

## S U M M A R Y

Debates on immigration policy often discuss calibrating immigration levels to meet the labor needs of the nation's economy. Indeed, it is clear that immigration strongly affects US labor markets – over the past thirty years, foreign-born workers have grown to record numbers, and currently about one out of every seven US workers was born outside the country.

Trends suggest that unless immigration laws are changed drastically, immigrants will form an increasing share of the workforce over the next thirty years. Foreign-born workers are well-represented in occupations predicted to grow most over the next decades, suggesting such workers will remain in demand. As a result, immigrants are expected to form about one-third of the low-skilled labor force over coming decades, and up to 18 percent of college-educated workers. Immigrants are also expected to assist in addressing the needs of an aging population by providing services to the elderly, altering worker-to-retiree ratios, and providing tax revenues that support programs for the aged. While the future of the country's economy is uncertain, it seems quite clear that immigrants will play a large role in the future workforce.

# Immigrants and Labor Force Trends: The Future, Past, and Present

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## I. Introduction

The number of immigrants in the US labor force reached a historic high of 22 million, or 14.7 percent of the total labor force, in 2005. If the level of immigration to the United States continues along its current trajectory, immigrants may make up between one-third and one-half of the growth of the US labor force through 2030. Immigrant workers have played an important role in the growth of the US labor force in recent history, and will continue to play an important role in the future. As debate on US immigration policy heats up, it is important to understand how immigrant workers have fit into the US workforce in the recent past, and what projections may say about immigration's impact on the workforce of the future.

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Over the past thirty years, foreign-born workers have formed a steadily increasing share of the US labor force. In contrast to the European dominated foreign-born population of 1970, immigrants from Mexico, other parts of Latin America, and Asia made up 78 percent of the foreign-born population in 2000. New flows of immigrants to the United States are increasingly educated, and over the past thirty years, a greater proportion of immigrants have held a college degree than natives. At the same time, in 2000, nearly one-third of immigrants had not completed a high school education.

In the next several decades, immigrants will make up a growing share of both high- and low-skill workforces. Between 2000 and 2030, immigrants are projected to grow from 10 to 15 percent of workers with a high school degree, and from 14 to 18 percent of those with a college education. At the same time, occupational projections suggest that many jobs that have the highest rate of growth (in percentage terms) will require a college education, while many jobs with the largest absolute (that is, numerical) growth will require only on-the-job training. The latter jobs are expected to produce over three times as many openings as the former between 2004 and 2014. Immigrants already form a large proportion of workers at both ends of the skill spectrum and, therefore, are likely to be a significant share of workers in tomorrow's labor force across the skill spectrum.

Some discussion surrounding immigrants' contributions to the labor market concentrates on how immigrants will serve the country's needs resulting from an aging population. While anticipated strains on the cost and delivery of public assistance programs and on productivity

rates cannot be solved simply by increasing immigration, these challenges will generate ongoing demand for substantial numbers of immigrant workers.

Peering into the future is fraught with difficulties of unanticipated events or sea changes in economic trends. Yet several factors are likely to generate a strong demand for immigrants, suggesting that an expectation of high growth is justified. First, immigrants already present in the country will predictably create a demand for ongoing family reunification. Secondly, the latent demand for immigrant labor will grow stronger as the baby boom generation moves into retirement and an aging population requires labor-intensive personal services. Finally, as globalization knits together international labor markets, this will ensure that US employers will continue to seek to employ foreign workers across the entire occupational continuum.

The first half of this Insight presents labor force projections prepared for the Pew Hispanic Center. These projections extend to 2050 both for the total labor force and for the educational profiles of future workers. Next, this section discusses occupational projections by the US Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) through 2014, with emphasis on large and fast-growing occupations, as well as the skill levels of the workers needed to fill them. These projections combine an assumption of continued immigration levels similar to those of recent years and assumptions about the nature of the demand for workers in various occupations. Finally, this section discusses the impact of the aging US population and the demand it is likely to create for immigrant workers.

The second half of the Insight provides historical context for these projections, presenting a profile of immigrant workers in the United States over the past thirty years, including their countries of origin, employment and unemployment rates, educational levels, and occupations. This section also explores the restructuring of the US economy after the recession of 2001, looking at how immigrant and native workers fared in this process, and at the most recent data on immigrants' roles in the labor market.

## II. Projections of Tomorrow's Labor Force

Most projections of future immigration suggest that foreign-born workers will play a significant role in the growth and skill composition of the US labor force. The BLS projects that the labor force will grow 10 percent (14.7 million), or an average of 1.0 percent per year, between 2004 and 2014, reaching a total of 162.1 million.<sup>1</sup> While this is substantial growth, the *rate* of labor force growth has been slowing for the past twenty years. Labor force growth has slowed largely because baby boomers had only enough children to replace themselves in the labor market, but not enough to cause the native-born working-age population to increase as it had in the past. The slowing of labor force growth is expected to accelerate after 2010, with annual growth falling to a low of 0.3 percent between 2020 and 2030 before recovering slightly to 0.6 percent between 2030 and 2050.<sup>2</sup>

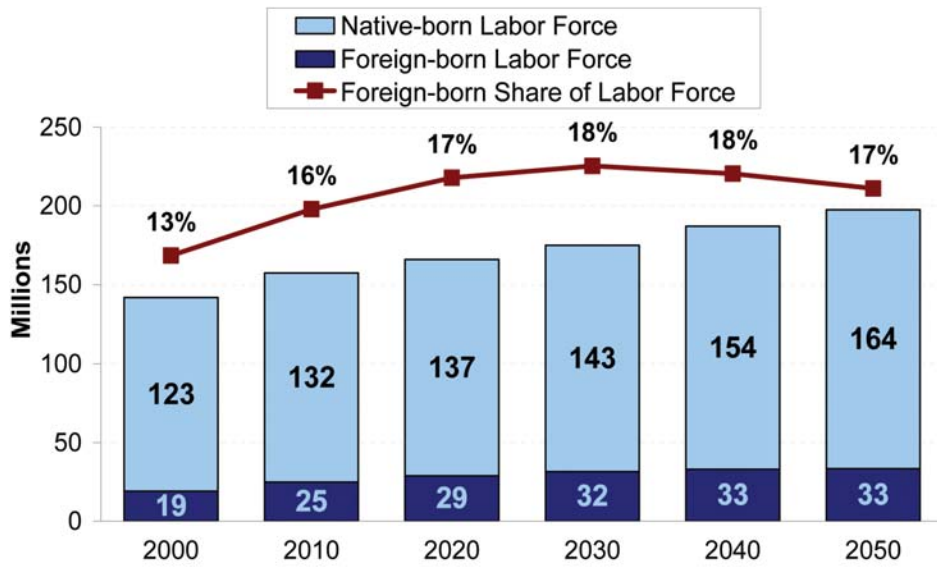
Immigrants have been an important source of labor force growth in the recent past, making up 48.6 percent of the total labor force

increase between 1996 and 2000, and as much as 60 percent of the increase from 2000 to 2004.<sup>3</sup> The levels of immigration used in BLS and other projections imply that immigrants will remain significant drivers of labor force growth in coming decades. The BLS' projections assume that *total* immigration, both legal and unauthorized, will continue to bring between 1.0 and 1.1 million people to the country each year until 2014, though this assumption is already lower than the estimated numbers since 2001, particularly in the illegal immigration cohort.<sup>4</sup> Recent legislative proposals could have important effects on the size and characteristics of future immigration flows, but barring truly restrictionist policy, immigration will continue to be robust under any legislation that becomes law.

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These projections imply that an immigrant workforce of 19 million will grow to 25 million by 2010, 29 million by 2020, and to 32 million by 2030 (see Figure 1). Likewise, the share of immigrants in the total labor force is predicted to climb from 13 percent in 2000 to 18 percent by 2030, and then remain little changed through 2050. Although the projections indicate little further growth of the immigrant workforce past 2030, much of the ongoing growth of the native workforce will be driven by the children of immigrants. In fact, the second generation is projected to generate over 60 percent of the growth in the US labor force between 2030 and 2050.<sup>6</sup>

Figure I. Projection of Labor Force by Nativity



Source: Jeffrey S. Passel, "Projections of Population, Educational Attainment, and Labor Force Participation: By Generation, Age, Sex, and Race/Ethnicity," unpublished tabulations prepared for the Pew Hispanic Center (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, October 2003).

New immigration is likely to contribute between one-third and one-half of the growth of the labor force through 2030 and begin to decline afterward.<sup>7</sup> Even more, between 2010 and 2030, first and second generation immigrants together are projected to account for all growth of the US labor force. If unauthorized

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immigrants continue to comprise roughly half of immigrant flows, unauthorized workers may account for as much as

a quarter of labor force growth over this period. Calculations for the Pew Hispanic Center suggest that if *no* immigrants entered the country after 2000, the labor force would be nearly 10 million workers smaller by 2015 than if immigration follows current projections. By 2050, the difference between the size of the labor force with immigration and without it would be 45 million.<sup>8</sup>

