

UP FOR GRABS:

The Gains and Prospects of First- and Second-Generation Young Adults



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By Jeanne Batalova and Michael Fix

November 2011

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Executive Summary

Youth and young adults from immigrant families today represent one in four people in the United States between the ages of 16 and 26 — up from one in five just 15 years ago. This population will assume a greater role as the US workforce ages, and how it fares in the classroom and in the workplace is of signal importance not just for these individuals but for the vibrancy of the overall US economy and local communities.

In this report, we profile first- and second-generation young adults ages 16 to 26 as they pass through differing stages of life, from adolescence to early and full adulthood.¹ We define *first generation* (or immigrants) as persons with no US citizenship at birth and the *second generation* as those born in the United States to immigrant parents.² Together the first and second generations make up *youth of immigrant origin*.³

This diverse population is notable for its substantial generational progress in terms of high school graduation, college enrollment, and ability to earn family-sustaining wages.

We find that these 11.3 million young immigrant-origin adults are far from a monolithic group: they differ widely in their language, age of arrival, citizenship status, gender, and race and ethnicity — all factors that have a profound effect on their educational and workforce outcomes.

This diverse population is notable for its substantial generational progress in terms of high school graduation, college enrollment, and ability to earn family-sustaining wages, in some cases making strides that equal or better those of third-generation/higher whites. However, we find that some of these young adults, particularly second-generation Hispanics, are not graduating from college at the same rate or on the same timeline because of family, work, or economic reasons.

Absent a greater understanding of the unique characteristics of this population, and how postsecondary education and workforce development and language training programs could better meet their needs, their futures will remain up for grabs.

The study examines the size and composition of the first and second generations and seeks to gauge whether they are on track to complete postsecondary education and obtain jobs that pay family-sustaining wages. In so doing, we aim to inform the policies and practices of the postsecondary educational institutions that play a critical role in shaping the nation's current and future workforce, including secondary schools, adult education programs, two- and four-year colleges, and workforce training programs.

Our approach has been to use the most recent national surveys by the federal government, including the

1 In this report the terms “youth” and “young adults” refer to persons between ages 16 and 26 and are used interchangeably.

2 In contrast, youth born in the United States with US-born parents are defined as the third or higher generations (or third generation for short). Overall, in this report, the native born are defined as persons who were US citizens in one of three categories: 1) people born in one of the 50 states or the District of Columbia; 2) people born in United States Insular Areas such as Puerto Rico or Guam; or 3) people born abroad to at least one US citizen parent.

3 We further separate the first generation into those who immigrated to the United States as adults (i.e., at age 16 or later, also known as *late entrants*) and as children (i.e., before age 16).



2009 American Community Survey (ACS) and the 2008 to 2010 Current Population Survey (CPS), and to disaggregate the population by generation, age, age at arrival, gender, race, Hispanic origin, and, when possible, legal status. In general, our analyses report results for two groups: youth of immigrant origin and the first- and second-generation Hispanics who make up more than half of this population. We focus on first- and second-generation Hispanics and non-Hispanics and compare these youth to third-generation Hispanics and non-Hispanic blacks and whites.

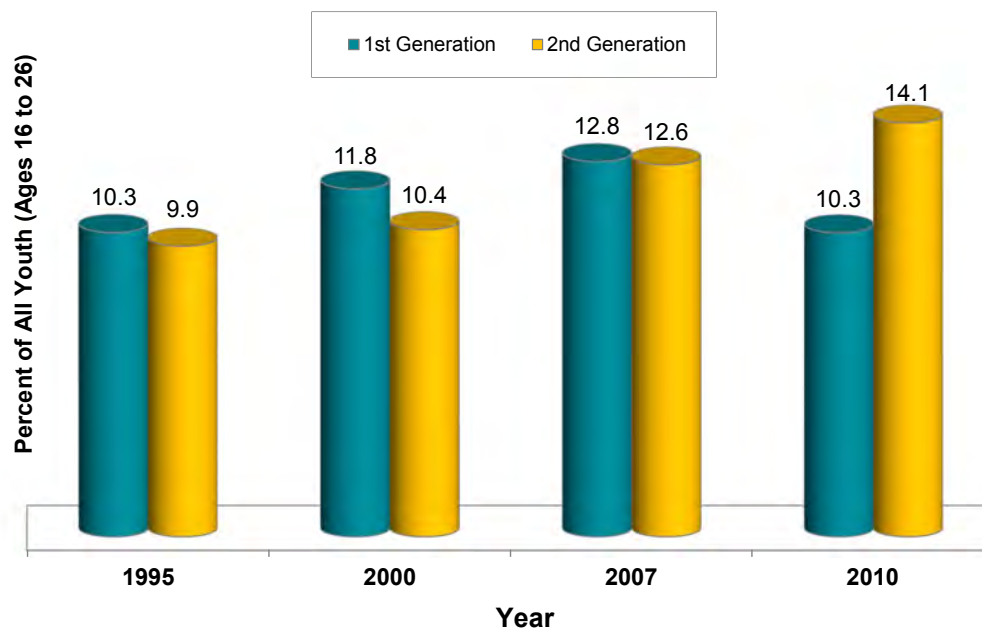
A number of broad themes emerge from our national portrait:

A. Demographic Trends

Rising Demographic Significance. In 2010, some 11.3 million people ages 16 to 26 — or one in four young adults in the United States — were members of the first and second generations. Between 1995 and 2010, immigrant-origin youth accounted for half of all growth in the nation's population of young people ages 16 to 26. Further, 30 percent of *all* low-income⁴ youth in that age bracket in the United States were members of a first or second generation.

Rapid Generational Shift toward US-Born Majority. There has been a rapid recent shift in the composition of the immigrant-origin population. As recently as 2007, the first generation outnumbered the second. But a recession-driven decline in immigration and the rise of a large cohort of US-born children in immigrant families who reached early adulthood have contributed to a recent shift in the composition of the immigrant-origin population: By 2010 the second generation had not only surpassed but had become 36 percent larger than the first (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. The Generational Tipping Point of 2007: US Born Account for Majority of Immigrant-Origin Youth



Source: Migration Policy Institute (MPI) analysis of 1995, 2000, 2007, and 2010 Current Population Survey (CPS) March data.

Put in terms of numbers, in 2010 there were 4.8 million first-generation immigrant youth ages 16 to 26

⁴ Low income refers to persons in families with incomes below 200 percent of federal poverty. To give a general idea of poverty levels, as defined by the Office of Management and Budget, the average poverty threshold for a family of four in 2009 was \$21,954; for a family of three, \$17,098; for a family of two, \$13,991; and for unrelated individual, \$10,956. All members of a family are assigned the same poverty status. Poverty thresholds are the same for the entire United States, despite differences in the cost of living across US communities.



in the United States: 2.8 million entered before they were 16 and 2 million entered after 16. There were 6.5 million second-generation youth ages 16 to 26 in 2010.

The trends driving this generational shift are likely to continue. As a result, we expect that the US-born share of immigrant-origin youth will increase while the share that is foreign born (many of whom are not citizens, either because they are unauthorized or are legal permanent residents) will diminish. As a result, a rising share of immigrant-origin youth will be fully eligible for college admission, financial aid, and employment.

Diversity in Origins, Legal Statuses, and Social Rights. The youth population in the 16-to-26 age tier represents an inherently heterogeneous population embodying several stages in the life course. The addition of the immigrant-origin population deepens this diversity since its members have their roots in a variety of countries, speak different languages, have differing legal statuses and social rights, and enter the United States for widely varying purposes: to work, go to school, flee persecution, or reunite with family.

A rising share of immigrant-origin youth will be fully eligible for college admission, financial aid, and employment.

This heterogeneity is exemplified by the age structure of differing subpopulations. The US-born second generation is younger than the first. While 61 percent of the second generation is below age 22, some 60 percent of the first generation is 22 or older. From an institutional perspective, this uneven age distribution will often mean that the first generation will be more heavily reliant upon adult education and workforce systems for skill upgrading while the second generation will more frequently turn to two- and four-year colleges.

Similarly, the diversity in legal statuses and age at arrival in the United States implies differing linguistic and education needs that have to be factored in when designing programs that target youth. For instance, while having a high school degree is an important step toward wider educational and employment opportunities for all, this credential is especially critical for some unauthorized youth who might be eligible for the DREAM Act.⁵ This pending legislation in Congress would offer a path to legalization for youth and young adults brought to the United States as children by their unauthorized parents, but it requires prospective beneficiaries to have a US high school diploma as a precondition for participation. Earlier research by the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) showed that more than 40 percent of the nearly 2 million potential beneficiaries are still in school and would benefit from programs that promote high school graduation.⁶

B. Strengths and Progress

The analyses clearly underscore the demographic importance of the immigrant-origin youth population. They also reveal several strengths upon which the nation's postsecondary education system can build, as well as risks that should be addressed.

5 *Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act of 2011*, S. 952. 112th Cong., 1st sess., <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c112:S.952>.

