Total	**379,402**	**402,247**	**449,065**	**434,374**	**470,088**

Source: U.S. Department of State, Report of the Visa Office. Website: http://www.travel.state.gov/pdf/FY08-AR-TableI.pdf, accessed February 12, 2009.

into the United States itself to access to fundamental rights. Some are sketched below:

1980: *The Refugee Act* removed refugees as a preference category. The President and Congress determine the annual ceiling and country distributions (ceilings have ranged from 50,000–90,000).
1986: *The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA)* legalized several undocumented immigrants but made it unlawful to hire undocumented workers.
1990: *The Immigration Act of 1990* increased the annual immigrant limit to 700,000 and established the Immigrant Investor Program.
1996: *Welfare Reform* ended many cash and medical assistance programs for most legal immigrants.
1996: *The Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA)* expanded enforcement operations of the Immigration and Naturalization Service.
2001: *The USA Patriot Act*, in response to the September 11, 2001, terror attacks on New York and Washington, DC, gives federal officials greater power to intercept national and international communications.

The *Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2007* was a bill that focused on managing unauthorized migration, but failed to pass the House. Its primary components were increased border security, creation of a guest worker program, a path to citizenship for undocumented workers, worksite enforcement, and criminal penalties for those continuing to reside illegally in the country. While the bill did not pass, the issues remain in the forefront of concern.

Demographic Trends

Newcomers to the United States enter under a variety of conditions. Early migrants of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries came as volunteer immigrants, indentured laborers, or as slaves. Most however, were considered "legal immigrants," particularly in the absence of any legislation. Present-day immigrants may be categorized as voluntary immigrants (illegal or undocumented) or as refugees (and asylees). Several legal immigrants, after a minimum length of residence in the country, choose to apply for U.S. citizenship.

The U.S. Census Bureau (2008) indicates that in 2007, of the approximately 301.6 million residents of the country, 38 million (12.6%) were foreign born (Figure 3-1).

Another 16 million (22.9% of all children under age 18) were of the second generation, children with at least one immigrant parent. In 2007, 25,270 asylees[3] also were admitted as immigrants and, in the same year, 660,477 thousand individuals were naturalized, although another 89,683 were denied citizenship. Immigration trends indicate that the percentage of the foreign-born population has

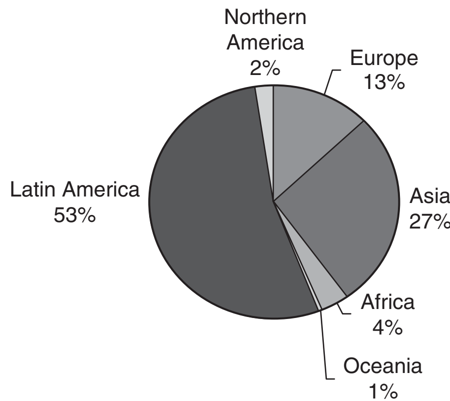

Figure 3-1. Origins of the Foreign Born — 2007
Source: U.S. Census, 2008.

been rising dramatically: In the 1980 Census, it constituted 6.2% of the population, increasing to 7.9% in 1990 and 11.1% in 2000.

It is clear from the distribution of sending countries, that although the largest number of immigrants to the United States is Mexican (Table 3-2), this is still only about 10%–15% of the total entrants; the percentage is even less if refugee numbers (Table 3-3) are included (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). Hence, it is essential that, while recognizing the strong Mexican presence, one remain cognizant of the diversity of immigrants in the United States.

Among those who voluntarily migrate to the United States are immigrants without the requisite papers, the unauthorized/undocumented population. While there is no valid method of counting undocumented immigrants, estimates by the Pew Hispanic Center (Passel & Cohn, 2008) suggest numbers ranging from between 10.2 million in 2004 and 11.9 million in 2008, peaking at 12.4 million in 2007. They are currently estimated to be four percent of the population with regional origins believed to be as found in Figure 3-2 (Passel & Cohn, 2008).

Despite perceptions of undocumented immigrants being those who slip across borders without appropriate documentation, the Office of Homeland Security reported in 2000 that about one-third of all undocumented immigrants are

Table 3-2. Immigrants Admitted by Region and Select Country of Last Residence (2004–2007)

Region and country of birth	2004	2005	2006	2007
All countries	957,883	1,122,257	1,266,129	1,052,415
Europe	135,663	180,396	169,156	120,759
Asia	319,025	382,707	411,746	359,387
Africa	62,623	79,697	112,100	89,277
Oceania	6,954	7,432	8,000	6,639
America	408,972	432,726	548,812	434,272
Canada	22,439	29,930	23,913	20,324
Mexico	173,711	157,992	170,042	143,180
Caribbean	82,116	91,371	144,477	114,318
Cuba	15,385	20,651	44,248	25,441
Dominican Republic	30,063	27,365	37,997	27,875
Haiti	13,695	13,491	21,625	29,978
Jamaica	13,581	17,774	24,538	18,873
Other Caribbean	9,392	12,090	16,069	12,151
Central America	61,253	52,629	74,244	53,834
South America	69,452	100,803	136,134	102,616

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Office of Immigration Statistics. (2008). *2007 yearbook of immigration statistics.* Website: http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/yearbook/2007/ois_2007_yearbook.pdf, accessed February 8, 2009.