### III. Projections of Workers by Education

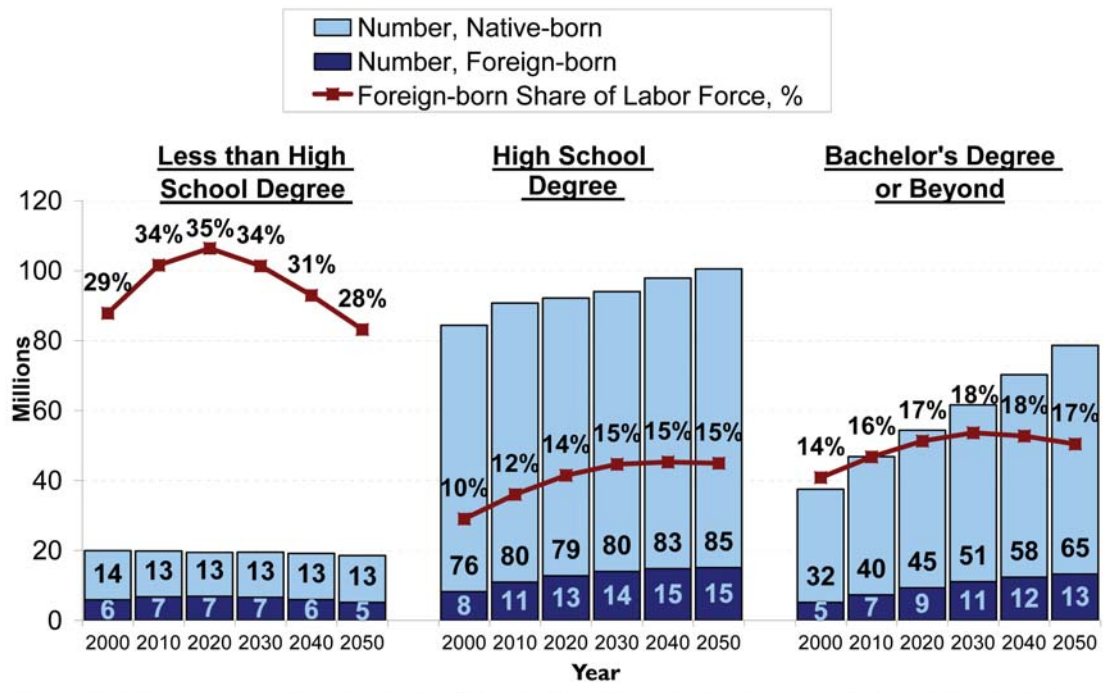
Beyond the total numbers, another important factor shaping immigrants' role in tomorrow's labor force is the educational profile of immigrant workers. Some observers speculate that the *average level* of education among natives,

which has been rapidly improving in recent decades, will begin to slow. After all, high school completion is already very high among natives and it is debatable whether ever-increasing proportions of high school graduates will pursue a college education. The Census Bureau projects that the percent of adults aged 25 and older who have completed high school will increase from 83 percent in 2003 to between 87 and 91 percent by 2028. But they also project that growth in post-secondary education will slow, with the percent of adults who have completed college rising from 24 percent in 2003 to between 28 and 31 percent by 2028.<sup>9</sup>

Projections for the Pew Hispanic Center of the number of college-educated workers among the

labor force show growth from 37 million in 2000, to 54 million in 2020, and 78 million in 2050 (see Figure 2). Conversely, the numbers of workers who have not graduated from high school are projected to fall slowly from 20 million in 2000 to 18 million in 2050. Immigrants are predicted to represent an increasing share of workers with both high and low education, comprising 29 percent of workers without a high school diploma in 2000, but 35 percent of these workers in 2020, and 14 percent of those with a college degree or more in 2000, growing to 17 percent in 2020.<sup>10</sup> The greatest gain is projected for immigrants with a high school, but not a college education; immigrants were 10 percent of workers with a high school degree in 2000 and are projected to be 15 percent by 2030.

**Figure 2. Projection of Labor Force by Education and Nativity**



Source: Jeffrey S. Passel, "Projections of Population, Educational Attainment, and Labor Force Participation: By Generation, Age, Sex, and Race/Ethnicity," unpublished tabulations prepared for the Pew Hispanic Center (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, October 2003).

In summary, projections of total immigration at levels similar to those seen since the late 1990s suggest that the number of immigrants, and their share of the labor force, will peak in the year 2030.<sup>11</sup> In that year there could be 32 million immigrant workers making up 18 percent of the total US workforce. Between 2000 and 2030, immigrants are projected to grow from 29 to 34

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#### IV. Projections of Workers by Occupation

The skill levels demanded by occupations projected to grow over the next several years parallel the educational profile of the labor force, suggesting ongoing demand across the skill spectrum. Every two years, the BLS publishes projections about the number of net jobs that will be created or lost in each occupation.<sup>12</sup> The latest projections, for the years 2004 to 2014, forecast a slowing in the rate of total labor force growth, as mentioned above. However, there is substantial variation in the fortunes of various occupations.

Tomorrow's economy will generate demand for jobs that are different from today's and the skills that workers need to do those jobs will likewise change. The BLS separates out occupations that are projected to have the largest numerical growth and those that are projected to experience the fastest rate of growth.<sup>13</sup>

Immigrants make up a significant share of the labor force in many large and fast-growing occupations. Importantly, the BLS further classifies occupations by the degree of skill required for the job, showing that there will be a continuous demand for both low and high-skilled workers.

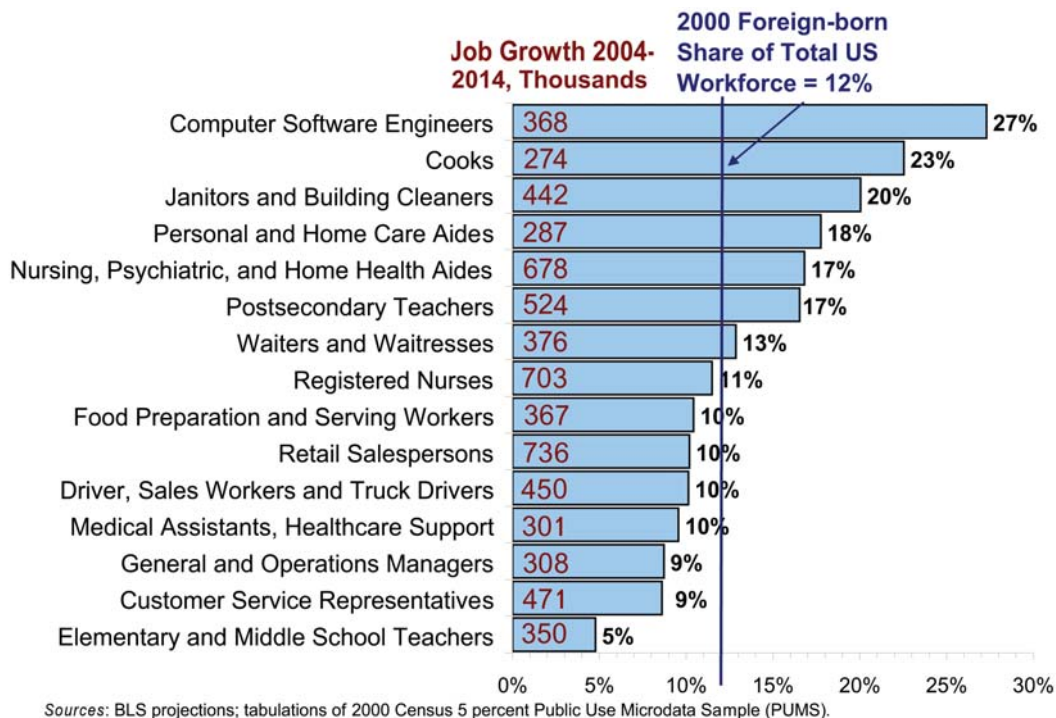
#### Large-Growth Occupations

For occupations forecast to experience largest growth, ten out of the fifteen require a minimum of only short or moderate-term on-the-job training, suggesting lower-skilled immigrants could contribute to meeting the demand for these types of jobs (see Appendix). According to 2000 Census data, immigrants were overrepresented in five of these occupations. Immigrants made up 23 percent of cooks, 20 percent of janitors and building cleaners, and 18 percent of personal and home care aides (see Figure 3). On the high-skill end, four large-growth occupations – postsecondary teachers, computer software engineers, elementary and middle school teachers, and general and operations managers – require a Bachelor's degree or higher and, as seen above, immigrants are especially well poised to continue to contribute to these.

#### Fast-Growth Occupations

At the same time, immigrants have made up a large share of some fast-growing occupations requiring college degrees. Of the fifteen occupations projected to grow the fastest, seven are occupations in which immigrants were overrepresented as a share of the workforce in 2000 (see Figure 4). Six of these seven require a college degree: medical scientists, database administrators, computer software engineers, network systems and data communications analysts, physical therapists, and postsecondary teachers.<sup>14</sup>

**Figure 3. Foreign-born Share of the Fifteen Occupations with Largest Growth 2004 to 2014**



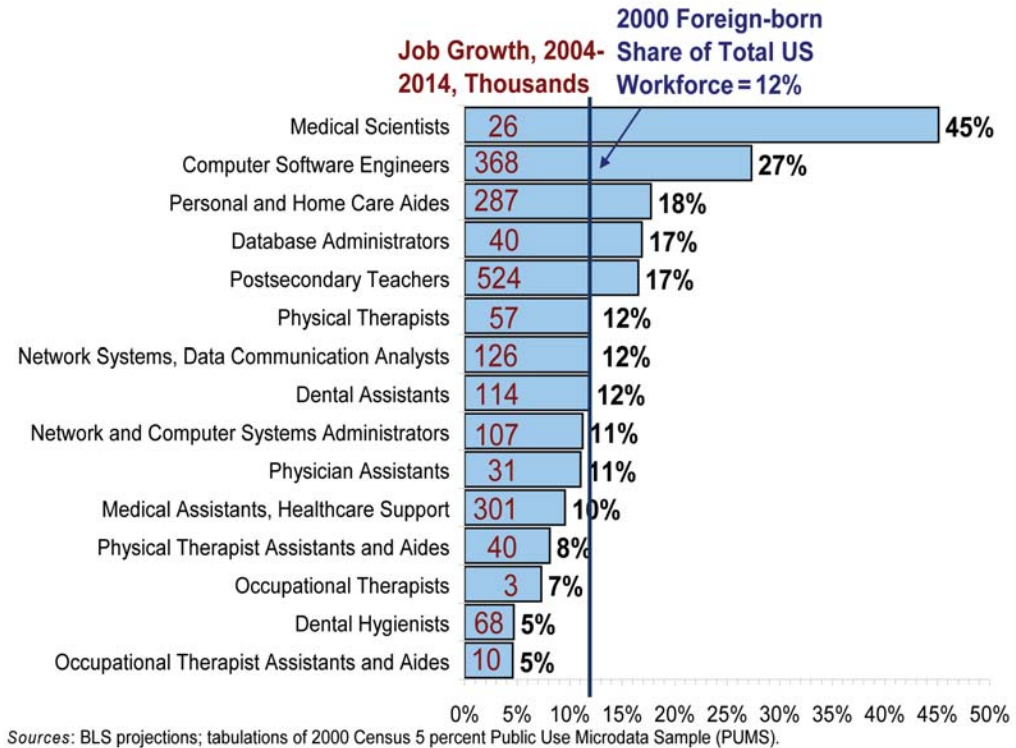
### Occupations to Serve an Aging Population

Immigrants are also employed in jobs that will be important in serving tomorrow’s aging population. Seniors are expected to generate increasing demand for medical, home care, and other services, many of which require workers with only on-the-job training. According to analysis of BLS data, nine of the fifteen occupations projected to grow most rapidly and four of the occupations projected to have largest absolute growth are medical support occupations including physical therapists; nursing,

psychiatric and home health aides; registered nurses; occupational therapist assistants and aides; and personal and home care aides. Immigrants were well represented in these occupations in 2000.