6 Jeanne Batalova and Margie McHugh, *DREAM vs. Reality: An Analysis of Potential DREAM Act Beneficiaries* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2010), www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/DREAM-Insight-July2010.pdf.



1. Bilingualism

Knowledge of more than one language may be an increasingly valuable asset in a global economy. We find that about 2.2 million foreign-born youth are bilingual. That is, they reported speaking English “very well” in addition to speaking another language.⁷ Moreover, if second and higher generations are taken into account, the number of bilingual youth expands to 7.1 million — more than twice the number of youth with limited English proficiency (3 million).⁸ In general, this largely overlooked attribute of many immigrant youth has not been captured by standard credential systems like high school degrees.

2. Familism and Parental Support

Leaving the parental home in the United States is part of the passage to becoming an independent adult. Yet, living with parents and other family members during difficult economic times or personal setbacks may serve as a protective factor, buffering youth by providing educational support and housing. Data show that second-generation youth are more likely to live with parents than their third-generation counterparts.

3. Generational Progress of Immigrant-Origin Youth

The story of immigrant integration in the United States has historically been one of generational progress with steadily improving outcomes along a number of dimensions, including educational attainment, delayed child bearing, and lower poverty levels. To assess progress, we compare these indicators for immigrants arriving as adults, those arriving as children, and the second and higher generations.

Focusing on the large Hispanic youth population, our data show consistent generational gains in education and employment. We find that second-generation Hispanics’ rates of high school attendance, enrollment in postsecondary institutions, and the receipt of an associate’s or higher degree are significantly higher than their first-generation counterparts.

The generational progress of second-generation Hispanic women is particularly impressive: 46 percent have enrolled in postsecondary education, a rate that equals third-generation white women (see Figure 2). The share of second-generation Hispanic men enrolled in college (37 percent) is lower and lags third-generation white men (40 percent), but is slightly higher than third-generation Hispanic men (35 percent).

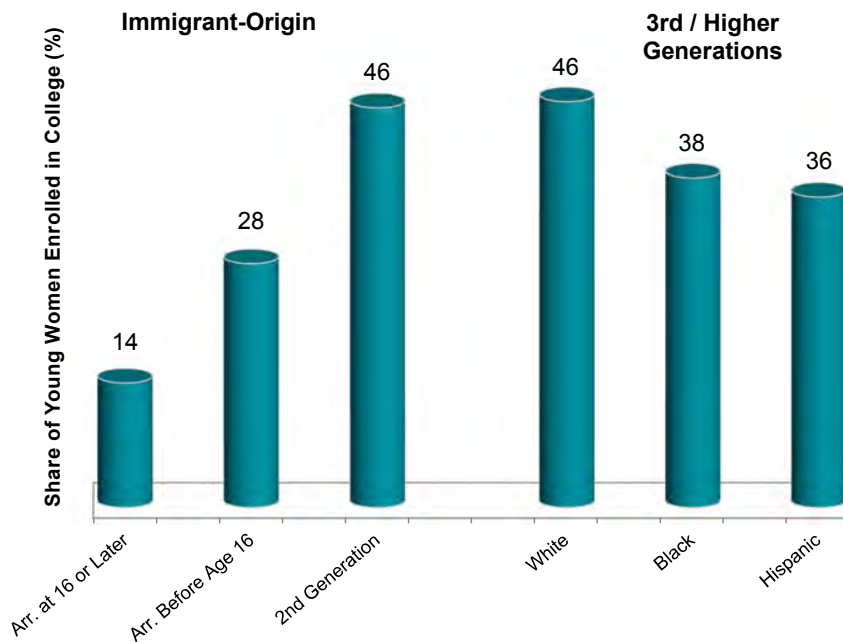
Our analysis also demonstrates that these gains are not restricted to education and employment. They can be seen in the level of bilingualism of second/higher versus first-generation Hispanic youth (54 percent versus 37 percent); dramatically lower levels of limited English proficiency (7 percent versus 59 percent; and a moderately lower share of low-income families (50 percent versus 64 percent).

⁷ The data on English language proficiency are based on the analysis of the 2009 American Community Survey (ACS), which does not allow for a finer distinction by generation. The second/plus generation includes the second and higher generations.

⁸ Limited English Proficient (LEP) refers to any person age 5 and older who reported speaking English “not at all,” “not well,” or “well” on his or her ACS survey questionnaire. Here we focus on youth ages 16 to 26.



Figure 2. Percent of Young Women (Ages 19-24) Enrolled in College, 2009*



* 2009 represents the midpoint for the three years of pooled data.

Source: MPI analysis of pooled CPS 2008-10 data.

4. High Performance of Non-Hispanic First- and Second-Generation Youth

By and large, non-Hispanic first and second generations have better education and labor market outcomes than both their Hispanic counterparts and third-generation Hispanics and blacks. Indeed, on some indicators, they do better than third-generation whites. For instance, more than 53 percent of non-Hispanic immigrant-origin young adults had at least an associate's degree by age 25 or 26. That compares with 45 percent of third-generation whites. These results have been driven in part by the strong performance of first- and second-generation Asian youth. But as has been frequently noted, there is wide variation in educational outcomes across Asian subpopulations that are highly correlated with countries of origin in general and refugee status in particular. Earlier research shows that while children of Chinese and Indian immigrants who tend to come from high economic status and two-parent families boasted top grades in school and high graduation rates, their refugee Laotian and Cambodian counterparts lagged behind.⁹

5. Education's Positive Impact on Wages

For both men and women, wages rise with every increment of education — regardless of nativity or Hispanic origin. The highest educational payoff comes at the bachelor's or higher degree level. At that point, all groups¹⁰ earn more than just family-sustaining wages — defined here as \$16 per hour.¹¹ We find that second-generation Hispanic women with a bachelor's or higher degree earn \$7 more per hour than their counterparts with an associate's degree. For second-generation Hispanic men the difference is \$5.

⁹ Alejandro Portes and Rubén Rumbaut. *Immigrant America: A Portrait* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006).

¹⁰ The hourly wage patterns are examined for adults between ages 26 and 36 who worked at least 25 weeks or 700 hours and had positive wages in the prior year, excluding the self-employed.

¹¹ Following the recent work of Wider Opportunities for Women, we define "family-sustaining wage" as \$34,000, which is half of what a dual-earner couple with two young children has to earn annually to cover basic costs such as housing, child care, health care, transportation, savings, and retirement. These annual earnings translate to \$16 per hour assuming that workers are employed full-time, full-year (or 2,080 hours).



Impressive Educational Achievement of Women... We find that women of all immigrant generations and ethnicities have better educational outcomes than their male counterparts. Women’s educational attainment is made all the more impressive by the fact that they are vastly more likely than their male counterparts to live with a child in the home.

The value or the return on investment that comes with a four-year degree appears especially high for women. It is only with a bachelor’s or higher degree that they earn more than family-sustaining wages.¹² In contrast, men earn family-sustaining wages with an associate’s degree or even fewer educational credentials.

... But It Does Not Always Close the Gender Wage Gap. Still, women’s hourly wages trail those of men at all educational levels. The wage gender gap substantially narrowed at the bachelor’s level (and higher) but only in the case of Hispanic women and native blacks. The gender gap for other groups remained.

6. Improved Educational Quality

There has been a longstanding debate in the immigration literature about the declining “quality” of the nation’s immigrants. When we compare the young immigrant-origin population in 1999 to that in 2009, we find higher educational attainment across diverse groups of immigrant-origin youth. In particular, the share of youth with no high school degree and not enrolled in school is significantly smaller in 2009 than in 1999. We also find that more young adults of immigrant origin went to college in 2009 than a decade earlier, and the share of second-generation Hispanics who ever enrolled in college rose from 30 percent to 37 percent.¹³

While our analysis reveals both strengths and progress among immigrant-origin young adults, we also identify roadblocks to school completion and labor market advancement — obstacles that affect some groups more than others.

C. Barriers to Educational and Economic Mobility

I. Hispanic Late Entrants Represent the Most Vulnerable Group

The heterogeneity of the 16- to 26-year-old immigrant-origin population is underscored by the multiple risk factors faced by Hispanic immigrants who entered the United States at age 16 or later. This group faces challenges to enrolling in postsecondary education and earning family-sustaining wages. Those challenges include:

- **Legal status.** More than seven in ten are unauthorized and, thus, ineligible for employment and most educational aid. (These late entrants are not likely to be eligible for legal status under the DREAM Act)
- **Low English skills.** Two-thirds have extremely poor English skills (i.e., they reported speaking English “not well” or “not at all”)
- **Low education.** Many come for work and have limited or interrupted education in their home countries. As time passes, it becomes more difficult and fewer opportunities exist for these young adults to recover lost education
- **Limited opportunities to learn English.** Those eager to upgrade their academic or work-related skills will be entering an adult education system that is underfunded and has only a limited capacity to integrate English language instruction in the context of work

¹² With the exception of second-generation non-Hispanic women who earned \$17 with an associate’s degree.

¹³ The “ever enrolled in college” share includes those with “unfinished college,” “currently enrolled in college but without an associate’s degree,” and “have at least an associate’s degree.”