Table 3-3. Refugee Arrivals by Region (2004–2007)

Region of birth	2004	2005	2006	2007
Total	52,837	53,738	41,150	48,217
Europe	9,254	11,316	10,456	4,561
Asia	10,896	14,977	9,245	23,195
Africa	29,110	20,746	18,185	17,485
Oceania	0	0	0	0
North America	2,998	6,368	3,145	2,922
South America	579	331	119	54

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Office of Immigration Statistics. (2008). *2007 yearbook of immigration statistics.* Website: http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/yearbook/2007/ois_2007_yearbook.pdf, accessed February 8, 2009.

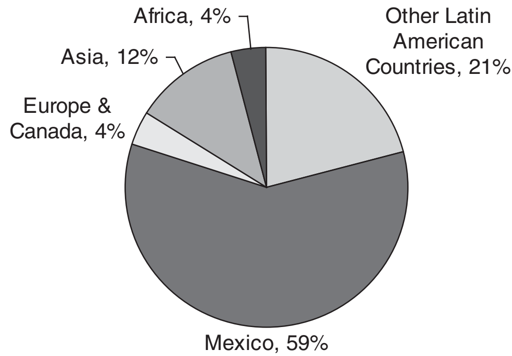

Figure 3-2. Unauthorized Immigrants by Region—2007

"overstays" who fail to return to their homelands when the period of their visas expires (GAO, 2004).

Refugees and asylees, unlike immigrants, are usually involuntary migrants. The United States has always been a refuge for those fleeing from persecution and, traditionally, has the largest number of the world's refugees (Mayadas & Segal, 2000), those people so identified by the 1951 convention and the 1967 protocol of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.[4] The U.S. President, in consultation with Congress, establishes annual numbers and allocations of refugees based on current world political climate. In recent years, these annual ceilings have been as high as 91,000 in 1999 and as low as 70,000 in 2005 and 2006 (U.S. Department of State, 2005). Ceilings have risen again to 80,000 in both 2008 and 2009, but the 2008 allocations are not projected to be achieved (Table 3-4).

Asylees differ from refugees in that they usually enter the United States on their own, and once within the United States they apply for asylum, which may or may not be granted. Frequently detained until a determination is made, they are either legally admitted into the country as refugees or are repatriated to their homelands. All refugees may apply to adjust their status to permanent resident after a year.

In throwback fashion to earlier migration periods of the early twentieth century, the nation is beginning to see three additional groups of migrants—victims of human smuggling, victims of human trafficking, and mail-order brides. Those smuggled into the country enter a consensual agreement and pay a substantial price to enter the country clandestinely, but after arriving in the United States, find they are burdened with debt and have few employment opportunities. There are criminal penalties for smuggling individuals into the United States (U.S. Department of Justice, 2005a) but it continues as a lucrative business. Victims of human trafficking,

Table 3-4. Refugee Admissions by Region (2008 and 2009)

Region	Fiscal Year (FY) Ceiling 2008	FY 2008 Projected Arrivals	Proposed FY Ceiling 2009
Africa	16,000	8,000	12,000
East Asia	20,000	18,000	19,000
Europe and Central Asia	3,000	3,000	2,500
Latin America/ Caribbean	5,000	4,500	4,500
East/South Asia	28,000	25,500	37,000
Unallocated Reserve	8,000		5,000
Total	80,000	59,000	80,000

Source: Proposed Refugee Admissions for FY 2009, Report to the Congress. Website: http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/113507.pdf, accessed February 16, 2009.

estimated to be between 14,500 to 17,500 annually, are exploited for illicit reasons and are practical slaves to those who bring them into the country; approximately 7,000 are brought from Asia, 5,000 from Europe/Eurasia, and 3,500 from Latin America (U.S. Department of Justice, 2005b). In 2000, the United States passed the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 that provides protection to victims, regardless of nationality.

Finally, the mail-order bride market is burgeoning, and a "Google" search results in over 3 million internet websites catering to a growing clientele. Mail-order brides are usually women from developing countries who register with a catalog or website their intent to marry foreign men. Usually there is no period of courtship, and marriages take place in absentia, with the man having "shopped" for the wife who best fits his needs. These women can enter the country legally as wives of U.S. citizens.

Under continuing discussion is a guest worker program that will allow temporary workers to enter the country for a period to assume jobs for which U.S. employers are unable to find native employees. While this may appear to be a novel idea, it has long been a part of the cross-border movement for Mexican workers who have entered the United States for seasonal work and returned home at the end of the season. Known as circular migration, this pattern is evidenced regularly and increasingly both in the United States and internationally (Hugo, 2003; Zuniga, 2006). However, currently, a significant number of workers who had entered the country illegally, but traditionally followed the pattern of circular migration, are now choosing to remain in the United States, as moving across the U.S.–Mexico border is substantially more dangerous (Zuniga, 2006). Migration researchers, further, are reporting two new phenomena with immigrants choosing to either return permanently to their homelands (return migrants) several years after leaving, or dividing their time equally between their natal countries and the United States (transnationals).