In summary, forecasts of occupational growth suggest occupations requiring better educated workers will continue to grow strongly. There will also be a substantial growth of jobs requiring little training and in which immigrants are already well represented.

**Figure 4. Foreign-born Share of Fifteen Occupations with the Fastest Growth 2004 to 2014**



## V. Population Dependency and Productivity

The aging of the baby boomer generation will slow labor force growth, increase the tax burden on workers supporting public assistance for retirees, and create a potential drag on productivity growth. Between 2004 and 2014, persons aged 55 and older are estimated to grow an average of 4.1 percent per year – quadruple the growth rate of the overall labor force. The number of workers aged 25 to 54, in contrast,

will grow by only 3.5 million for the entire period, or a rate of 0.3 percent per year. These demographic trends will slow the rate of growth of the total prime-age labor force.<sup>15</sup>

The aging of the population will change the elderly dependency ratio — the number of retired dependents relative to economically active workers. That ratio is expected to rise as the baby boomer generation enters retirement and as US fertility rates remain low, leaving a greater number of elderly to be supported by each worker.<sup>16</sup> The decreasing number of tax-



paying workers supporting each retiree will strain public assistance programs for the elderly including Social Security and Medicare.<sup>17</sup> Many observers argue that an infusion of young, taxpaying immigrants can help address future shortfalls in these programs.<sup>18</sup>

While the evidence suggests that greater immigration could aid elderly assistance programs, it should not be expected to solve the dependency problem. Increased immigration can temporarily lessen the Social Security and Medicare burden on native workers, but in the longer run, permanent immigrants will also age into retirement. Further, immigrants are currently only 12 percent of the US population and current rates of immigration add about a million legal immigrants yearly. It would take many new immigrants over a large period of time to change the demographic structure of a total US population of 298 million. Indeed, a widely cited UN report on this subject concludes that “the levels of migration needed to offset population aging (i.e., maintain potential support ratios) are extremely large, and [for all countries] entail vastly more immigration than occurred in the past.”<sup>19</sup> The UN estimates that about 47 million migrants would be needed to maintain the overall size of the US population until 2050; about 79 million migrants would be needed to maintain a constant size of the age group 15 to 64; and about 674 million would be needed to maintain a constant elderly dependency ratio.

The most effective way to bolster the number of workers is to increase the number of persons participating in the labor force. Bringing more women into the labor force, therefore, could be a viable way to maintain the number of available workers.<sup>20</sup> Women’s participation in the labor force grew from 34 percent in

1950 to 50 percent in 2002.<sup>21</sup> However, that growth is slowing. There are also other ways to increase the labor force, e.g., increasing the employment rate of the youngest workers, increasing the number of full-time workers, increasing the labor participation of the elderly, increasing the number of temporary foreign workers, or, most talked about, increasing the retirement age. Indeed, increasing the labor force participation rates of older Americans would have a more dramatic benefit for Social Security and Medicare than increasing immigration.

Alternatively, capital investment and new technologies could improve worker productivity.<sup>22</sup> Growing productivity could maintain high production output even in the face of a slowly growing US workforce, helping US employers remain globally competitive and boosting tax revenues. Productivity increases — through the development of new technology, investment in machinery to replace workers, or the development of more efficient production processes — would enable a smaller pool of workers to produce as much as a larger labor force under current rates of productivity. The United States has enjoyed record productivity in recent years and the BLS predicts a relatively high annual rate of productivity growth of 2.7 percent from 2004 to 2014.

Immigration may also boost productivity because immigrant workers tend to be younger

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and therefore generally more productive than older workers, but it is unclear how greatly immigration would need to be expanded to significantly enhance productivity. A National Academy of Sciences report in 1997 concluded that immigrants generate a small but positive boost to the gross national product by generating increased returns to capital that are greater than any adverse wage impacts immigrants generate for native workers.<sup>23</sup> Another study looked at the economic effects of doubling both high and low-skilled immigration in the context of the economic challenges of an aging society. It found that the greatest impact came from the high-skilled end, which would create positive spillover effects. However, the study found that a doubling of low-skill immigration would cause adverse effects from social costs and use of public assistance.<sup>24</sup>

Some evidence suggests that innovation thrives when human capital is agglomerated in areas with many specialists and skilled migrants. The booming economy of the late 1990s was fueled by historic productivity gains, one-third of which came from information technology (IT), and foreign workers fueled one-quarter of the IT labor force growth.<sup>25</sup> Note, too, that immigrants started about one-third of Silicon Valley's high-tech start-ups.<sup>26</sup>

In summary, an aging population will place strains on US government programs for the elderly and challenge productivity growth.

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Huge numbers of immigrants would be required to offset the demographic effects of aging, and boosting productivity will likely

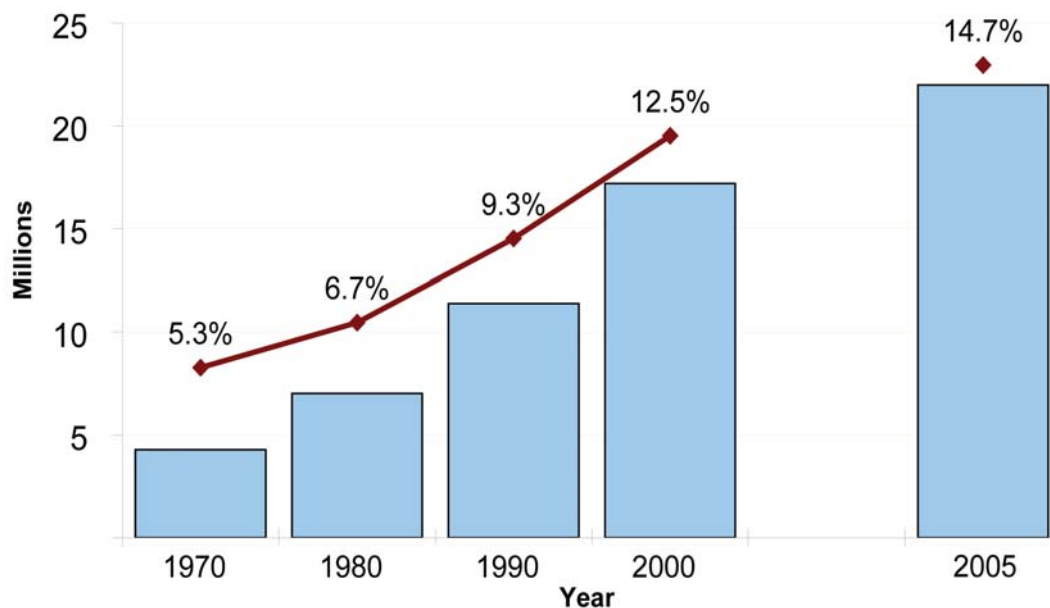
require slanting immigration more toward high-skills. On balance, however, while the challenges created by the aging of the US labor force cannot simply be solved by more immigration, budget and productivity shortfalls will generate demand for generous numbers of skilled immigrant workers.

## VI. The Last Thirty Years: Increases in Foreign Workers from New Sending Countries

The Immigration Act of 1965 opened access to the United States for immigrants from nations that had been virtually excluded since the 1920s and set in play significant growth of the foreign-born population. As the immigrant population grew, the share of immigrants in the workforce also increased. In 1970, the Census counted 4.3 million foreign-born workers aged 16 and over who made up just 5.3 percent of the total civilian labor force. Those numbers increased to 11.4 million by 1990, and 21.7 million in 2005, at which time they made up 14.7 percent of all civilian workers (see Figure 5). During the three decades from 1970 to 2000, the native labor force grew by 38 percent while the immigrant labor force grew 218 percent. Immigrant males led labor force growth throughout, with females remaining at about 40 percent of immigrant workers over this period. But while the number of immigrant workers has reached a historic high, their share of the workforce is roughly the same as it was at its peak earlier in the last century.

Because the 1965 Act opened up immigration from countries that now send most immigrants to the United States, there has been a significant shift from a foreign-born population domi-

Figure 5. Foreign-born in Labor Force, Number and Percent of Total Labor Force, by Census Year



Sources: Tabulations of 5 percent Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS); Current Population Survey (CPS), March.