- **Low-mobility employment.** These young adults have strong labor force attachment and were able to find employment even during the recession. However, their jobs typically do not pay family-sustaining wages and offer few career prospects
- **Competing time pressures.** Hispanic youth (alongside native-born blacks) are much more likely to be caretakers of minor children than whites and other non-Hispanics, a clear risk factor for postsecondary education access and completion.

2. Legal Status and Poverty

While *all* members of the second generation ages 16 to 26 are citizens as a result of birthright citizenship, few member of the first-generation youth population are citizens. In 2007, 47 percent of immigrant young adults were unauthorized (versus 31 percent of the total immigrant population); 32 percent of immigrant youth were legal permanent residents (versus 32 percent of all immigrants); and only 17 percent of immigrant youth were naturalized citizens (versus 35 percent of the total immigrant population).

Poverty is not only felt broadly among unauthorized youth (23 percent) but also among legally present groups. We find that legal permanent residents who have lived in the United States for five years or less (and thus are ineligible for many public benefits under the 1996 welfare reform law) have high poverty rates (27 percent). Refugee youth also have poverty rates (24 percent) that are as high as for unauthorized youth, suggesting that the narrow focus of the refugee resettlement program on the employment of resettled adults may need to be broadened to encompass the needs of children and youth in refugee families. While naturalized citizens have higher incomes and are less likely to be poor (13 percent), few first-generation youth are naturalized citizens with full legal rights to the social safety net.

3. Improved Access to Higher Education But Low Completion among Hispanic Youth

As we mentioned earlier, today's young adults are more likely to enroll in college than their counterparts in 1999. However, our data also reveal that the strong gains in access to postsecondary education among second- and third-generation Hispanics are not maintained when it comes to college completion. For example, while the share of second-generation Hispanic women enrolled in college by ages 19 to 24 is similar to that of third-generation white women (46 percent), they trail white women by 18 percentage points when it comes to completing an associate's degree or higher by age 25 or 26 (33 percent versus 51 percent).

Similarly, while the college enrollment rates of second-generation Hispanic men and third-generation white men differ little (37 percent versus 40 percent), Hispanics are much less likely to have a college degree (22 percent versus 40 percent) by age 25 or 26. In short, second-generation Hispanics are closing the gap in terms of access to higher education, but large disparities remain in completion. Whether these gaps will continue to narrow in an era of severe budget retrenchment remains to be seen, leaving future gains up for grabs.

4. Recession Worsened Prospects of Young Adults

The economic recession of 2007-09 led to a doubling in unemployment and increased part-time employment for virtually all subpopulations. Between March 2008 and 2010, the unemployment rates of the second- and third-generation Hispanics increased to more than 21 percent (from about 10 percent). Sharp jumps in unemployment can be seen even among typically highly educated third-generation whites and immigrant-origin non-Hispanics. For instance, non-Hispanics who arrived as children saw their unemployment rate double to 15 percent, from 7 percent, between 2008 and 2010.

Two groups stood out. Third-generation blacks had the highest unemployment rate among all young adults before, during, and in the early postrecession periods. That rate in 2006 and 2008 was 20 percent. By 2010, it reached 29 percent.



Late-entering Hispanics felt the recession's impact earlier than other groups. While their rate of unemployment in March 2006 was 5 percent — the lowest among all young adults — it more than doubled to 13 percent by 2008 to exceed that of other first-generation groups (7 percent). However, it *fell* slightly to 12 percent by 2010 in sharp contrast with the rising unemployment of other young adults. The stable unemployment rate for late-entering Hispanics might be seen as a product of their reduced numbers, greater spatial and sectoral mobility, and a sharp rise in part-time work.

D. Policy Directions

In a successor phase of this project we will examine in greater detail the policies and programs that serve differing subsets of the immigrant-origin population. But we can draw broad policy lessons from the profile we have developed here. In the first instance, this analysis drives home both the size and, importantly, the heterogeneity of the immigrant-origin population. The youth heterogeneity also needs to be captured by ongoing analyses of educational and employment trends with a focus on youth. A number of key characteristics that are unevenly tracked across datasets and that are particularly relevant for planning purposes include generation, age at arrival, household structure, levels of English proficiency, and legal status (e.g., legal permanent resident, refugee, naturalized citizen).

The importance of capturing this diversity can be seen in the differing outcomes and prospects of unauthorized immigrants who arrived before and after age 16. Few late entrants who are unauthorized would be reached by immigration reforms like the DREAM Act, intended for children brought to

Our results also strongly suggest the need for policies that go beyond the postsecondary education system.

the United States when they were young and educated in US schools. For these late entrants more comprehensive immigration reform measures will be required for their own integration and, in many instances, their families'. The DREAM Act *would* provide a path to legal status for those entering before age 16 who have been mostly educated in US schools. But as we have previously written, that path to legal status is one that is far from automatically traversed, requiring at least two years of postsecondary education or service in an increasingly selective military.¹⁴

Our analysis shows that limited English proficiency and low incomes persist among Hispanic first-generation youth who arrived both after age 16 and before. The 3 million Limited English Proficient (LEP) first-generation youth will need English as a Second Language (ESL) programs delivered by an increasingly fragile adult education system and at postsecondary levels. Those programs will need to be aligned with credit-bearing vocational and academic courses and pathways to degrees. Other critical supports needed by these LEP young adults will be two-generation family literacy programs that promote the literacy and employability of parents and the language development of their children.

Our results also strongly suggest the need for policies that go beyond the postsecondary education system. In particular, our findings regarding the comparatively low educational success rate and high LEP rates of first-generation Hispanic youth who arrived *before* they were age 16, and presumably were educated in US schools, indicate a need to focus on English Language Learner (ELL) programs and supports in both preschool and K-12 systems. A number of successful strategies here have been comparatively well documented: early literacy programs and mastery of academic vocabulary, professional development for "mainstream" classroom teachers with substantial ELL enrollment, and effective parent engagement are

¹⁴ Batalova and McHugh, *DREAM vs. Reality*.



only a few.¹⁵ At older ages, dual enrollment in high school/colleges can compress the time for learning, stimulate the student, and save fees. Other reforms that can help overcome the barriers represented by learning both language and academic content are giving credit for foreign-earned courses and extending time to graduation.

With regard to the rising share of those first- and especially second-generation youth entering postsecondary education, we know that a large share will be nontraditional students from low-income families, who work while in school and have minor children. These students will need flexible scheduling, financial assistance, and wrap-around services. They also will need programs that reduce the amount of time they spend in remedial courses and that accelerate their progress toward a degree.

With regard to the rising share of those first- and especially second-generation youth entering postsecondary education... a large share will be nontraditional students from low-income families, who work while in school and have minor children.

Finally, our findings underscore the value of attaining a four-year degree and reinforce the need for accessible pathways that allow students to build their credentials as they make the transition among adult basic education, non-credit occupation training, and for-credit postsecondary certificate and degree programs. The results would seem to reinforce the importance of articulation agreements or formal policies that outline which courses and programs of study are fully transferable from two-year institutions to four-year institutions throughout a state's system of higher education. Thanks to such agreements, students can resume studies toward four-year degrees without having the financial burden of credits that do not transfer. Young adults will also need supportive programs to guide them through the transfer process. And they will benefit from mentorship programs for nontraditional students on college campuses.

¹⁵ Dale Russakoff, *PreK-3rd: Raising the Educational Performance of English Language Learners (ELLs)* (New York: The Foundation for Child Development, 2011), <http://fcd-us.org/sites/default/files/FCD%20ELLsBrief6.pdf>.



I. Introduction

Despite the vicissitudes of the Great Recession, immigrants and their children now and for the foreseeable future will make up at least a quarter of the US labor force. With the eventual retirement of the baby boom generation, immigrants and their descendants together will account for all growth of the US labor force over the next two decades.¹⁶ An earlier Migration Policy Institute (MPI) report demonstrated that — at least prerecession — immigrants were able to find employment across a wide distribution of low-, high-, and middle-skilled jobs, with many earning family-sustaining wages.¹⁷ The report also found that the career pathways of first- and second-generation young adults 16 to 26 years old¹⁸ were far from secure, as few had found their way to good, well-paying middle- or high-skill jobs. As Anthony Carnevale and others have contended, many of today's job seekers lack the education and skills demanded by available jobs.¹⁹ Further, this gap is growing at a time when two-thirds of projected job openings require at least some postsecondary education.

Given these powerful demographic, labor force, and educational trends, we start with an overarching question: *Are first- and second-generation young adults succeeding in obtaining the academic and occupational credentials that they need to earn a family-sustaining wage, contribute to the economy's revival and growth, and avoid transmitting intergenerational poverty?*

To explore this complex question, we have developed a profile of first- and second-generation young adults of immigrant origin. We focus on the population between ages 16 and 26 — a period that marks a critical transition from adolescence to adulthood. It is during this age span when young adults typically graduate from high school, leave the parental home, pursue further studies, begin work, and form new relationships often via marriage and parenthood.²⁰ Our approach in developing the profile is to use recent US Census Bureau data to highlight differences in educational attainment, and work and family experiences among today's immigrant and US-born youth. We disaggregate the youth populations by Hispanic origin, gender, immigrant generation, and, among the first generation, age at arrival. We also selectively disaggregate foreign-born youth by their citizenship and legal status.