Regardless of the process and reasons that immigrants enter the United States, it is clear that for a large proportion, a primary impetus is economic opportunity. Furthermore, most rarely completely sever ties with their homelands, and a significant number sends remittances to support family members, organizations, or communities in the country of origin.

Demographic Characteristics

Table 3-5 compares aggregates of the foreign-born and native populations revealing that the percent distribution is relatively equivalent for both groups. The foreign born are more likely to be married and twice as likely to be enrolled in graduate education as are the natives. This suggests that several of the former may arrive in the country for higher education, especially since the educational difference is not as evident among those who are no longer enrolled in an academic program.

Economic Impact of Immigration

Many deliberations in the United States revolve around the economic impact of migration. The ongoing immigration debate juggles arguments regarding the assets newcomers bring to the country with those about the drains they place on the infrastructure, and the country is divided on the current net worth of immigration in the twenty-first century.

The Immigrant Workforce

Recent foci on immigration reform and the guest worker program have drawn attention to undocumented workers. One must bear in mind in all deliberations that of the 34 million documented immigrants in the United States in 2004, over 27 million were between the ages of 16 and 65 years, and the majority of them were in the workforce and across the occupational structure (Table 3-6). A significant proportion of the legitimate workforce, they have the appropriate documentation and are essential to the functioning of the country. While immigrants in 2004 constituted 11% of the population, they made up 14% of the labor force and 20% of the low-wage earners (Nightingale & Fix, 2004), and in 2007, the foreign born accounted for 15.7% of the civilian labor force (Terrazas & Batalova, 2008). Table 3-7 provides an occupation comparison between the native and foreign-born population. Ironically, immigrant unemployment rates have fallen faster than those

Table 3-5. Select Demographic Characteristics, 2007

Subject	Total	Native	Foreign born
Total population	**301,621,159**	**263,561,465**	**38,059,694**
Male	49.3%	49.1%	50.3%
Female	50.7%	50.9%	49.7%
Median age (years)	36.7	35.8	40.2
Population 15 years and over	**240,724,018**	**204,762,339**	**35,961,679**
Never married	30.8%	31.8%	24.9%
Now married, except separated	50.2%	48.5%	59.9%
Divorced or separated	12.7%	13.2%	10.1%
Widowed	6.3%	6.5%	5.2%
Population 3 years and over enrolled in school	**79,329,527**	**73,741,332**	**5,588,195**
Nursery school, preschool	6.2%	6.5%	1.7%
Elementary school (grades K-8)	45.6%	46.9%	29.1%
High school (grades 9-12)	22.0%	21.9%	22.8%
College or graduate school	26.2%	24.7%	46.3%
Population 25 years and over	**197,892,369**	**166,289,255**	**31,603,114**
Less than high school graduate	15.5%	12.4%	32.0%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	30.1%	31.3%	24.0%
Some college or associate's degree	26.9%	28.7%	17.2%
Bachelor's degree	17.4%	17.6%	16.0%
Graduate or professional degree	10.1%	9.9%	10.9%
Population 5 years and over	**280,950,438**	**243,190,088**	**37,760,350**
English only	80.3%	90.3%	15.6%
Language other than English	19.7%	9.7%	84.4%
Speak English less than "very well"	8.7%	1.9%	52.4%

Source: http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/STTable?_bm=y&-state=st&-qr_name=ACS_2007_1YR_G00_S0501&-ds_name=ACS_2007_1YR_G00_&-CONTEXT=st&-_caller=geoselect&-geo_id=01000US&-format=&-_lang=en, Accessed February 15, 2009.

of natives, yet their wages have increased half as fast. Therefore, while, in general, immigrants have a higher employment rate and are composed of two-parent families, they are more likely to live in poverty than are native born Americans (Nightingale & Fix, 2004).

Several big businesses, construction companies, agriculture, and employers in many service industries contend that the absence of immigrant workers, specifically the unauthorized workforce, would cause a major catastrophe in the U.S. economy. There is a strong, steady demand for migrant workers in agriculture, construction, manufacturing, and hospitality (Caulfield, 2006; Kochhar, 2005). About 6.3 million undocumented workers are Mexican and estimated to fill 25% of all agricultural, 17% of office and house cleaning, 14% of construction, and 12% of food preparation jobs, yet it is clear that the United States is severely divided about their presence. The *New York Times* featured numerous articles on undocumented Mexican workers reporting that, although border enforcement has heightened since 1990, and although policy makers are aware that most migrants come to work, policing the workplace has low priority. For under $50, one can buy a set of forged documents (social security card and permanent residency card) that protect employers from appearing to have violated the law (Portes, 2006). Interestingly, the country benefits, as millions of unauthorized workers are listed in company books, receiving wages that appear to be legal, and so they pay taxes—but they do not draw on the benefits.