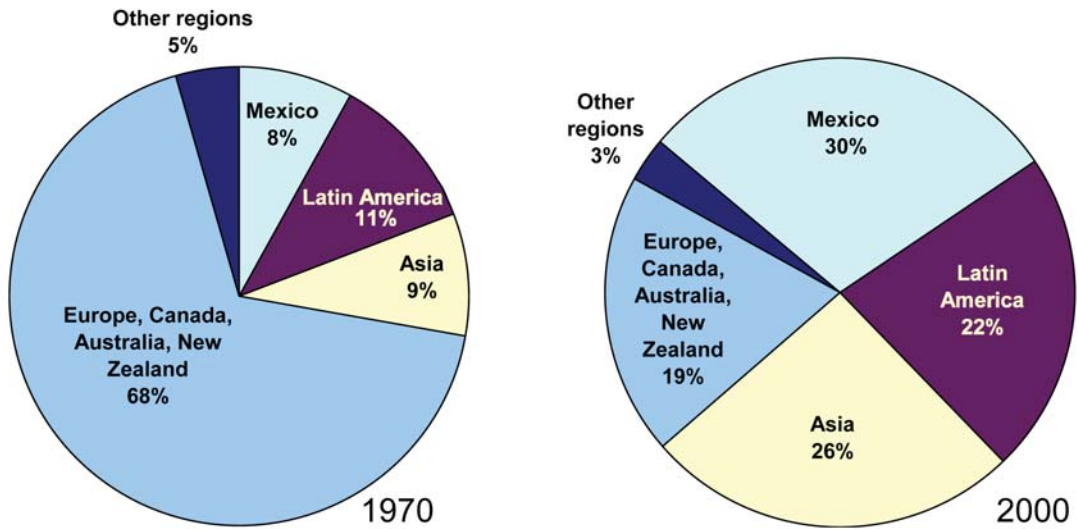
nated by Europeans in 1970, to a population dominated by Latin Americans and Asians in 2000. Whereas Europeans, Canadians, Australians, and New Zealanders made up 68 percent of all the foreign-born in 1970, by 2000 that share had dropped to just 19 percent (see Figure 6). Meanwhile, Mexicans grew from just 8 percent of all the foreign-born to 30 percent in 2000, while the share of other Latin Americans doubled from 11 to 22 percent. Of equal significance is the increase of Asians from 9 percent of all immigrants to 26 percent during this short three-decade span.

There has also been an increase in the number of foreign-born workers who are unauthorized,

particularly in the late 1990s when the number of new unauthorized migrants may have exceeded the number of legal admissions.<sup>27</sup> Of course the presence of unauthorized workers in the US workforce is not new. In 1980, there were already an estimated 1.8 million unauthorized workers making up over one-quarter of the foreign-born workforce. In 2005, the best available estimate places the number of unauthorized workers at 7.2 million. The unauthorized population was about 2 percent of the total US labor force in 1980 and 4.9 percent in 2005.

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**Figure 6. Share of Foreign-born by Country/Region of Birth, 1970 and 2000**



Source: Tabulations of 5 percent Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS).

The Latin American share of the unauthorized workforce may be a little more than 81 percent, the region’s estimated share of the unauthorized population.

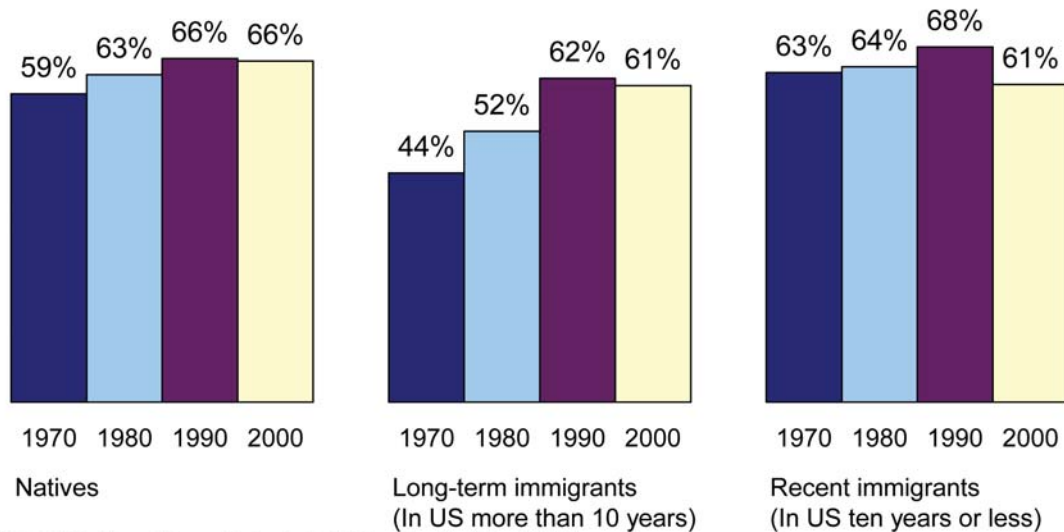
## VII. Past and Present Rates of Employment and Unemployment

Immigrants have tended to participate in the labor force at rates similar to those of natives. The labor force participation rate measures the share of persons who are either employed or unemployed (but looking for work) out of the total civilian population aged 16 and over. Recent immigrants, in particular, have high participation rates, equal to all natives, while long-term immigrants who have been in the United States for more than ten years participate at rates lower than all natives (see Figure

7). This is due to the fact that “long-term” immigrants are also “older” immigrants and participation rates tend to be lower for older persons. The effect of age on labor force participation rates can be gleaned from the labor force participation rate of immigrants in the 1970 Census, which stood at only 44 percent. In 1970, most immigrants were European. Few Europeans had immigrated since World War II, so the low participation rate in 1970 can be explained by the fact that the remaining European workers were relatively old.

Participation rates also vary substantially by immigrant origins and gender. In the year 2000, native-born males and most male immigrants had similarly high rates of labor force participation (see Figure 8). The exception, again, was European males, who were older on

Figure 7. Labor Force Participation Rates by Nativity and Time in the United States, by Census Year



Source: Tabulations of 5 percent Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS).

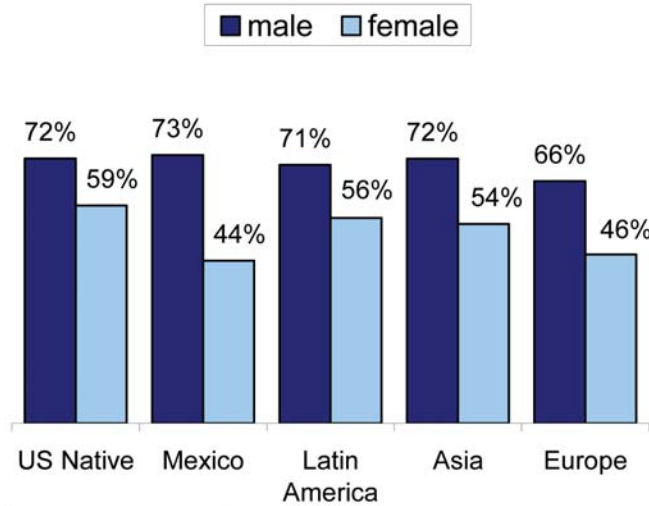
average than other immigrants. Female participation rates were lower than those of males for all groups, but particularly low for Mexican females, who had a participation rate of 44 percent.

Unemployment rates show a somewhat different pattern from labor force participation rates, if in a not particularly surprising way. Recently arrived immigrants have higher rates of unemployment than either natives or long-term immigrants, a difference that was most pronounced in 1990 (see Figure 9). Recently arrived immigrants have less US labor market specific experience and fewer resources; they are therefore simultaneously less employable and more likely to be looking for work, so they experience higher rates of unemployment. (US

unemployment data report only those who actively look for work; those who do not – the so-called “discouraged workers” – fall off the unemployment statistics. Most discouraged workers are either natives or longer-term immigrants.) On the other hand, the unemployment rates of long-term immigrants and natives have been fairly similar over the past thirty years, likely reflecting the fact that experienced immigrants were in as much demand as natives. However, by the year 2000, the unemployment rates of immigrants declined following the trend of all unemployment.

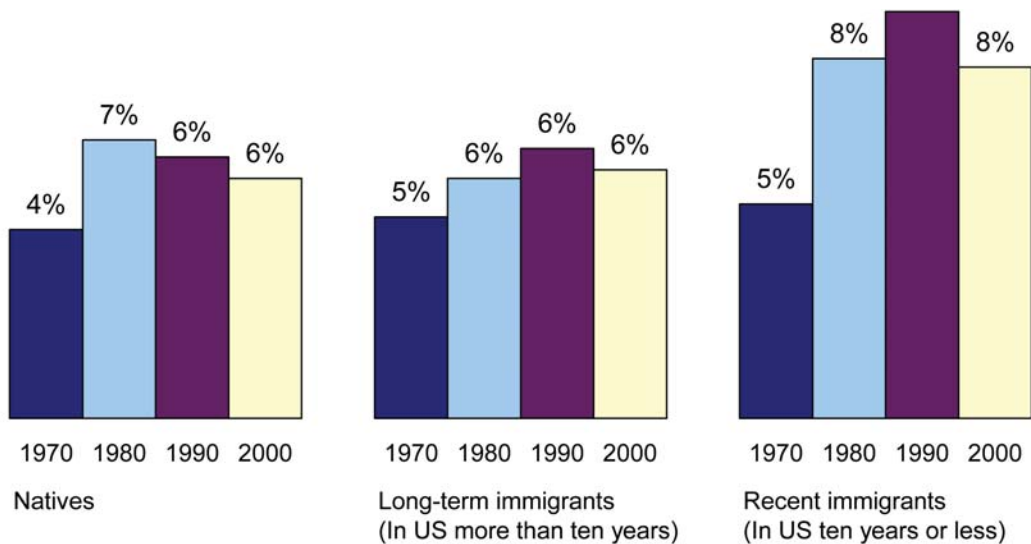
Unemployment rates varied markedly by place of birth and gender. In addition to female immigrants’ lower rates of labor force participation, female immigrants also tended to expe-

Figure 8. Labor Force Participation Rates by Country/Region of Birth and Sex, 2000



Source: Tabulations of 5 percent Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS).

Figure 9. Unemployment Rates by Nativity and Time in the United States, by Census Year



Source: Tabulations of 5 percent Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS).

rience higher unemployment rates than males (see Figure 10). Mexican females had the highest unemployment rate in 2000, 14 percent, followed by other Latin American females, 9 percent of whom were unemployed. Latin American males also had rates of unemployment greater than those of natives, while Asians and Europeans of either gender had lower rates of unemployment than natives. Thus, unemployment rates varied much more by place of birth and gender than did participation rates.