The portrait is composed of three parts. First, we use various years of the March Supplement of the Current Population Survey (CPS) and the American Community Survey (ACS) to examine the sociodemographic characteristics of young adults, emphasizing the challenges that many members of the first and second generation face, as well as the strengths they bring. Among the questions we address in this section are:

- 16 Jeffrey 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 by the Urban Institute, Washington, DC, October 2003).
- 17 Randy Capps, Michael Fix, and Serena Yi-Ying Lin, *Still an Hourglass? Immigrant Workers in Middle-Skilled Jobs* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2010), www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/sectoralstudy-Sept2010.pdf.
- 18 We define "first generation" (or immigrants) as persons with no US citizenship at birth; "second generation" as those born in the United States to immigrant parents. We further separate the first generation into those who emigrated to the United States as adults (i.e., at age 16 or later, also known as "late entrants") and as children (i.e., before age 16). Together the first and second generations make up youth and young adults of immigrant origin. In contrast, the third-plus generation consists of young adults born in the United States with two US-born parents. The term "third generation" is used interchangeably with "youth of nonimmigrant origin."
- 19 Anthony Carnevale, "Postsecondary Education and Training As We Know It Is Not Enough" (paper presented at the Georgetown University and Urban Institute Conference on Reducing Poverty and Economic Distress After ARRA, Washington, January 15, 2010), www.urban.org/publications/412071.html. See also Irwin Kirsch, Henry Braun, Kentaro Yamamoto, and Andrew Sum, *America's Perfect Storm: Three Forces Changing Our Nation's Future* (Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service, 2007), www.ets.org/Media/Education_Topics/pdf/AmericasPerfectStorm.pdf.
- 20 For a recent review of the research on transition to adulthood among immigrant-origin youth, see Rubén Rumbaut and Golnaz Komaie, "Immigration and Adult Transitions," *The Future of Children* 20, no. 1 (2010): 43-66, www.princeton.edu/futureofchildren/publications/docs/20_01_03.pdf.



- *What is the size and composition of today's immigrant-origin youth? How has this population changed since 2000 and how is it likely to evolve in the near future?*
- *What are the social risks, such as unauthorized status and poverty, that are likely to affect this population's ability to build human capital and gain a foothold in the labor market?*
- *What are the strengths and protective systems, such as bilingualism and living with parents, that young adults can draw on during their transition to self-sufficient adulthood?*

In the second part of the report we examine how young adults differ in their access to and completion of secondary and postsecondary education. We look at the 2008-10 rates of enrollment and educational attainment of three groups of young adults: the school-age population (16 to 18), the postsecondary-age population (19 to 24), and the traditional college graduate-age population (25 to 26). We then compare immigrant-origin youth in 2009 to a similar age group in 1999 to understand the changing educational endowments or “quality” of cohorts. In this section we probe:

- *To what degree do first- and second-generation youth persist in school?*
- *How do rates of postsecondary access and completion vary by generation, Hispanic origin, and gender?*
- *Are today's first and second generation better educated and, hence, better positioned to move up economically than their predecessors?*

In the third section, we examine the experiences of young adults of immigrant origin before, during, and in early postrecession periods by focusing in particular on their unemployment, full-time employment, and median incomes; we do this using 2006, 2008, and 2010 CPS data. To anticipate what might await today's 16- to 26-year-old young adults in the near future, we analyze how a cohort preceding it (i.e., those 26 to 36 years of age) fared economically. Here we use pooled CPS 2008-10 data to examine terms of compensation, including wages and employer-provided pension and health insurance benefits. Among the key questions we explore are:

- *How did the 2007-09 recession affect the economic fortunes of the 16- to 26-year-old cohort? Which groups were more successful in weathering the economic storm?*
- *Are 26- to 36-year-olds able to find employment that provides family-sustaining wages? Do these jobs offer pensions and health insurance?*
- *How much education do young adult workers of immigrant origin need to obtain quality jobs that pay decent wages and offer employer-provided benefits?*

We conclude with a discussion of the policy implications of our findings for the well-being and economic self-sufficiency of immigrant-origin youth. Overall, our interest lies in ensuring that as first- and second-generation young adults make the transition from secondary to postsecondary education, and then to the workforce, that they emerge with jobs that pay at least a family-sustaining wage.

A. Defining Main Study Groups

Throughout this report, we focus on six first- and second-generation groups (see Box 1) and compare these youth to third-generation Hispanics and non-Hispanic blacks and whites.

**Box 1. First- and Second-Generation Study Groups (ages 16 to 26)**

- *Hispanic late entrants*: first-generation Hispanics who immigrated at age 16 or later
- *Hispanics who immigrated as children*: first-generation Hispanics who came before age 16
- *Second-generation Hispanics*: US-born Hispanics from immigrant families
- *Non-Hispanic late entrants*: first-generation non-Hispanics who immigrated at 16 or later ages
- *Non-Hispanics who immigrated as children*: first-generation non-Hispanics who came before age 16
- *Second-generation non-Hispanics*: US-born non-Hispanics from immigrant families

B. A Note on Data Limitations

Our goal is to capture differences by generation, age at arrival, and gender in the pre- and postsecondary education periods. Given the sample size and other limitations of the datasets analyzed in this report, we have generally separated our results by the broad ethnic and racial categories of “Hispanic” and “non-Hispanic” immigrant-origin youth as compared to “third-generation non-Hispanic whites,” “third-generation non-Hispanic blacks,” and “third-generation Hispanics.” We acknowledge, however, that these broad categories mask important differences in schooling and economic outcomes within the “Hispanic” and “non-Hispanic” populations.

II. Demographic Profile

A. One-Quarter of Youth Are First or Second Generation

From a policy and program perspective, perhaps the most salient fact about the immigrant-origin youth population is its size. In 2010, roughly one-quarter (or 11.3 million) of the nation’s 46.3 million youth and young adults ages 16 to 26 were members of the first and second generations (see Table 1). Between 1995 and 2010, the number of first- and second-generation young adults rose 40 percent, from 8.1 million to 11.3 million, while the third generation grew by only 10 percent, from 32 million to 35 million. During this period, the immigrant-origin population accounted for about half the growth of the nation’s 16-to-26-year-old population (3.2 million out of 6.3 million).

**Table 1. Young Adults by Generation and Citizenship, Select Years, 1995-2010**

	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Estimate (000s)								
All Youth	40,004	41,315	44,422	45,267	45,795	45,773	45,888	46,325
3 rd and Higher Generations	31,915	32,117	33,493	34,022	34,163	34,558	34,926	35,021
Immigrant-Origin Youth	8,089	9,198	10,929	11,245	11,632	11,215	10,962	11,304
2 nd Generation	3,951	4,312	5,330	5,561	5,790	5,765	6,062	6,517
1 st Generation	4,138	4,886	5,599	5,684	5,842	5,450	4,900	4,787
Non-US Citizens	3,601	4,141	4,577	4,573	4,614	4,303	3,799	3,647
Percentage								
All Youth	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
3 rd and Higher Generations	79.8	77.7	75.4	75.2	74.6	75.5	76.1	75.6
Immigrant-Origin Youth	20.2	22.3	24.6	24.8	25.4	24.5	23.9	24.4
2 nd Generation	9.9	10.4	12.0	12.3	12.6	12.6	13.2	14.1
1 st Generation	10.3	11.8	12.6	12.6	12.8	11.9	10.7	10.3
Non-US Citizens	9.0	10.0	10.3	10.1	10.1	9.4	8.3	7.9

Source: MPI analysis of CPS 1995 to 2010 data.

B. Rapid Rise in the Second Generation

A second important demographic development is the recent generational shift within the immigrant-origin population, with the second generation rapidly supplanting the first. This transition is important because comparatively few members of the first generation are US citizens, while all members of the second generation are citizens as a result of the birthright citizenship clause of the Constitution.²¹ The sizes of both the first and second generations have changed substantially over time. The first-generation population grew from 4.1 million in 1995 to a peak of 5.8 million in 2007 and then fell to 4.8 million by 2010 (see Table 1). The decline was due, at least in part, to the dampening effects of the Great Recession on immigration, increased border and worksite enforcement, and natural emigration flows. In contrast, the second generation has risen steadily — from 3.9 million in 1995 to 5.8 million in 2007 to 6.5 million in 2010.

The speed of the second generation's growth is especially notable. In the past 15 years, its growth rate has far exceeded that of the first generation: 65 percent versus 16 percent. As recently as 2007, on the brink of the recession, the first generation was slightly larger than the second (see Table 1). Just three years later, the second generation was 36 percent larger than the first.