Labor Market, Low-Wage, and Entry-Level Occupations

Ness (2006) writes of the immigrant workforce that has been essential in filling low-wage,

Table 3-6. Employment and Foreign-Born Civilian Population 16+ Years by World Region of Birth: 2004 (in thousands)

Employment Status & Occupation Group	Foreign Born		World Region of Birth: Europe		Asia		Latin America		Other Areas	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total Civilian Labor Force	**21,168**	**100.0**	**2,424**	**100.0**	**5,470**	**100.0**	**11,641**	**100.0**	**1,633**	**100.0**
Employed	19,857	93.8	2,294	94.6	5,178	94.7	10,844	93.2	1,542	94.4
Unemployed	1,310	6.2	130	5.4	292	5.3	797	6.8	91	5.6
Total Employed	**19,857**	**100.0**	**2,294**	**100.0**	**5,178**	**100.0**	**10,844**	**100.0**	**1,542**	**100.0**
Management, Professional, and Related Occupations	5,225	26.3	953	41.6	2,332	45.0	1,340	12.4	601	39.0
Service Occupations	4,631	23.3	315	13.7	830	16.0	3,175	29.3	311	20.2
Sales and Office Occupations	3,737	18.8	556	24.2	1,221	23.6	1,666	15.4	294	19.1
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	309	1.6	1	0.1	15	0.3	289	2.7	4	0.3
Construction, Extraction, & Maintenance Occupations	2,556	12.9	214	9.3	173	3.4	2,047	18.9	122	7.9
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving	3,398	17.1	254	11.1	606	11.7	2,327	21.5	210	13.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Current population survey, annual social and economic supplement, 2004.* Immigration Statistics Staff, Population Division, Internet Release Date: February 22, 2005.

Table 3-7. Labor Force and Poverty Rates—Native & Foreign Born (2007)

Subject	Total	Native	Foreign Born
Total population	**301,621,159**	**263,561,465**	**38,059,694**
Population 16 years and over	**236,416,572**	**200,722,532**	**35,694,040**
In labor force	64.8%	64.4%	66.9%
Not in labor force	35.2%	35.6%	33.1%
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	**142,588,118**	**120,050,146**	**22,537,972**
CLASS OF WORKER			
Private wage & salary workers	78.6%	77.6%	84.0%
Government workers	14.5%	15.6%	8.3%
Self-employed workers in own business	6.7%	6.6%	7.5%
Unpaid family workers	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%
OCCUPATION			
Management, professional, and related occupations	34.6%	36.0%	27.2%
Service occupations	16.7%	15.6%	23.1%
Sales and office occupations	25.6%	27.0%	18.0%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	0.7%	0.5%	2.0%
Construction, extraction, maintenance, & repair	9.7%	9.0%	13.4%
Production, transportation, & material moving	12.7%	12.0%	16.4%
INDUSTRY			
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	1.8%	1.7%	2.4%
Construction	7.7%	7.1%	11.5%
Manufacturing	11.3%	10.9%	13.1%
Wholesale trade	3.2%	3.2%	3.2%
Retail trade	11.4%	11.8%	9.5%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	5.2%	5.3%	4.7%
Information	2.5%	2.6%	1.8%
Finance and insurance, and real estate	7.2%	7.5%	5.7%
Professional, scientific, management/administrative	10.3%	10.1%	11.5%
Educational services, health care, social assistance	21.2%	22.0%	16.6%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, & hospitality	8.8%	8.2%	11.7%
Other services (except public administration)	4.8%	4.5%	6.3%
Public administration	4.7%	5.2%	2.1%
Population 16 years and over with earnings (12-month)	**94,817,488**	**79,186,476**	**15,631,012**
$1 to $9,999 or loss	2.0%	1.9%	2.4%
$10,000 to $14,999	4.8%	4.1%	8.6%
$15,000 to $24,999	16.7%	15.0%	25.4%
$25,000 to $34,999	18.5%	18.4%	18.8%
$35,000 to $49,999	21.0%	21.8%	16.5%
$50,000 to $74,999	19.6%	20.7%	14.0%
$75,000 or more	17.3%	18.0%	14.2%
Male (median earnings)	44,255	46,695	32,451
Female (median earnings)	34,278	35,138	29,365
Population for whom poverty status is determined	**293,744,043**	**256,229,568**	**37,514,475**
Below 100 percent of the poverty level	13.0%	12.6%	15.6%
100 to 199 percent of the poverty level	17.7%	16.8%	24.1%
At or above 200 percent of the poverty level	69.3%	70.6%	60.4%
All families	9.5%	8.6%	14.4%
With related children under 18 years	14.9%	13.9%	18.8%
With related children under 5 years only	16.0%	15.8%	17.0%
Married-couple family	4.5%	3.4%	10.7%
With related children under 18 years	6.4%	4.6%	13.3%