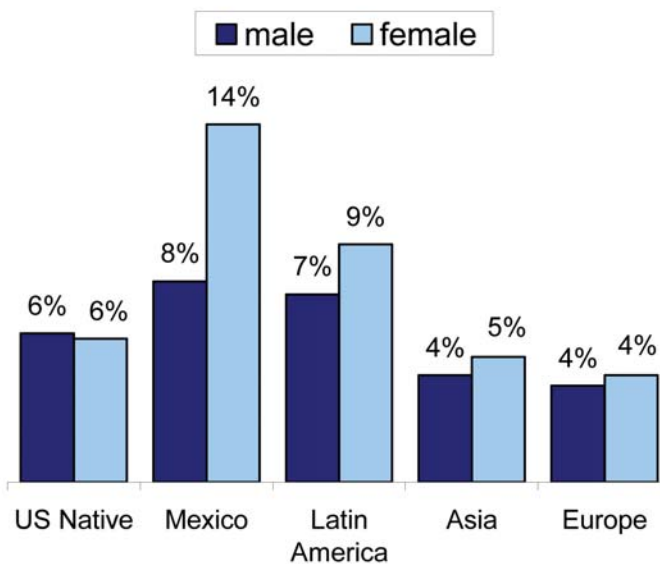
## VIII. Past and Present Rates of Educational Attainment

Since 1970, immigrants have shown a bimodal educational distribution, being both more likely than natives to have a college education and more likely not to have finished high school. The most noteworthy trends are simultaneous improvements in immigrants' education over time and even faster growth in natives' education – leading to a widening education gap (see Figure 11). In 1970, 46 percent of native

adults had not completed a high school education. This percentage declined precipitously over the next thirty years as older persons died and as a high school education became more universal. In addition, as more natives completed high school, increasing numbers went on to college.

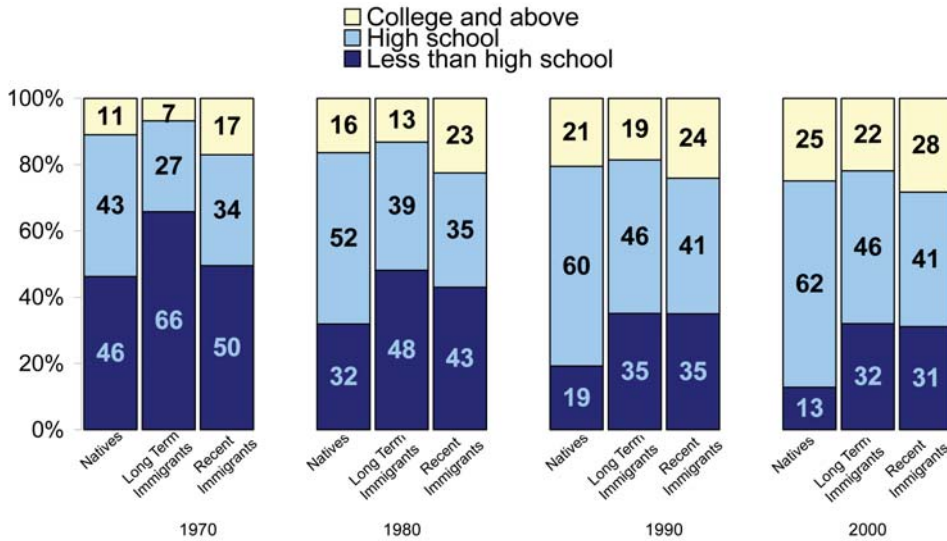
During these decades of marked improvement in the education of natives, immigrants remained a substantial share of non-high school educated adults. In 2000, about 31 percent of all immigrants were still not high school graduates. At the same time, recent immigrants in each decade have also been more likely than natives to have a college education. Hence, newly arriving immigrants have been better educated over time, but the substantial

**Figure 10. Unemployment Rates by Country/Region of Birth and Sex, 2000**



Source: Tabulations of 5 percent Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS).

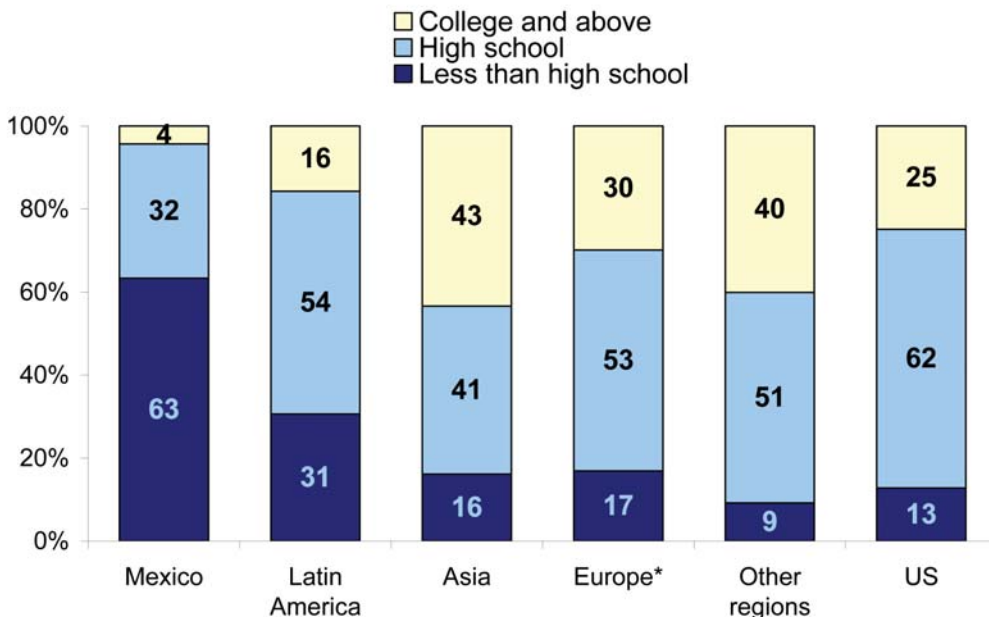
Figure 11. Educational attainment by Nativity and Time in the United States (Age 25+), by Census Year



**Note:** Long-term immigrants are those who have been in the US for more than ten years. Recent immigrants have been in the US for ten years or less.

Source: Tabulations of 5 percent Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS).

Figure 12. Educational Attainment by Country/Region of Birth (Age 25+), 2000



\* Europe includes foreign-born from Europe, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

Source: Tabulations of 5 percent Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS).



share without a high school education differentiates them from the native population, which has seen more significant gains in secondary education over time.

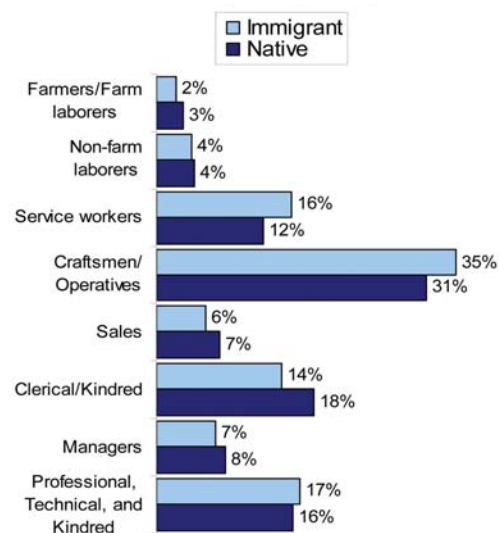
Among the foreign-born, it is primarily Mexican and certain other Latin American immigrants who have not completed a high school education (see Figure 12). In fact, Asian and European immigrant adults are not only very likely to complete high school, they are also more likely than natives to have a college education. Latin American immigrants, on the other hand, also have quite low levels of college education.<sup>28</sup> And while Asian and European immigrants demonstrated the same sharp increase in levels of education from 1970 to 2000 as natives, Latin American immigrants demonstrated some improvements

in high school completion but relatively little improvement in college completion. In short, Latin American immigrants, who are the majority of all foreign-born, are relatively poorly educated, while Asians and Europeans are very well educated relative to today's natives.

## IX. Past and Present Changes in Occupational Employment

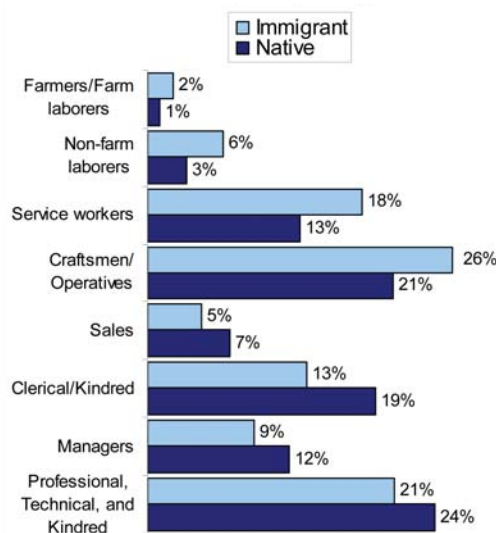
Immigrants were employed in the same *broad occupational groupings* as natives in both 1970 and 2000. Both groups experienced the same thinning of ranks of craftsmen/operatives (a process fueled by the long-term decline in manufacturing) and simultaneous increase in employment in professional, technical and kindred (PTK) jobs (see Figures 13 and 14). Nevertheless, immigrants were more likely to

**Figure 13. Share of Native and Immigrant Workers by Occupation, 1970**



Sources: Tabulations of 5 percent Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS).