While the size of the first generation is sensitive to changing economic and immigration enforcement conditions,²² the second generation continues to grow regardless of these factors. The current and future growth of the second generation is the result of two demographic trends: high levels of immigration, largely from Latin America and Asia, that started in the mid-1960s and accelerated in the 1980s, and the relatively high fertility of these new arrivals.²³

Our near-term projections for growth in the first- and second-generation youth populations are set

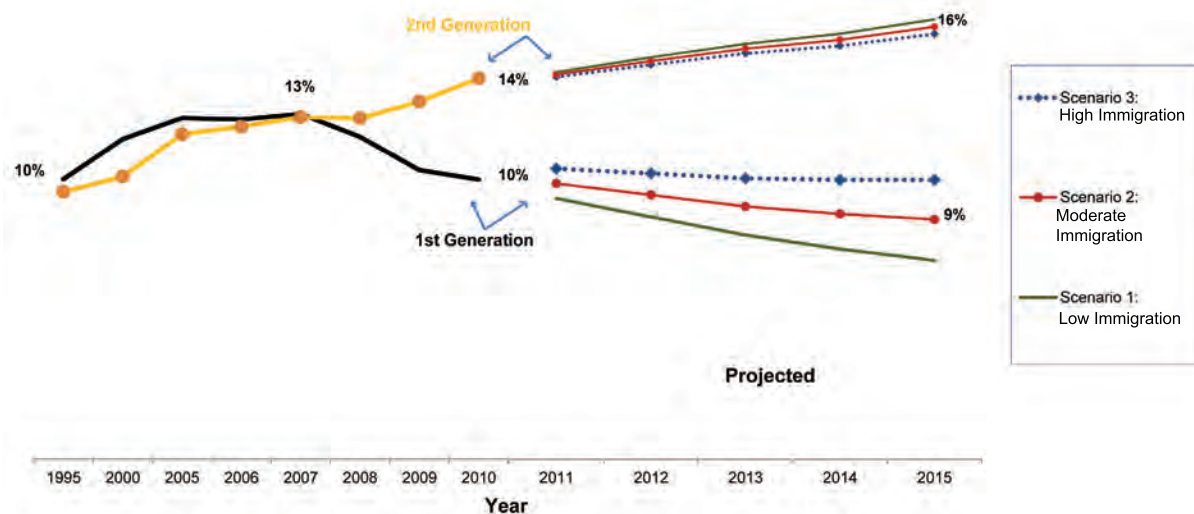
21 US-born children of immigrants are full citizens by birth and entitled to the same benefits and services as those born to US-born parents. For a discussion of recent debates about this constitutional clause, see Jennifer Van Hook with Michael Fix, *The Demographic Impacts of Repealing Birthright Citizenship* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2010), www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/BirthrightInsight-2010.pdf.

22 Demetrios G. Papademetriou, Madeleine Sumption, and Aaron Terrazas with Carola Burkert, Stephen Loyal, and Ruth Ferrero-Turrión, *Migration and Immigrants Two Years after the Financial Collapse: Where Do We Stand?* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2010), www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/MPI-BBCreport-2010.pdf.

23 Jeffrey Passel, "Demography of Immigrant Youth: Past, Present, and Future," *The Future of Children* 21, no. 1 (2011): 19-42.

under three scenarios (see Figure 3): (1) a low-immigration scenario that includes a net unauthorized flow of 0 (a not unrealistic scenario considering there was no net growth in the overall unauthorized population in the United States from 2005 to 2010); (2) a moderate-immigration scenario with an unauthorized flow (all ages) of about 400,000 (a scenario typical for the past 20 years); and (3) a high-immigration scenario with annual unauthorized inflows (all ages) of about 800,000 (a scenario that occurred only during peak years of the economic boom).²⁴ All three scenarios assume no significant changes to US immigration law, with legal immigration continuing at its current pace.

Figure 3. Historical and Projected²⁵ Shares of the First and Second Generations among All Youth (16-26) under Three Different Illegal Immigration Flow Scenarios



Notes: Displayed percent values are rounded. The three scenarios are based on new legal immigration inflows (all ages) remaining steady at about 400,000 annually.

Source: MPI analysis of CPS 1995 to 2010 data and MPI projections (see also Appendix B for more detail).

These projections highlight two important trends. One is the continuing rise of the second generation, which should reach 16 percent of all youth ages 16 to 26 by about 2015. The second is a continuation of the decline in the first generation that began in 2007 (see Figure 3, right panel). These trends are likely to take place regardless of the size of future flows of legal and/or unauthorized migrants, even if there is a substantial, if improbable, increase in these flows. The large and growing number of second-generation children ages 11 to 15 who will turn 16 by 2015 is driving these powerful changes.

The demographic ascendance of the second generation will mean, at a minimum, that postsecondary initiatives targeted to 16- to 26-year-olds of immigrant origin can leverage the greater legal and political claims of this rapidly rising US-citizen group.

C. Second Generation Is Younger

The first and second generations are not evenly distributed by age since members of the second are

²⁴ The third, high-immigration scenario occurred between 2000 and 2005 when immigration enforcement was weaker and the economy was much stronger. Pew Hispanic Center estimates suggest that about 800,000 unauthorized migrants (of all ages) arrived per year during the early 2000s. At the same time, roughly 400,000 legal immigrants arrived. Jeffrey S. Passel and D'Vera Cohn, *Unauthorized Immigrant Population: National and State Trends 2010* (Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center, 2011), <http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/133.pdf>.

²⁵ Migration Policy Institute (MPI) projections of the size and share of the immigrant-origin population are based on age-specific trends in mortality and immigration. For more details about the projections, see Appendix B.



younger than those of the first. While 70 percent of the 16-to-18 population is second generation, the first generation makes up a majority — 59 percent — of the 25-to-26 age group (see Table 2).

Table 2. Immigrant-Origin Young Adult Age Groups by Generation, 2009

	16-18	19-21	22-24	25-26	Total (000s)
Estimate (000s)	2,979	2,735	3,117	2,330	11,160
Age Groups by Generation (%)					
Immigrant-Origin Youth	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
2 nd Generation	70.4	58.5	47.0	40.8	54.8
1 st Generation	29.6	41.5	53.0	59.2	45.2

Source: MPI analysis of pooled CPS 2008-10 data.

Further, while 61 percent of the second generation is under age 22, some 60 percent of the first generation is 22 or older (see Table 3). This age distribution suggests that the immigrant first generation is more likely to be reached by adult education and workforce systems, while the second generation is more likely to enroll in secondary schools and postsecondary institutions.

Table 3. Immigrant-Origin Young Adult Generations by Age, 2009

	16-18	19-21	22-24	25-26	Total
Generation by Age Groups (%)					
Immigrant-Origin Youth	26.7	24.5	27.9	20.9	100.0
2 nd Generation	34.3	26.2	24.0	15.5	100.0
1 st Generation	17.4	22.5	32.7	27.3	100.0

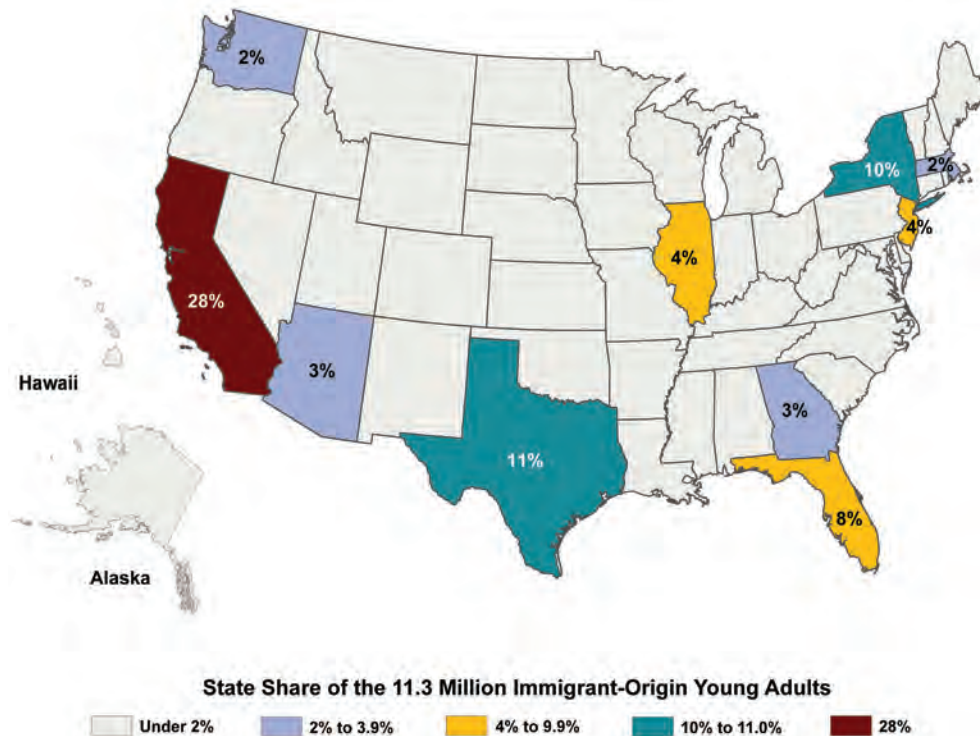
Source: MPI analysis of pooled CPS 2008-10 data.