Table 3-7. (*Continued*)

With related children under 5 years only	5.9%	4.5%	11.7%
Female householder, no husband present, family	28.2%	27.8%	30.6%
With related children under 18 years	36.5%	36.0%	39.7%
With related children under 5 years only	44.8%	45.2%	42.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007, http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/STTable?_bm=y&-state=st&-qr_name=ACS_2007_1YR_G00_S0501&-ds_name=ACS_2007_1YR_G00_&-CONTEXT=st&-_caller=geoselect&-geo_id=01000US&-format=&-_lang=en. Accessed February 18, 2009.

entry-level occupations that most U.S.-born Americans seek to avoid but upon which the nation has come to depend. Furthermore, despite the tendency to believe that these occupations are filled only by unauthorized workers, both formal and informal labor market intermediaries, including educational institutions, employment agencies, and community organizations, channel new immigrants to potential employers (Theodore & Mehta, 2001). Nor are low wages for immigrants limited to blue-collar occupations. Immigrants entering the United States on the H-1B visa (issued to "high-tech" foreign workers) usually are at the bottom of the pay scale for their positions and paid $13,000 less than their American counterparts (Miano, 2005).

Some studies contradict research that immigrants are taking jobs that are not of interest to native workers. Sum, Harrington, and Khatiwada (2006) found that immigrant workers displaced young native workers, aged 16–34 years. Controversial authority George Borjas (2001) suggests that net gains to the U.S. economy are only $8 billion annually and because many immigrants work for lower wages and immigration actually shifts several billions of dollars each year to employers. He further posits that because current immigrants are less educated and skilled than their predecessors, they may be more dependent on public assistance and live in segregation and poverty.

Brain Drain, Brain Gain, and Brain Waste

Most individuals who undertake the challenge of migration to an alien land are rarely without substantial human capital. While this capital may not be in the form of tangible assets, it often is found in psychological, intellectual, and physical capabilities. The United States frequently benefits from resources that immigrants bring in their quest for opportunity. A significant number comes for education, eventually adjusting to immigrant status. Long known as the "brain drain" for the country of origin, it has now been recognized as a "brain gain" to receiving countries. As one reviews the list of U.S. Nobel Prize winners, evidence suggests that a disproportionate number were born elsewhere.

The brain drain can, nevertheless, benefit sending countries in the form of remittances. The World Bank reports that although most expatriates send money to support family members, the receiving country's economy benefits from the flow of these additional monies. Thus, the brain drain serves to provide income and help offset poverty for poorer or less-educated family members and, to some extent, counteracts the effects of the loss of educated individuals (Ozden & Schiff, 2006), helping build capacity in the country of origin (Asian Development Bank, 2005). These remittances, furthermore, can be quite substantial; in 2008, $45.9 billion were sent from the United States to Latin American countries (Inter-American Development Bank, 2008). Such remittances not only allow sending countries to develop their social capital, they also enable expatriates to firmly establish and maintain connections to their home communities (Mooney, 2004).

An even more recent and disturbing phenomenon is the "brain waste" reported by the Migration Policy Institute (Batalova, Fix, & Creticos, 2008). Over 1.3 million college educated immigrants (one in five) are working in unskilled jobs as taxi drivers, dishwashers, and security guards. Either because their credentials are not transferable, their knowledge of the

professional jargon in English in not sufficient, or they are unable to find positions commensurate with their qualifications, they settle for occupations far below their capabilities. Batalova et al. (2008) lament this brain waste and the unrealized returns not only to the immigrant but to the United States and propose a closer look at integration policies, including credentialing and intensive English language and culture training programs.

Social Impact of Migration Policies

Immigrant Influences on the United States and the Native-Born

As immigrants enter the United States and adapt to life in their new homeland, they bring with them a diversity of cultures and norms. The United States prides itself at being a multicultural nation of immigrants, and as the United States influences these New Americans, the country is influenced by them. The country is substantially impacted by the multiplicity of languages that are spoken by immigrants, and from any cursory look at border towns in the Southwestern United States, or in Florida, New York, or California, it is apparent that the impact of the Spanish language is profound and permanent. Immigrants influence the U.S. culture and society through their social norms, family patterns, art, music, dance, cuisine, and businesses. They expose native-born Americans to alternative modes of behavior and social relationships, differences in perceptions and interpretations, and variations in experiences and observations. They may challenge traditional American norms and require that Americans reassess or defend them. Orum (2005) suggests that it is essential that one evaluate the impact immigrants have on host nations. Focusing only on immigrant adaptation, which is the tendency of most theoreticians, provides only a partial picture.

Impact on Health, Education, and Social Service Systems

Health Systems. U.S. health policy, which allows health coverage for many, but not for all, has particular implications for those in or near poverty and those of low socioeconomic status and income that are self-employed. The latter are the least likely to be able to afford private insurance coverage, yet they are ineligible for means-tested coverage such as Medicaid. Large segments of the immigrant population are self-employed and the exorbitant costs of private insurance may well correlate with low insurance coverage. Furthermore, new immigrants are likely to be poor and stay poor because they have higher levels of unemployment, less education, and larger families than do native-born groups (Haniffa, 1999).