**Figure 14. Share of Native and Immigrant Workers by Occupation, 2000**



Sources: Tabulations of 5 percent Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS).

be employed as lower-skilled craftsmen/operatives and, by 2000, especially as non-farm laborers than natives. Finally, immigrants also retained a greater likelihood of being employed as service workers than natives in both 1970 and 2000. In contrast, natives were actually slightly less likely to be employed in PTK jobs in 1970 than immigrants, but had a distinct

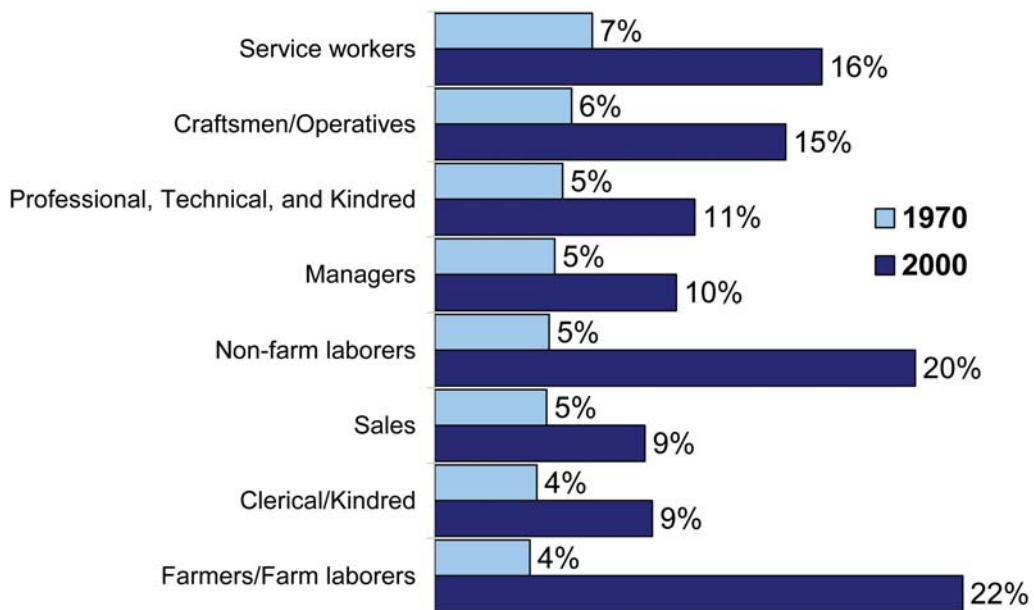
*Mexican-born workers are much more likely than natives to find employment in food preparation, building and grounds maintenance, construction, and production occupations*

employment edge in PTK by 2000.<sup>29</sup>

While the relative distribution of immigrants and natives in different occupations appears to be remarkably stable, the immigrant share of each

occupation's workforce has increased dramatically over the past three decades. On the one hand, this is not very surprising as the immigrant share of the total labor force more than doubled between 1970 and 2000. However, within certain occupations, the immigrant share of the workforce can be quite striking. The most notable gains were in farmer/farm laborer occupations, which were 4 percent immigrant in 1970 and 22 percent immigrant by 2000 (see Figure 15). Immigrants also saw their share increase from 5 percent to 20 percent of non-farm laborers during the same time period. And while the share of all workers who were craftsman/operatives declined during this period, the immigrant share of this workforce increased from 6 to 15 percent. Immigrants are

**Figure 15. Immigrant Share of Workforce by Occupation, 1970 and 2000**



Source: Tabulations of 5 percent Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS).

now a substantial part of the workforce of all major occupational groupings.

Nevertheless, there are notable occupational differences between natives and immigrants when place of birth and gender are considered. Mexican-born workers are much more likely than natives to find employment in food preparation, building and grounds maintenance, construction, and production occupations (see Table 1). Other Latin American-born workers show similar differences, although they are somewhat more similar to natives in their employment in sales/administrative support jobs, as are Asian and European-born workers.

More striking are male-female differences in employment from all regions. All women, including Mexican-born women, are much more likely than their male counterparts to be employed in sales/administration. And natives,

as well as other Latin American, Asian, and European women are often found in health care occupations. Native, Asian, and European women have notable employment shares in management and business.

## X. The Recent Picture: Changes in Industrial Employment

The economic recession that began in early 2001 officially ended by November of that year, as real output began to recover in the last quarter. However, job growth lagged, and the number of employed civilians declined until late 2002. The unemployment rate grew to a peak of 6.3 percent in mid-2003 before beginning to recede.

Yet despite the economic downturn, immigrant workers fared well in terms of increased employment. Indeed, because of the large

**Table 1. Distribution of Employed Workers Ages 16 and Above by Occupation, Country/Region of Birth, and Sex, 2000**

Occupation	US		Mexico		Latin America		Asia		Europe/Canada/Australia	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Management/Business	15	12	4	4	9	9	15	13	19	13
IT/Sci/Engineers	7	3	1	1	4	2	21	9	14	6
Other professionals	5	13	1	5	3	7	4	6	6	11
Arts/Entertainment	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	3
Health care	3	11	0	5	3	15	6	14	3	12
Protective services	3	1	1	0	2	1	1	0	1	0
Food preparation	3	6	10	10	7	6	7	6	4	5
Building/Grounds Maintenance	3	2	10	13	8	11	2	2	3	4
Personal care & services	1	5	1	6	1	6	2	6	1	6
Sales/Admin support	19	38	8	23	17	30	19	29	14	32
Farming	1	0	8	4	1	0	0	0	0	0
Construction/Extraction	17	1	27	1	20	1	6	0	16	1
Production occupations	20	7	29	27	23	12	15	13	17	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

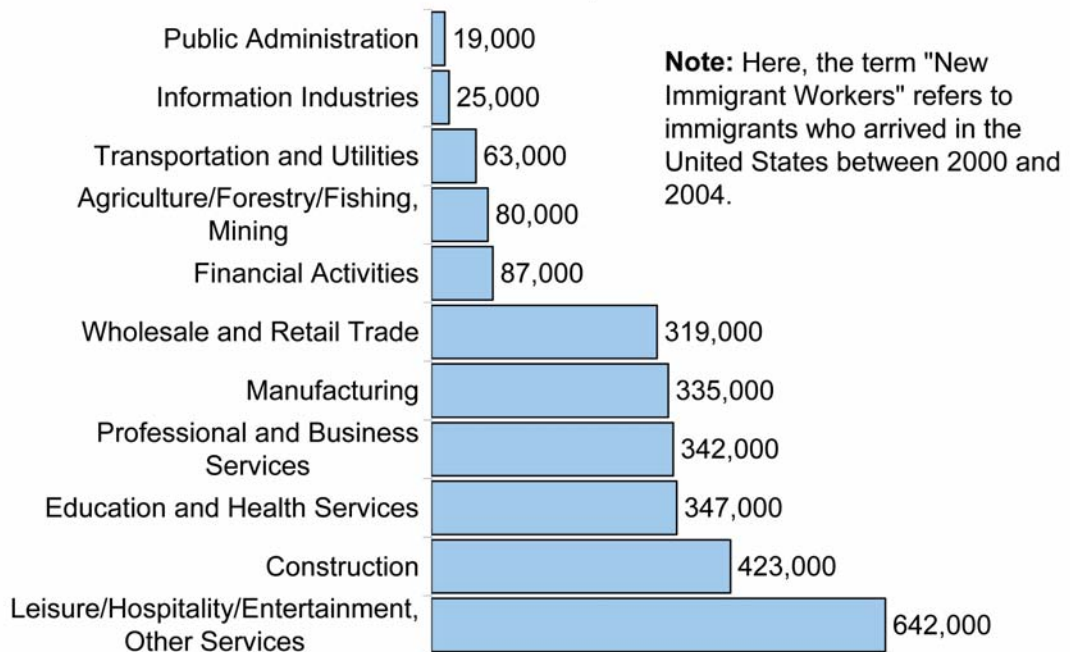
Sources: Tabulations of 5 percent Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS).

numbers of new immigrant arrivals and increasing employment, some observers have argued that immigration is no longer responsive to economic cycles.<sup>30</sup> But this is not the case in a strict sense, as the number of new entrants, legal or unauthorized, can be shown to have increased during the 1990s' economic boom and then decreased each year from 2001 through 2003.<sup>31</sup> The number of new entrants appears to have increased in 2004, but only after some rebound in the economy and increased hiring. Therefore, immigration continued during the recession, but the annual number of all entrants was smaller than it had been in the years prior to the recession.

Of greater interest is the fact that native employment was stagnant during the recession while the numbers of employed foreign workers increased, especially in certain industries (see Figure 16). Further, the increase in immigrant employment coincided with declining wages for immigrants and in particular for Latino immigrants.<sup>32</sup> The reason for the apparent contradiction of decreasing immigrant wages during a time of high demand for immigrant workers is simply not clear.

During the recession, the economy underwent considerable restructuring; manufacturing continued to decline rapidly, leading to a loss of

**Figure 16. Number of New Immigrant Workers in Major Industries, 2004**



Source: Sum et al, "New Foreign Immigrants," 2005.

2.8 million manufacturing jobs between 2000 and late 2003. Yet in the context of this decline, over 300,000 new immigrant workers gained employment in manufacturing industries. Across all industries, new immigrant employment increased by about 2.1 million between 2000 and 2004, while native-born employment decreased by 958,000, and immigrants already present in the country in 2000 saw a decrease in employment of 352,000. New immigrant workers (those who entered in or after 2000) were heavily concentrated in several industries in 2004, with 15 percent of new immigrant workers in construction, 17 percent in leisure and hospitality, 13 percent in professional and business services, and 13 percent in education and health services.<sup>33</sup> So while the total, yearly number of new immigrants entering the country declined during the recession, since the inflow responded to economic conditions, newly arrived immigrant workers experienced favorable employment conditions once in the country.

## XI. Conclusion

Looking to the future of US immigration, many observers ask whether immigration could provide a solution to many of the problems foreseen for the US economy. The baby boom generation is reaching the cusp of retirement, creating expectations for a slowing of the growth of the labor force, impending challenges for Social Security and Medicare, and growing shortages of workers such as nurses and home aides to care for the aging population. Other problems, such as growing demand for high-tech workers that threatens to outpace the growth in numbers of Americans with proper technical training, and the ever-present threat of companies moving production overseas have

all raised the question of whether immigration can be used strategically to meet the country's economic needs.

Data from the past thirty years can inform this debate. Census numbers show that immigrant workers have played an important role in the US labor force. The number of foreign-born workers has increased rapidly, reaching a historic high, while the proportion of immigrants in the labor force has grown over this period to rates similar to those seen during the immigration boom of the early twentieth century. The demographics of the foreign-born labor force have shifted over this same period from one dominated by European immigrants to one dominated by Mexican and other Latin American immigrants. Educational levels of immigrant workers continued to show a bimodal distribution, with immigrant workers more likely than natives to both have a college degree and have less than a high school education. In general, immigrants showed roughly the same occupational distribution as native workers, but Mexican-born males in particular were disproportionately concentrated in construction and production jobs, with more than half of such workers in these occupations. These demographic and occupational data have shaped current projections to suggest that immigrants will continue to play an important role in both high and low-skill occupations.