D. Three in Four Immigrant-Origin Youth Reside in Ten States

The 11.3 million first- and second-generation youth are concentrated in a few states. As Map 1 demonstrates, nearly half of young adults of immigrant origin live in only three states: California (28 percent), Texas (11 percent), and New York (10 percent). The top ten states are home to three-quarters of immigrant-origin youth in the nation. Nine in ten young adults of immigrant origin live in just 22 states. (See Appendix C for state shares.)

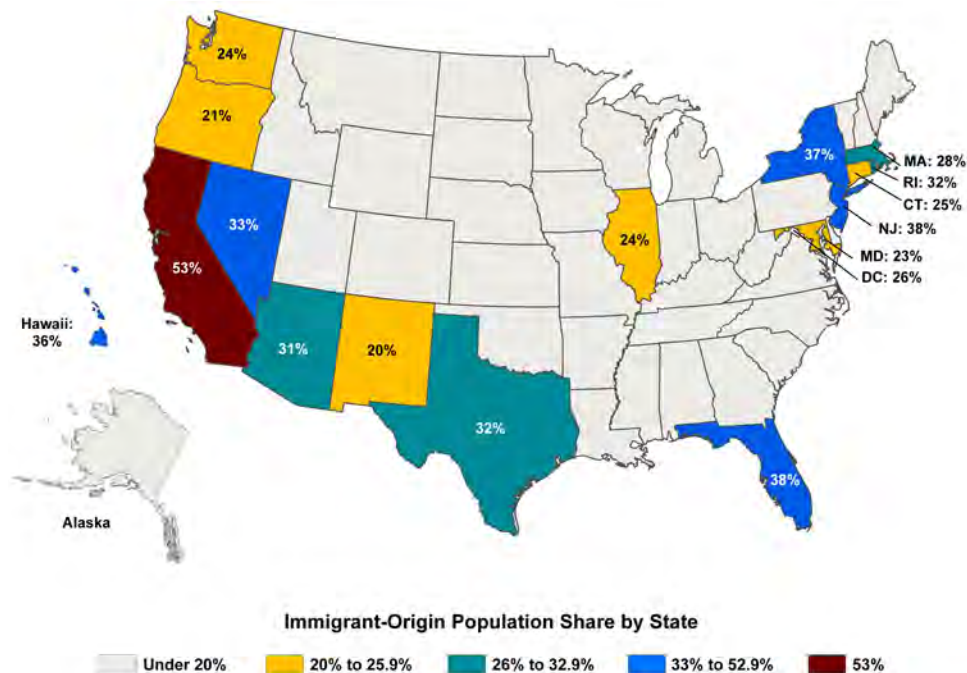
First- and second-generation youth make up 53 percent of youth in California, 38 percent in New Jersey, and 37 percent in New York (see Map 2). These patterns suggest that relatively few states are responsible for educating and training most immigrant-origin youth. At the same time, these states will also have ready access to the future labor force these youth represent. Several of these states — most notably California — have been especially hard hit by the recession and cuts to adult basic education and postsecondary education.

Map 1. State Share of All Immigrant-Origin Young Adults (Select States), 2010



Note: There were no states with the following share of immigrant-origin young adults: 12 percent to 26.9 percent.
Source: MPI analysis of CPS 2010 data. (See Appendix C for size and share of immigrant-origin populations by state.)

Map 2. Immigrant-Origin Youth as Share of Total State Youth Population (Select States), 2010



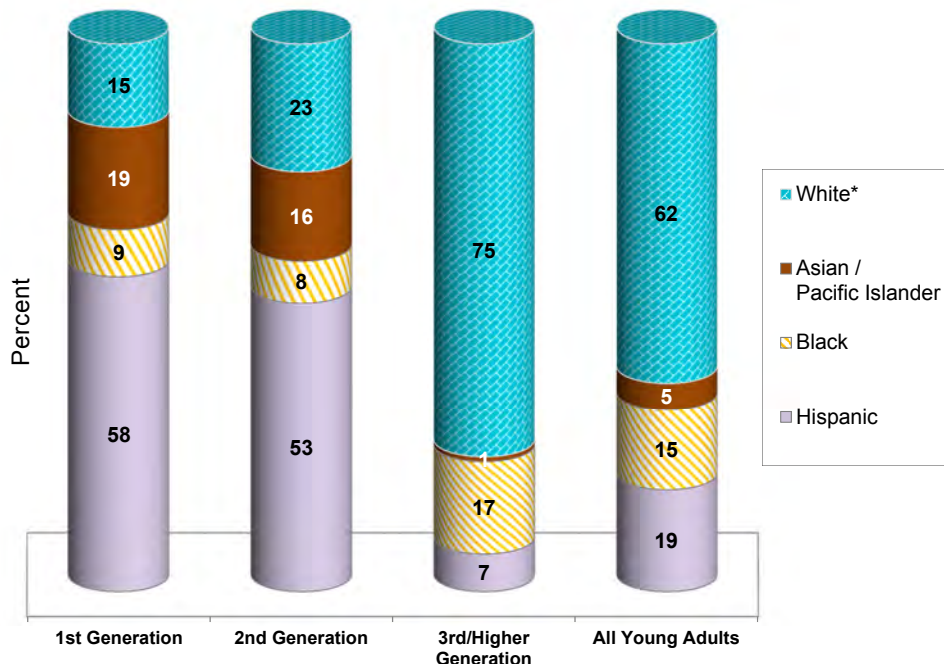
Source: MPI analysis of CPS 2010 data. (See Appendix C for size and share of immigrant-origin populations by state.)



E. Over Half of Immigrant-Origin Young Adults Are Hispanics

As Figure 4 indicates, the first and second generations closely resemble one another when it comes to their racial and Hispanic composition. More than half of each is Hispanic and less than 10 percent are black. This pattern stands in sharp contrast to the third generation. Altogether, non-white racial and ethnic groups account for more than 75 percent of the first and second generation, compared with less than 25 percent of the third.

Figure 4. Racial and Ethnic Composition of Young Adults by Generation, 2009



Note: Whites include a small number of American Indians.
Source: MPI analysis of pooled CPS 2008-10 data.

The dramatically different ethnic backgrounds of immigrant-origin and third-generation youth raise questions as to whether newcomers and their children will be able to achieve the same social and economic mobility as the earlier (mostly white) immigrants in a society that is still marked by substantial racial and ethnic inequality.²⁶

F. Many First-Generation Young Adults Are Late Entrants

Our data show that 44 percent of first-generation young adults came to the United States *after* age 16. Research indicates that the experiences of immigrant youth greatly depend on their age at arrival.²⁷ Those arriving as adolescents or adults, especially from non-English speaking countries, are less likely than those who come as children to learn English or to enroll in or graduate from US schools.

²⁶ Roger Waldinger and Renee Reichl, "Today's Second Generation: Getting Ahead or Falling Behind?" in *Securing the Future, US Immigrant Integration Policy, A Reader*, ed. Michael Fix (Washington, DC: MPI, 2007); Alejandro Portes and Rubén G. Rumbaut, *Legacies: The Story of the Immigrant Second Generation* (Berkeley and New York: University of California Press and Russell Sage Foundation, 2001).

²⁷ Portes and Rumbaut, *Immigrant America*.

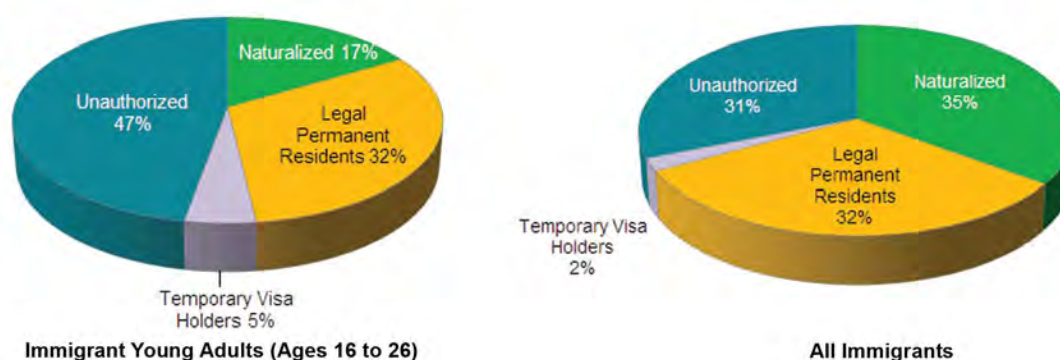
III. Risk and Protective Factors

The trajectories of young adults, including those of immigrant origin, are shaped by their own efforts and determination. Still, family and community resources and the structure of opportunities play a critical role in shaping their transition to independent adulthood.²⁸ In this section we examine some of the risk factors, as well as the strengths and protective systems, that influence young adults' life pathways, their access to and ability to afford postsecondary education, and their success in the labor market.