Implications of health policy for immigrants are not limited to issues of coverage; several other cultural and educational concerns confound access to health care services. Health policy currently does not focus on how services are utilized, and general access to health care services is fraught with problems for many immigrant groups. Even if immigrants do have good health care coverage, they may be less knowledgeable about the availability of programs and services. They may also be more suspicious of different treatment methods, uncomfortable with interaction patterns with health care providers, and confused by governmental and other insurance programs and reimbursement procedures. Any or all of these factors discourage them from utilizing the health services that are available to them. A number of specific phenomena are often prevalent in the immigrant experience of illness and treatment; the most pervasive of these may be poor knowledge of preventative health care, the use of home remedies, and the underutilization of services.

Even with good U.S. health programs, cultural, linguistic, and economic barriers can deny the immigrant opportunities for disease prevention, early diagnosis, prompt treatment, and participation in clinical trials (Tu, Taplin, Barlow, & Boyko, 1999). Immigrants who are educated, professional, and can function in the mainstream are better equipped to meet their health needs. Recent immigrants are much less likely than either native-born individuals or those who have been in the United States longer to access medical care or have contact with physicians. Some, in fact, access care as infrequently as those who have no health insurance at all (Leclere, Jensen & Biddlecom, 1994). Thus, when a large segment of the immigrant

population finally turns to health care services, it may be through the already overburdened emergency rooms or through practitioners who are unprepared to communicate with them, either because of language differences, cultural barriers, or unfamiliarity with social norms.

Educational Systems. The national policy [20 USCS, Sec. 1221–1 (1999)] states:

> Recognizing that the Nation's economic, political, and social security require a well-educated citizenry, the Congress (1) reaffirms, as a matter of high priority, the Nation's goal of equal education opportunity, and (2) declares it to be the policy of the United States of America that every citizen is entitled to an education to meet his or her full potential without financial barriers. (p. 10)

Referring to federal immigration policies, Congress specified in 20 USCS, Sec. 7402–1 (1999) that the collection of language-minority Americans in the United States speak almost all the world's languages and that there are even greater numbers of children and young people of limited English proficiency. These children face numerous challenges in their efforts to received adequate education and become an integral part of U.S. society. Several decades ago, Congress recommended that elementary and secondary school education be strengthened with bilingual education, language-enhancement, and language-acquisition programs, however, recent immigrant backlash has resulted in "English only" resolutions in a number of states. Congress also proposed an emergency immigrant education policy to help the large number of immigrant children who lack English language skills to make the transition. Free public school education to the secondary school level, furthermore, is available to all residents in the United States regardless of visa status, and children under the age of 16 years are mandated to be enrolled in school. Thus, this mandate (and access) applies to all immigrant children, whether they are documented or unauthorized.

In response to the awareness that limited English language capabilities of adults also handicap their functioning in the United States, several public educational institutions, libraries, and nonprofit organizations have begun free language classes for adults. Many of these do not ask immigration status. Thus, not only have governmental policies been modified to adapt to the educational needs of immigrants, other institutions are voluntarily assuming the responsibility of providing educational access for immigrants.

Social Service Systems. Amendments to the Social Security Act of 1935 currently provide for: (1) a combination of old age and survivors' insurance (OASI) and disability insurance (DI), known as (OASDI); (2) unemployment insurance; (3) federal assistance to the elderly, the visually impaired, and those with disabilities under the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program; (4) public assistance to families under the new Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program; (5) federal health insurance for the elderly (Medicare); and (6) federal and state health assistance for the poor (Medicaid). While some immigrants benefit from the services delivered through the Social Security Act, their use often differs from that of the native-born population, both because of their sociodemographic characteristics and because of the changes in eligibility requirements enacted by Congress in 1996. Several of these changes that were implemented specifically limit immigrant access, particularly to cash assistance and medical benefits until they have been in the country a certain length of time.

In general, social welfare services are minimally accessed by immigrants for a number of cultural reasons, among them are shame in seeking assistance from outside the family and fear and distrust of governmental authority. Thus, although there may be a need, this population may not seek assistance, even when it is qualified or in need. Consequently, the social services are frequently under the misconception that immigrants either have few social service needs or the family and/or immigrant community is able to address them. Results are that needs are not *addressed, and immigrant families may struggle alone with dysfunction (Segal, 2002). Although the increased attention to the experience of refugees in the United States is an important step made by the social services, outreach efforts to other immigrant groups may be effective in preventing future

and greater difficulties for these populations and the community at large.