While labor force projections show continuing strong demand for workers in occupations immigrants are well-positioned to fill, these predictions are based on assumptions about the level of immigration and the nature of job demand in the decades ahead. Both are somewhat uncertain. Further, strategies other than immigration could be used to meet the coun-

try's coming economic needs. For example, the need for high-skilled labor could be met in ways other than increasing the numbers of high-skilled immigrants allowed into the country. The United States could devote greater resources to raising the skill level of residents, retraining workers from sunset industries and improving the teaching of skills most relevant to the future economy. In some cases, high-technology jobs could be outsourced to rising centers of technological expertise such as Bangalore or others around the world.

Given the dynamic nature of the economy, the uncertainty of any attempts to predict the needs of tomorrow's economy, and the limited control any government can exert over demographic changes, it is difficult to say with any certainty how immigration can or should be

used to meet the needs of the country's coming labor markets. However, it is quite clear that immigration has been an important source of labor force growth in the past, and that the skills required of the occupations projected to be important to the future, in both technology and healthcare industries, will likely match reasonably well with the skill profiles of immigrants today and the projected skill profiles of future immigrants. Immigrants currently play a large role in several of the occupations expected to have the fastest and largest growth and can therefore be expected to contribute to meeting the future demand of these industries. Immigration is not *the* answer to the country's future economic needs, but it could, and likely will, play an important part in a more comprehensive solution.

## Acknowledgements

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## APPENDIX

Table 2. Fifteen Fastest Growing Occupations 2004-2014

Occupation	Percent Growth 2004-2014	Foreign-born Share of Workforce	Most Significant Source of Postsecondary Education or Training
Network Systems, Data Communication Analysts	55%	12%	Bachelor's degree
Physician Assistants	50%	11%	Bachelor's degree
Computer Software Engineers	46%	27%	Bachelor's degree
Dental Hygienists	43%	5%	Associate degree
Dental Assistants	43%	12%	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Personal and Home Care Aides	41%	18%	Short-term on-the-job training
Physical Therapist Assistants and Aides	39%	8%	Short-term on-the-job training/associate degree
Occupational Therapist Assistants and Aides	38%	5%	Short-term on-the-job training/associate degree
Network and Computer Systems Administrators	38%	11%	Bachelor's degree
Database Administrators	38%	17%	Bachelor's degree
Physical Therapists	37%	12%	Master's degree
Medical Assistants, Healthcare Support	35%	10%	Short to moderate-term on-the-job training/vocational degree
Medical Scientists	34%	45%	Master's/doctoral degree
Occupational Therapists	34%	7%	Master's degree
Postsecondary Teachers	32%	17%	Doctoral degree

Sources: BLS projections; tabulations of 2000 Census 5 percent Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS).

Table 3. Fifteen Occupations with Largest Job Growth 2004-2014

Occupation	New Jobs 2004-2014 (thousands)	Foreign-born Share of Workforce	Most Significant Source of Postsecondary Education or Training
Retail Salespersons	736	10%	Short-term on-the-job training
Registered Nurses	703	11%	Associate degree
Nursing, Psychiatric, and Home Health Aides	678	17%	Short-term on-the-job training/vocational degree
Postsecondary Teachers	524	17%	Doctoral degree
Customer Service Representatives	471	9%	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Driver, Sales Workers and Truck Drivers	450	10%	Short to moderate-term on-the-job training
Janitors and Building Cleaners	442	20%	Short-term on-the-job training
Waiters and Waitresses	376	13%	Short-term on-the-job training
Computer Software Engineers	368	27%	Bachelor's degree
Food Preparation and Serving Workers	367	10%	Short-term on-the-job training
Elementary and Middle School Teachers	350	5%	Bachelor's degree/bachelor's or higher, plus experience
General and Operations Managers	308	9%	Bachelor's or higher degree, plus experience
Medical Assistants, Healthcare Support	301	10%	Short to moderate-term on-the-job training/vocational degree
Personal and Home Care Aides	287	18%	Short-term on-the-job training
Cooks	274	23%	Short to long-term on-the-job training

Sources: BLS projections; tabulations of 2000 Census 5 percent Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS).



Table 4. Fifteen Fastest Declining Occupations 2004-2014

Occupation	Percent Growth 2004-2014	Foreign-born Share of Workforce	Most Significant Source of Postsecondary Education or Training
Textile Knitting/Weaving Machine Operators	-56%	12%	Long-term on-the-job training
Textile Winding/Twisting/Drawing Out Machine Operators	-45%	11%	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Textile Bleaching/Dyeing Machine Operators	-45%	19%	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Utilities meter readers	-45%	5%	Short-term on-the-job training
Credit Authorizers, Checkers, and Clerks	-41%	9%	Short-term on-the-job training
Railroad Brake, Signal, and Switch Operators	-39%	4%	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Mail Clerks, Machine Operators (Not Postal Service)	-37%	12%	Short-term on-the-job training
Sewing Machine Operators	-36%	41%	Moderate-term on-the-job training
File Clerks	-36%	9%	Short-term on-the-job training
Telephone Operators	-36%	8%	Short-term on-the-job training
Computer Operators	-33%	10%	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Misc. Textile, Apparel, and Furnishings Workers	-29%	22%	Short to long-term on-the-job training
Shoe Machine Operators and Tenders	-27%	22%	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Pumping Station Operators	-26%	4%	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Textile Cutting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	-25%	30%	Moderate-term on-the-job training

Sources: BLS projections; tabulations of 2000 Census 5 percent Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS).

Table 5. Fifteen Occupations with Largest Job Decline 2004-2014

Occupation	Jobs Lost 2004-2014 (thousands)	Foreign-born Share of Workforce	Most Significant Source of Postsecondary Education or Training
Farmers and Ranchers	-155	3%	Long-term on-the-job training
Stock Clerks and Order Filers	-115	10%	Short-term on-the-job training
File Clerks	-93	9%	Short-term on-the-job training
Sewing Machine Operators	-93	41%	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Correspondence Clerks and Order Clerks	-65	12%	Short-term on-the-job training
Mail Clerks, Machine Operators (Not Postal Service)	-59	12%	Short-term on-the-job training
Computer Operators	-49	10%	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Metal, Plastic Cutting/Punching/Press Machine Operators	-43	10%	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Telemarketers	-42	6%	Short-term on-the-job training
Word Processors and Typists	-30	7%	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Electrical, Electronics, and Electromechanical Assemblers	-29	30%	Short-term on-the-job training
Credit Authorizers, Checkers, and Clerks	-27	9%	Short-term on-the-job training
Machine Feeders and Offbearers	-27	15%	Short-term on-the-job training
Textile Knitting/Weaving Machine Operators	-26	12%	Long-term on-the-job training
Information and Record Clerks, All Other	-24	9%	Short-term on-the-job training

Sources: BLS projections; tabulations of 2000 Census 5 percent Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS).

Table 6. Fifteen Occupations with Highest Immigrant Concentrations: Growth 2004-2014

Occupation	Change in Number of Jobs 2004-2014, (thousands)	Percent Change 2004-2014	Foreign-born Share of Workforce	Most Significant Source of Postsecondary Education or Training
Agricultural Graders and Sorters	4	8%	52%	Work experience in a related occupation
Tailors, Dressmakers, and Sewers	-6	-7%	46%	Short to long-term on-the-job training
Medical Scientists	26	34%	45%	Master's/doctoral degree
Jewelers and Precious Stone and Metal Workers	0	0%	44%	Vocational degree
Misc. Personal Appearance Workers	24	20%	43%	Short-term on-the-job training/vocational degree
Misc. Agricultural Workers, Animal Breeders	-14	-2%	41%	Short to moderate-term on-the-job training
Sewing Machine Operators	-93	-36%	41%	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Misc. Media and Communications Workers	13	19%	38%	Long-term on-the-job training
Plasterers and Stucco Masons	5	8%	38%	Long-term on-the-job training
Taxi Drivers and Chauffeurs	47	25%	37%	Short-term on-the-job training
Other Physical Scientists	4	15%	37%	Bachelor's degree
Textile, Garment, and Material Pressers	2	3%	35%	Short-term on-the-job training
Other Health Diagnosing and Treating Practitioners	16	23%	34%	Bachelor's degree
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	165	12%	33%	Short-term on-the-job training
Shoe and Leather Workers and Repairers	-2	-16%	32%	Long-term on-the-job training

Sources: BLS projections; tabulations of 2000 Census 5 percent Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS).

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Mitra Toossi, "Labor Force Projections to 2014: Retiring Boomers," *Monthly Labor Review* 128, no. 11 (November 2005): 26, <http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2004/02/art1full.pdf>. See also Lynn A. Karoly and Constantijn Panis, "Shifting Demographic Parameters Shaping the Future Workforce," in *The 21<sup>st</sup> Century at Work* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2004), [http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2004/RAND\\_MG164.pdf](http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2004/RAND_MG164.pdf).
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- 4 Michael Horrigan, "Employment Projections to 2012: Concepts and Context," *Monthly Labor Review* 127, no. 2 (February 2004): 12, <http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2004/02/art1full.pdf>; Jeffrey S. Passel, "The Size and Characteristics of the Unauthorized Migrant Population in the U.S." (Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center, 2006). The BLS uses the middle-series population projections of the Census Bureau, which assume annual immigration levels of about 1.0 to 1.1 million between now and 2015.
- 5 Abraham Mosisa, "The Role of Foreign-Born Workers in the US Economy," *Monthly Labor Review* 125, no. 5 (May 2002): 3, <http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2002/05/art1exc.htm>; Andrew Sum, et al., "New Foreign Immigrants and the Labor Market in the US" (Boston, MA: Center for Labor Market Studies, Northeastern University, January 2005).
- 6 Jeffrey S. Passel, "Projections of Population, Educational Attainment, and Labor Force Participation: By Generation, Age, Sex, and Race/Ethnicity," unpublished tabulations prepared for the Pew Hispanic Center (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, October 2003). See also data prepared by Jeffrey S. Passel for Randy Capps, "The US Immigrant Workforce: Limitations of Policy," Workshop on Migration, (Washington, DC: IZA/Urban Institute, May 21, 2004). The estimation of the immigrant share of the workforce in 2000 stated here differs from that stated elsewhere (12 percent) because these estimates were derived from different sources. The estimates above are based on the Current Population Survey, while other estimates are based on tabulations from the US Census Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS).
- 7 The estimates here are based on separate BLS projections of the number of all workers (see Mitra Toossi, "A Century of Change: The US Labor Force, 1950-2050," *Monthly Labor Review* 125, no. 5 (May 2002), <http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2002/05/art2full.pdf>) and Jeffrey Passel's projections of the immigrant percent of the labor force (see n. 5, Passel, "Projections of Population, Educational Attainment, and Labor Force Participation"). Another report estimates that if immigrants' labor force participation rate follows historical trends, 4.25 million immigrants will join the workforce between 2002 and 2012 and account for a fourth of total projected labor force growth. See Immigration Policy Center, "Economic Growth & Immigration" (Washington, DC: American Immigration Law Foundation, November 2005).
- 8 Capps, "The US Immigrant Workforce" (see n. 5).
- 9 Jennifer Day and Kurt Bauman, "Have We Reached the Top? Educational Attainment Projections of the US Population" (Working Paper Series, No. 43, Population Division, US Census Bureau, 2000), <http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0043/twps0043.pdf>.
- 10 Jeffrey S. Passel, "Projections of Population, Educational Attainment, and Labor Force Participation" (see n. 5). Immigrants represent a large share of workers without a high school diploma partly because immigrants at this education level are more likely to work than their US-born counterparts. In 2004, 59.5 percent of immigrants without a high school diploma were in the labor force compared to only 36.8 percent of natives. See Immigration Policy Center, "Economic Growth & Immigration" (see n. 6), 13.