A. Legal Status

A person's legal status represents both a protective factor and risk factor. Naturalized citizens are eligible for all public programs and most jobs on the same terms as native-born US citizens. Our data reveal that only 17 percent of first-generation youth are naturalized citizens. That compares with 35 percent in the overall immigrant population (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Citizenship and Legal Status of Young Adult and Overall Immigrant Populations, 2007



Source: MPI analysis of pooled CPS 2006-08 data, augmented with assignments of legal status to noncitizens by Jeffrey S. Passel, Pew Hispanic Center.

About one-third of young immigrant adults are legal permanent residents, a share equal to the overall immigrant population. Legally admitted youth (i.e., legal permanent residents or LPRs) are allowed to attend public postsecondary institutions and qualify for in-state tuition benefits, enroll in public workforce development programs, and receive federal financial aid for education. However, following enactment of the 1996 welfare reform law, many LPRs who had less than five years of LPR status in the country found their eligibility for federally funded means-tested public benefits restricted.²⁹ Nearly 40 percent of LPRs between ages 16 and 26 have had their green cards for less than five years and are, therefore, ineligible for benefits in much of the country. Several states, including major immigrant destinations such as California and New York, have created state-funded replacement programs for some of these benefits, allowing all LPRs residing there to receive them.

28 Marcelo Suarez-Orozco, Carola Suarez-Orozco, and Carolyn Sattin-Bajaj, "Making Migration Work," *Peabody Journal of Education* 85, no. 4 (2010): 535-51; Rubén Rumbaut, "Ages, Life States, and Generational Cohorts: Decomposing the Immigrant First and Second Generations in the United States," *International Migration Review* 38 (2004): 1160-205.

29 These benefits include cash welfare (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), disability payments (Supplemental Security Income), food assistance (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or food stamps), and public health insurance for low-income people (Medicaid).



Another 5 percent of first-generation youth hold temporary visas, most likely having been admitted as international students and scholars, or as foreign temporary skilled workers: a share more than twice that of the overall immigrant population. These temporary visas authorize their holders to study or work, bring immediate family members, and move freely within the country. However, temporary visa holders are not eligible to apply for federal education loans or other public benefits.

One striking aspect of the immigrant-youth population is the fact that nearly half (47 percent compared with 31 percent of all immigrants) appears to be unauthorized. There were about 2.9 million unauthorized immigrants ages 16 to 26 in 2007 versus 3.2 million legally present immigrants. The unauthorized make up a larger share of the 16-to-26 immigrant population than immigrants older than 26. Following the onset of the recession, illegal inflows appeared to decline faster than those of legal immigrants.³⁰ Thus it is logical to assume that the unauthorized make up a smaller share of the total noncitizen population today than before the recession.

Youth lacking legal status have the fewest rights. Unauthorized young adults are barred from legal employment, leaving them open to exploitation in informal labor markets. Those attending postsecondary institutions are ineligible for federal financial aid, and they can obtain access to in-state tuition benefits in only 13 states.³¹ Moreover, the unauthorized are barred from virtually all public benefits with the exception of K-12 education, free and reduced-price lunches, and emergency health care.³²

We also find that legal status varies significantly by Hispanic origin and age at arrival. In contrast to Hispanics, half of non-Hispanic immigrants who arrived before age 16 were naturalized citizens, another third were LPRs, and 18 percent were unauthorized (see Table 4). Thanks to their legal status, these groups will have easier access to postsecondary institutions, financial aid, and well-paid jobs.

Table 4. Legal Status of First-Generation Youth by Hispanic Origin and Age of Arrival, 2007

	Hispanics		Non-Hispanics		Total 1 st - Generation Youth
	Arrived at 16 or Later	Arrived Before Age 16	Arrived at 16 or Later	Arrived Before Age 16	
Share (%)					
Naturalized	1.3	12.6	8.0	50.6	16.5
Legal Permanent Residents	26.1	30.7	42.6	31.5	31.6
Temporary Visa Holders	1.6	0.1	22.2	0.2	4.7
Unauthorized	71.0	56.6	27.2	17.7	47.1

Source: MPI analysis of pooled CPS 2006-08 data, augmented with assignments of legal status to noncitizens by Jeffrey S. Passel, Pew Hispanic Center.

30 Demetrios G. Papademetriou, Madeleine Sumption, and Aaron Terrazas, eds., *Migration and the Great Recession: The Transatlantic Experience* (Washington, DC: MPI, 2011).

31 As of October 2011, 12 states had passed laws making unauthorized immigrants eligible for public college in-state tuition benefits: Texas, California, Utah, New York, Washington, Oklahoma, Illinois, Kansas, New Mexico, Nebraska, Maryland (in community colleges only), and Connecticut. (The states are listed by date of enactment into law.) In addition, Rhode Island's Board of Governors for Higher Education in fall 2011 approved a measure to offer in-state tuition rates to eligible unauthorized residents. Four states — Arizona, Colorado, Georgia, and Indiana — passed laws that bar unauthorized students from receiving in-state tuition, while South Carolina and Alabama bar unauthorized students from attending state colleges and universities altogether. The remaining states do not have an explicit policy on offering or prohibiting in-state tuition benefits to unauthorized immigrants. See National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), *Undocumented Student Tuition: State Action* (Washington, DC: NCSL, 2011), www.ncsl.org/default.aspx?tabid=12846.

32 Michael Fix, ed., *Immigrants and Welfare: The Impact of Welfare Reform on America's Newcomers* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2009), www.russellsage.org/publications/immigrants-and-welfare.



For the unauthorized, enactment of legislation providing a path to legal status (such as the DREAM Act³³) appears to be a prerequisite to obtaining access to postsecondary education and the mainstream labor market. However, few unauthorized youth who entered after age 16 will be eligible. Moreover as we have written, many young immigrants would encounter difficulties satisfying the legislation's requirement of completing two years of postsecondary education or service in the military. Finally, we should note that about one-quarter of unauthorized young adults have minor children, the great majority of whom are US citizens. The lives and well-being of these children are closely connected to the fate and prospects of their parents, in terms of both family income and the reduced willingness of parents to apply for public benefits on behalf of their US-citizen children.³⁴

B. English Skills

Limited English proficiency represents another barrier to mobility among the first, but also among some members of the second, generation. Our data reveal that more than 6 percent (or 3 million) of all young adults in the United States are Limited English Proficient (LEP), defined here as speaking English less than “very well” (see Table 5).³⁵

English skills are correlated with time of arrival. Immigrants arriving after childhood are more likely to be LEP. Some 84 percent of Hispanics who came at age 16 or older are LEP; and 43 percent of late-arriving non-Hispanic immigrants are also LEP (see Table 5).

Table 5. English Skills of Young Adults by Generation, Hispanic Origin, and Age at Arrival,³⁶ 2009

	<u>Hispanics</u>		<u>Non-Hispanics</u>		2 nd or Higher Gen. Hispanic	2 nd or Higher Gen. Non- Hispanic Whites	2 nd or Higher Gen. Non- Hispanic Blacks	All Youth
	Arrived at 16 or Later	Arrived Before Age 16	Arrived at 16 or Later	Arrived Before Age 16				
Share (%)								
English Only	3.1	4.0	16.1	28.7	38.8	95.7	96.2	78.3
Bilingual	12.7	56.9	41.0	56.3	54.1	3.6	3.2	15.2
Limited English Proficient	84.3	39.1	42.9	15.0	7.1	0.7	0.5	6.4

Note: Limited English Proficient (LEP) youth are those who speak a language other than English at home and speak English less than “very well.”

Source: MPI analysis of 2009 ACS data.

33 Michael Olivas, “The Political Economy of the Dream Act and the Legislative Process: A Case Study of Comprehensive Immigration Reform,” *Wayne Law Review*, February (2010), <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1554032>.

34 Randy Capps, Michael Fix, Jason Ost, Jane Reardon-Anderson, and Jeffrey S. Passel, *The Health and Well-Being of Young Children of Immigrants* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2004), www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/311139_Childrenimmigrants.pdf; Michael Fix and Wendy Zimmermann, *All Under One Roof: Mixed-Status Families in an Era of Reform* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 1999), www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/409100.pdf.

35 In general, the term Limited English Proficient (LEP) refers to any person age 5 and older who reported speaking English “not at all,” “not well,” or “well” on the ACS survey questionnaire. Persons who speak only English or report speaking English “very well” are considered proficient.

36 The data are based on analysis of the 2009 ACS, which does not allow for a finer distinction by generation. The second-plus generation includes the second and higher generations.