Inter-Group Marriages and Families

Most societies of the world have traditionally frowned upon marriages or intimate extramarital relationships between people of different socioeconomic backgrounds. Prohibition against marriages and relationships between two people of different races or ethnic groups has been even more common. Marriage between members of different groups is both a transcendence of ethnic segregation and the forging of an American identity that is distinct from the ethnic American identity of subgroups (Rodriguez, 2000). It not only attests to a newly formed American identity but also loosens ethnic and cultural ties with the parental generation, making an even stronger statement of adaptation and commitment to the United States Both foreign-born Asians and foreign-born Latinos have higher rates of intermarriage than do U.S. European or African Americans, and intermarriage rates for second and third generations of the former two groups are extremely high (Rodriguez, 2000). The native-born, second generation is more likely than immigrants to intermarry, but even for immigrants, the prevalence of intermarriage steadily increases with the length of time spent in the United States It is apparent that while immigrants are being influenced by the host country, increasing intermarriage is modifying family relationships. Increasing societal acceptance of diverse options lowers pressure for ethnic groups to assimilate to all European American norms. Beyond the outward indices, trends show that assimilation by the White culture is also under way as it begins to embrace family values and philosophies that are basic to Asian, African, and Latino societies.

Development of Human Capital

U.S. society is increasingly aware of ethnic and cultural differences among immigrants, particularly those of color and the native-born populations. Interest in understanding attitudes, values, religions, and behaviors is reflected in the burgeoning literature on immigrants and refugees. As newcomers adapt to their new environments, the environment itself is being sensitized to their diversity.

Less focus has been placed on the systematic understanding of the socioeconomic levels of these immigrant groups and their implications for adaptation and achievement. Based on the allocation of immigration visas, there have been a variety of legal immigrant streams that have entered the United States in the last few decades. While earlier immigrants of the 1960s were, primarily of a professional stream, current streams are more likely to include large numbers entering through family reunification processes. These individuals and groups may not have the human capital and skills that are readily transferable into the fast-paced technological society. Further, refugees and undocumented immigrants may frequently find themselves on the fringes of society—the former for a significant portion of their lives, and the latter, almost for their entire stay in the United States Thus, a large segment of the immigrant group, particularly the newer immigrants of the last decade, is likely to be marginalized. Without the requisite English language competencies, education, and usable job skills, many hover at poverty levels. Many immigrants in the beginning of the twenty-first century have been highly successful, while others have continued to struggle. With the bimodal distribution of the immigrant population's level of achievement, and the rising numbers of unmet health, education, and welfare needs, this can be a social, if not an economic, drain on the country.

Many new immigrants to a country arrive with little facility in the language of the host country, which is often the primary obstacle. Without language ability, seeking housing or employment, accessing health care or other services, or learning a vocation become impossible. Language competence increases ability to negotiate through a nation's bureaucracies, and literacy, or the ability to read and write in the host language further improves opportunities.

English Language Training, Job Training, and Training in Social/ Cultural and Workplace Norms

Immigrant children fairly rapidly learn the English language, even if they are denied a bilingual education, for despite laws in the mid-twentieth century that required the establishment of bilingual programs, in the last two and a half decades, increasing numbers of states are moving toward an "English only" policy in schools. However, of the 1.2 million individuals in adult education classes, over half are there to learn English and another 3 million are awaiting English language education (Murguia & Munoz, 2005). Although federally funded programs expanded during the Clinton administration, these have since declined. In a study of immigrants in New York City and Los Angeles County, where 20% of the immigrant population lived in 2000, immigrants with low English proficiency were more likely to be poor and lack sufficient food (Fix & Capps, 2002).

The Refugee Resettlement Program that has as its primary goal "self-sufficiency in the shortest time possible," provides English language education for a period of only about eight months, and within that time, refugees must find jobs that will sustain them. If their English language competence is low, they get positions in low-paying entry level occupations with little possibility for advancement. To support their families, they often work at a second job, leaving little time to gain functional literacy in English, and the development of their human capital is severely curtailed. Functional English, furthermore, is not always sufficient for workplace success; essential also is the understanding of social and cultural workplace norms. The Center for Immigrant Education and Training, at the La Guardia Community College in New York, prepares immigrants to enter the workforce with the necessary vocational and cultural skills. Other such programs around the country focus on job training for immigrants, recognizing that many may not have skills readily transferable to the U.S. economy.

Training of Native-Born Employers and Service Providers

If 12% of the population is of the immigrant generation and another 13% is second generation, most individuals will have the opportunity to work with, for, or alongside these groups. Learning about immigrants is increasingly imperative if employers and service providers are to adequately utilize their resources or have their resources utilized. At the very least, both employers and service providers must: (1) be culturally aware; (2) avoid discrimination, intimidation, and exploitation; and (3) protect workplace rights. Grey (2002) provides a practical and "culturally competent" guide for managers and supervisors in "welcoming" immigrants into Iowa. This guide recommends, in addition to learning about immigrant populations and the immigrant experience: (1) bringing on board the leadership of organizations before expecting changes in the organization; (2) undertaking an audit regarding the readiness of the organization to integrate these new groups into their functioning; (3) if the organization is not prepared, developing guidelines for becoming so and integrating communication and training programs for both long-term workers and new organizational recruits; and (4) making a commitment to maintaining a diverse workforce by making long-term cultural changes, focusing on similarities rather than differences, and generating a cross-cultural organizational attitude.