- 11 The drop-off in the immigrant share of the labor force after 2030 reflects Census Bureau assumptions that net migration will fall after 2030 as emigration rates remain steady but immigration falls in response to a decreasing dependency ratio. The dependency ratio is expected to drop following high dependency ratios during the retirement period of baby boomers.
- 12 Overall, the BLS projects that the number of jobs in the country will increase, on net, by 18.9 million between 2004 to 2014. The BLS also projects 54.7 million total job openings over this ten-year period. Job openings include new jobs as well as jobs that will open due to workers switching jobs or leaving the workforce. Although the projected size of net job growth is larger than the projected labor force growth, the BLS assumes there will not be a labor shortage, as some workers may fill more than one job.
- 13 Our projections of the fifteen fastest and largest growing occupations differ slightly from those of the BLS since we matched our occupational categories to the ones used by the Census Bureau. In some cases, this resulted in groupings of several occupations that the BLS examined individually.
- 14 Looking at things another way, of the fifteen occupations in which immigrants made up the largest share of the workforce in 2000, five occupations are predicted to grow more than the average net employment increase of 15 percent (see Appendix).
- 15 See Toossi “Labor Force Projections to 2014” (see n. 1), 26. The 2004 labor force participation rate of 25- to 54-year-olds was 82.8 percent, that of persons aged 55 to 64 was 62.3 percent, and that of persons aged 65 and older was 14.4 percent.
- 16 US fertility rates stand at an average of two births per woman, and are expected to fall below replacement rate by 2020. Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, *World Population Prospects: The 2004 Revision, Highlights* (February 24, 2005), 71.
- 17 Alan Greenspan, “Remarks by Chairman Alan Greenspan,” Symposium Sponsored by the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City (Jackson Hole, Wyoming, August 27, 2004), <http://www.federalreserve.gov/boarddocs/speeches/2004/20040827/default.htm>. See also David Ellwood, “How We Got Here,” in *Grow Faster Together. Or Grow Slowly Apart* (Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute, 2003), [http://www.aspeninstitute.org/atf/cf/{DEB6F227-659B-4EC8-8F84-8DF23CA704F5}/DSCBROCHURE\\_FINAL.PDF](http://www.aspeninstitute.org/atf/cf/{DEB6F227-659B-4EC8-8F84-8DF23CA704F5}/DSCBROCHURE_FINAL.PDF).
- 18 For a similar discussion, see B. Lindsay Lowell, “Immigration as a Labour Market Strategy – European and North American Perspectives,” (Brussels, Belgium: Migration Policy Group, June 2005).
- 19 UN Population Division, *Replacement Migration: Is It a Solution to Declining and Ageing Populations?* (Geneva: UNPD 2000).
- 20 McDonald, Peter and Rebecca Kippen, “Labor Supply Prospects in 16 Developed Countries, 2000-2050,” *Population and Development Review* 27, no. 1 (March 2001), 1-32.
- 21 Mitra Toossi, “A Century of Change” (see n. 6), 15. Women’s participation rate is predicted to grow only 2 percent each year between 2002 and 2012 to reach 61.6 percent in 2012.
- 22 Michael Cichon, Florian Léger, and Rüdiger Knopp, “White or Prosperous: How Much Migration Does the Ageing European Union Need to Maintain Its Standard of Living in the Twenty-First Century?” Prepared for the 4th International Research Conference on Social Security (Antwerp, May 5-7, 2003).
- 23 James P. Smith and Barry Edmonston, eds., *The New Americans: Economic, Demographic, and Fiscal Effects of Immigration* (Washington, DC: National Research Council, 1997). However, a recent trade-based model finds that immigrants reduce national product by a small amount. See Donald R. Davis and David E. Weinstein, “Technological Superiority and the Losses from Migration” (Working Paper 8971, National Bureau of Economic Research, 2002).
- 24 Hans Fehr, Sabine Jokisch, and Laurence Kotlikoff, “The Role of Immigration in Dealing with the Developed World’s Demographic Transition” (Working Paper 10512, National Bureau of Economic Research, 2004).
- 25 The temporary H-1B program alone drove about one-quarter of IT growth. See B. Lindsay Lowell, “The Foreign Temporary (H-1B) Workforce and Shortages in Information Technology” in *The International Migration of the Highly Skilled: Demand, Supply, and Development Consequences in Sending and Receiving Countries*, ed. Wayne Cornelius et al. (San Diego: University of California, 2001).

- 26 AnnaLee Saxenian, *Local and Global Networks of Immigrant Professional in Silicon Valley* (San Francisco: Public Policy Institute of California, 2002).
- 27 Jeffrey S. Passel, “The Size and Characteristics of the Unauthorized ” (see n. 4).
- 28 These findings are primarily the case for the large number of Central American workers in this category, while workers born in South America are distinctly better educated.
- 29 Tabulations not included here show that, with time in the United States, long-term immigrants are more likely to be found in higher skilled occupations, while recent arrivals are more likely to find employment as farm and non-farm laborers.
- 30 See, for example, Sum et al., “New Foreign Immigrants and the Labor Market” (see n. 3); and Steven A. Camarota, “A Jobless Recovery? Immigrant Gains and Native Losses” (Washington, DC: Center for Immigration Studies, October 2004), <http://www.cis.org/articles/2004/back1104.html>.
- 31 Jeffrey S. Passel and Roberto Suro, “Rise, Peak and Decline: Trends in U.S. Immigration 1992–2004” (Washington DC: Pew Hispanic Center, 2005), <http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/53.pdf>.
- 32 Rakesh Kochhar, “Latino Labor Report, 2004: More Jobs for New Immigrants but at Lower Wages” (Washington DC: Pew Hispanic Center, 2005), <http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/45.pdf>; B. Lindsay Lowell, “Immigration as a Labor Market Strategy in the United States,” in *Immigration as a Labour Market Strategy: European and North American Perspectives*, ed. Jan Niessen and Yongmi Schibel (Brussels: Migration Policy Group, 2005), <http://www.migpolgroup.com/multiattachments/2136/DocumentName/ImmigrationasLabourMarketStrategy2005.pdf>.
- 33 Sum, et al., “New Foreign Immigrants and the Labor Market” (see n. 3).

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## Jeanne Batalova

Jeanne Batalova is a Policy Analyst at the Migration Policy Institute, where she focuses on the impacts of immigrants on social structure and labor markets; integration of immigrant children and elderly immigrants; and the policies and practices regulating immigration of highly skilled workers and foreign students. She is also Data Manager for the *Migration Information Source*, MPI's online resource.

Dr. Batalova received her PhD in Sociology from University of California - Irvine, MBA from Roosevelt University, and BA in Economics from Academy of Economic Studies, Chisinau, Moldova. Her dissertation work will be published in 2006 as a monograph titled *Skilled Immigrant and Native Workers in the United States: The Economic Competition Debate and Beyond*. Recently, Dr. Batalova also co-authored a study on the limited English proficiency children and their academic literacy outcomes and a study on characteristics of elderly immigrants in the United States.

The Migration Policy Institute (MPI) is an independent, non-partisan, non-profit think tank dedicated to the study of the movement of people worldwide. The institute provides analysis, development, and evaluation of migration and refugee policies at the local, national, and international levels. It aims to meet the rising demand for pragmatic responses to the challenges and opportunities that migration presents in an ever more integrated world. MPI produces the Migration Information Source website, at [www.migrationinformation.org](http://www.migrationinformation.org).

This report was commissioned as part of MPI's Independent Task Force on Immigration and America's Future. The task force is a bipartisan panel of prominent leaders from key sectors concerned with immigration, which aims to generate sound information and workable policy ideas.

The task force's work focuses on four major policy challenges:

- The growing unauthorized immigrant population
- Immigration enforcement and security requirements
- Labor markets and the legal immigration system
- Integrating immigrants into American society

The panel's series of reports and policy briefs will lead to a comprehensive set of recommendations in 2006.

Former Senator Spencer Abraham (R-MI) and former Congressman Lee Hamilton (D-IN) serve as co-chairs, and the task force's work is directed by MPI Senior Fellow Doris Meissner, the former Commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

The approximately 25 task force members include high-ranking members of Congress who are involved in shaping legislation; leaders from key business, labor and immigrant groups; and public policy and immigration experts. MPI, a nonpartisan think tank dedicated to the analysis of the movement of people worldwide, is partnering with Manhattan Institute and the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars for this project.

For more information on the Independent Task Force on Immigration and America's Future, please visit:

[www.migrationpolicy.org](http://www.migrationpolicy.org)

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