Increasing Health Care Access

The Centers for Disease Control found that foreign-born adults were uninsured at higher rates (26%) than their U.S.-born counterparts (11%), and Hispanic adults were the most likely to be without insurance (37%; Dey & Lucas, 2006). Immigrants were twice as likely as native-born adults to have no usual source of health care, less likely to have spoken to a health care practitioner in the past year, or ever, and yet they reported lower health risk factors and chronic disease than their U.S.-born counterparts. Risk factors (i.e., obesity and hypertension) tended to increase with length of time in the United States. Other publications indicate that in their early years in the United States,

regardless of their immigration status, many fear deportation, lack of confidentiality, and poor communication and choose not to seek health care services. Additional issues that interfere with access for all citizens also affect immigrants, including long waiting periods, appointments set far in the future, and limited physician access. Addressing health care needs is fundamental to ensuring a sense of well-being, which, in turn, allows individuals to engage in those activities that will develop their personal resources or human capital.

Closing Remarks

Since September 11, 2001, and the terror attacks on the United States, there has been a substantial increase in xenophobia against all foreigners but particularly toward those who look as though their origins are Middle Eastern. While some segments of the country are appreciating the ever growing diversity in race, ethnicity, and culture, others are threatened by it. It is safe to say that the flow of immigrants can strain the receiving country in a variety of ways. It behooves policy makers and service providers to be cognizant of the implications of both immigration and integration policies. Receiving countries must recognize that migration across their borders will persist with improvements in transportation and with further emerging reasons for relocating.

In admitting immigrants, countries make a commitment to them. Unless a country is willing to help them through the transitional period of adjustment, their unmet economic, social, health, and mental health needs can, in both the short and the long term, drain a nation's resources. On the other hand, early attention to these very immigrants may accelerate their entry as contributors to society (Mayadas & Elliott, 2003).

This chapter has tried to discuss issues facing immigrants and refugees in the United States They share the experience of being newcomers to this land of opportunity and of having left much in their homelands. A close inspection of the 2007 census data[5] makes it abundantly clear that there is no single profile of immigrants or refugees. They range in age from infancy to well into old age. They may be single, married, divorced, or widowed; they may come with families, without families, or as part of an extended family. They may be white, black, brown, yellow, red, or any other color under which the human species is categorized. They may be living in the United States legally or illegally. They may be highly professional and skilled, or they may be unprofessional with skills not transferable to the United States economy. They may be extremely wealthy or very poor. They may be fluent in the English language and speak several other languages, or they may speak only their mother tongue, which may not be English, and they may be illiterate even in that. They may be from cultures that are highly hierarchical and autocratic, or they may be from cultures with greater equality. Clearly, barring the fact that they were born outside the United States, immigrants and refugees may share little common with others from different countries or even from their own countries.

Underlying difficulties in understanding is a far reaching xenophobia—both of the immigrants and by them. It is difficult to assess who should be responsible for crossing the divide—is it the host or is it the self-invited newcomer? For immigrants, as for all people, much is dependent on their personal resources. Even more than this, however, is the readiness of the United States to accept immigrants and their American-born descendents. Immigration policies may reflect the interests of the nation in allowing entry to certain groups of people, however, it is the opportunities and obstacles that immigrants and their offspring, particularly those of color, encounter on a daily basis that affect the ease of adjustment and mutual acceptance. Immigrants and the host nation must make a conscious level to adapt to each other—it is neither the exclusive responsibility of the host nation nor of the immigrant.

For any immigrant community, it is a long road from its country of origin. The physical distance may be great, but the social, psychological, and emotional distance of immigrant travel is always greater. Nevertheless, the human condition and its similarities bind peoples together to a much greater extent than one tends to accept, regardless of social norms, culture, religion, or language. As a land of immigrants, if the United States is to be truly multicultural, as

it claims to be, it must also be pluralistic and recognize, accept, and laud the differences in peoples as a national asset. It does not have the corner on cultural diversity and immigration struggles, and in this increasingly interdependent world, it must allow effective policies, programs, and services from other nations to inform its own practices.

Notes

1. Detailed legislation is available through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website: http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.eb1d4c2a3e5b9ac89243c6a7543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=dc60e1df53b2f010VgnVCM1000000ecd190aRCRD&vgnextchannel=dc60e1df53b2f010VgnVCM1000000ecd190aRCRD, accessed February 5, 2009.
2. U.S. Department of State. Retrieved February 15, 2009, from http://travel.state.gov/visa/immigrants/types/types_1306.html.
3. Asylees seek refugee status once they have arrived in the United States, either at the port of entry or after having been in the country for a length of time.
4. UNHCR: The UN Refugee Agency. Website: http://www.unhcr.org/protect/3c0762ea4.html, Accessed February 10, 2009.
5. www.census.gov.

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