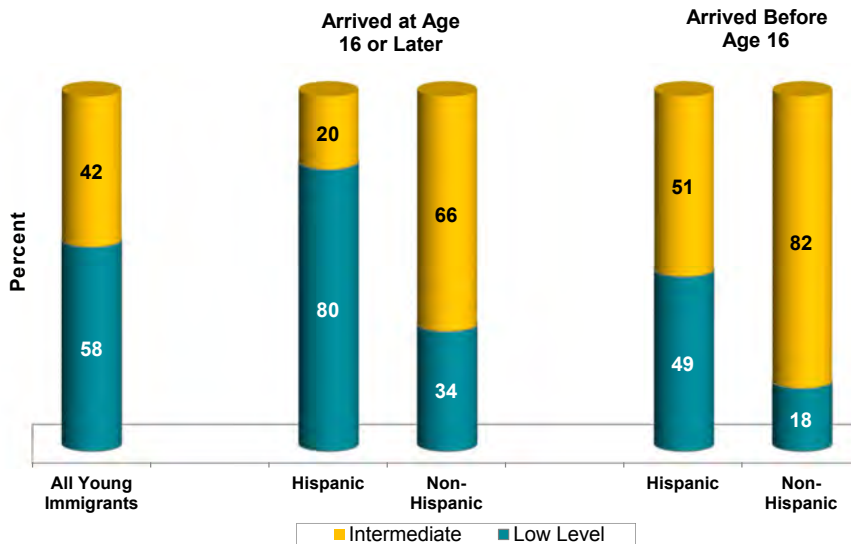


We find that roughly half of the 3 million LEP young adults ages 16 to 26 had quite low levels of English proficiency.³⁷ That is, they reported speaking English “not well” or “not at all.” The instruction required to bring them to English proficiency levels needed to graduate from high school, let alone to enter and succeed in postsecondary institutions, is substantial as these institutions have to build both language and content knowledge in a compressed period of time. Many LEP students will enter remedial or developmental instruction programs within community colleges: programs that historically have had low completion rates.³⁸

Nearly half of LEP Hispanics who arrived before age 16 — many presumably having attended US schools — report having very low levels of English proficiency (see Figure 6). At the same time, an overwhelming majority of LEP Hispanic late entrants (80 percent) reported speaking English poorly or not at all. Earlier research finds that adults reporting low levels of English proficiency often experience a double linguistic disadvantage: poor English skills and low literacy in their native language.³⁹

English skills improve from the immigrant to the native generation. Only 7 percent of second generation-plus Hispanics were LEP. Further, English skills do not appear to come at the expense of Spanish. While 39 percent of the second generation-plus young Hispanics speak only English, another 54 percent are bilingual. (The ACS data do not allow us to distinguish between the second and third — or higher — generations. Therefore, our results might mask important differences in language use between these two groups of youth.⁴⁰)

Figure 6. First-Generation LEP Young Adults by Spoken English Proficiency Level, 2009



Note: LEP youth are those who speak a language other than English at home and speak English less than “very well.” Low-level English proficient youth are those who reported speaking English “not well” or “not at all,” while intermediate-level English youth are those who spoke English “well.”

37 Based on our earlier research, we divided the LEP group into two subgroups — intermediate-level proficient (those who speak English “well”) and low-level proficient (“not well” or “not at all”) — because these two groups differ in the type of English instruction they need. See Jeanne Batalova and Michael Fix, “A Profile of Limited English Proficient Adult Immigrants,” *Peabody Journal of Education* 85, no. 4 (2010): 511-34.

38 Alene Russell, *Enhancing College Student Success Through Developmental Education* (Washington, DC: American Association of State Colleges and Universities, 2008), www.aascu.org/uploadedFiles/AASCU/Content/Root/PolicyAndAdvocacy/Policy-Publications/pmaug08.pdf.

39 Heide Spruck Wrigley, *Adult ESL and Literacy: Issues and Options* (Montreal: The Centre for Literacy, 2008), www.centreforliteracy.qc.ca/whatsnew/sli2008/Adult%20ESL_Literacy_Issues_Opti.pdf.

40 Pew Hispanic Center, *Between Two Worlds: How Young Latinos Come of Age in America* (Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center, 2009), <http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/117.pdf>; Richard Fry, *The Changing Pathways of Hispanic Youths Into Adulthood* (Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center, 2009), <http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/114.pdf>.



Among first-generation 16-to 26-year-olds, LEP shares rise sharply with age. Less than 32 percent of immigrant youth ages 16 to 18 were LEP, versus 51 percent of those ages 25 to 26. The shares of the immigrant LEP population with low levels of English proficiency also rose with age, along presumably with the time, intensity, and resulting costs of meeting their instructional needs.

While it is obviously important for policymakers to focus on the 3 million LEP young adults, a substantially larger number (7.1 million) of immigrant and US youth who are bilingual⁴¹ is often overlooked. Their knowledge of at least two languages and their cultural awareness represent a potentially important asset for US companies and organizations that either conduct global business or provide health care and educational services to linguistically diverse domestic clients. Our data reveal that more than half of immigrants who arrived before age 16 are bilingual (see Table 5).

C. Family Formation and Parenthood

A third set of risk and protective factors bears on family composition and parenting. In the United States, living apart from parents has traditionally been seen as a milestone on the road to personal autonomy and economic self-sufficiency. Marriage has been the primary reason for leaving home, especially for women, who historically had more difficulty achieving economic self-sufficiency than men. However, as earlier research points out, pathways to adulthood have become less predictable.⁴² Because of changing economic conditions, social norms, and demographic trends — including immigration — staying in the parental home longer and raising children in one-parent families are no longer anomalous.⁴³ As we argue here, family resources and context can work as both protective factors and risk factors.

I. Living with Parents

The data reveal that family transition patterns differ by Hispanic origin, age at entry, and generation. In general, the family structure of immigrants arriving at age 16 or later tends to look very different from other groups'. Immigrants who came to the United States after age 16 are the least likely to live with their parents (see Table 6) regardless of their age. This is not surprising given that many migrate to work and send money to support parents and other relatives in their home countries. We also find that 16- to 18-year-old Hispanics who arrived before age 16 and native blacks were less likely to live with parents (86 percent) than second-generation Hispanics (93 percent) or third-generation whites (94 percent). This pattern suggests that the group may be more vulnerable during the important years of high school and be less likely to persist in high school without parental supervision.

Other immigrant-origin groups, including the demographically important Hispanic second generation, are significantly more likely than late entrants or native blacks to live with their parents (see Table 6). Research on immigrant-origin young adults in New York showed that they explain their multigenerational living by citing cultural norms of familism or family togetherness.⁴⁴ Multigenerational living permits young adults to tap additional sources of income, rely on relatives for child care, pay for college, or save

for their own home. It can also act as a protective factor, mediating against economic uncertainty during the transition to adulthood.⁴⁵

41 These bilingual youth reported speaking a language other than English at home *and* speaking English “very well.”

42 Richard Settersten Jr., Frank F. Furstenberg, and Rubén Rumbaut, eds., *On the Frontiers of Adulthood: Theory, Research, and Public Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

43 Judith Treas and Jeanne Batalova, “Residential Independence: Race and Ethnicity on the Road to Adulthood in Two U.S. Immigrant Gateways,” *Advances in Life Course Research* 16 (2011): 13-24.

44 Philip Kasinitz, John Mollenkopf, Mary C. Waters, and Jennifer Holdaway, *Inheriting the City: The Children of Immigrants Come of Age* (New York: Russell Sage, 2008).

45 Rumbaut and Komaie, “Immigration and Adult Transitions.”

**Table 6. Family Transitions by Generation, Hispanic Origin, and Age at Arrival, 2009**

	<u>Immigrant-Origin Hispanics</u>			<u>Immigrant-Origin Non-Hispanics</u>			<u>3rd / Higher Generations</u>			All Youth
	Arrived at 16 or Later	Arrived Before Age 16	2 nd Generation	Arrived at 16 or Later	Arrived Before Age 16	2 nd Generation	Non-Hispanic Whites	Non-Hispanic Blacks	Hispanic	
16-18										
Estimate (000s)	62	412	1,184	60	346	915	7,315	1,931	746	13,255
Percent Residing with Parent/s	54.8	85.6	93.3	55.3	92.2	95.0	93.8	85.7	89.4	91.6
Percent Married	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.9	-	-	1.0
Percent with Minor Children	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.8	2.5	-	1.3
19-24										
Estimate (000s)	700	919	1,558	530	637	1,508	13,830	2,990	1,210	24,366
Percent Residing with Parent/s	17.3	49.7	64.4	28.7	67.0	65.3	52.1	55.2	53.0	52.9
Percent Married	28.4	25.7	13.8	22.7	9.3	6.8	11.9	5.0	13.5	12.1
Percent with Minor Children	21.6	23.8	17.0	11.8	5.6	5.7	10.7	18.6	20.7	13.0
25-26										
Estimate (000s)	502	310	484	346	221	467	4,528	936	446	8,375
Percent Residing with Parent/s	11.0	26.2	40.4	13.7	47.0	39.2	20.6	33.1	33.4	25.1
Percent Married	41.0	43.1	28.9	39.5	28.8	24.3	35.1	14.0	26.6	31.9
Percent with Minor Children	34.3	41.2	30.8	21.2	17.1	16.5	26.3	31.8	35.2	27.7

Notes: “-” indicates that the estimate could not be reported due to a small sample size. “Minor children” refer to biological, step- and adopted children under age 18.

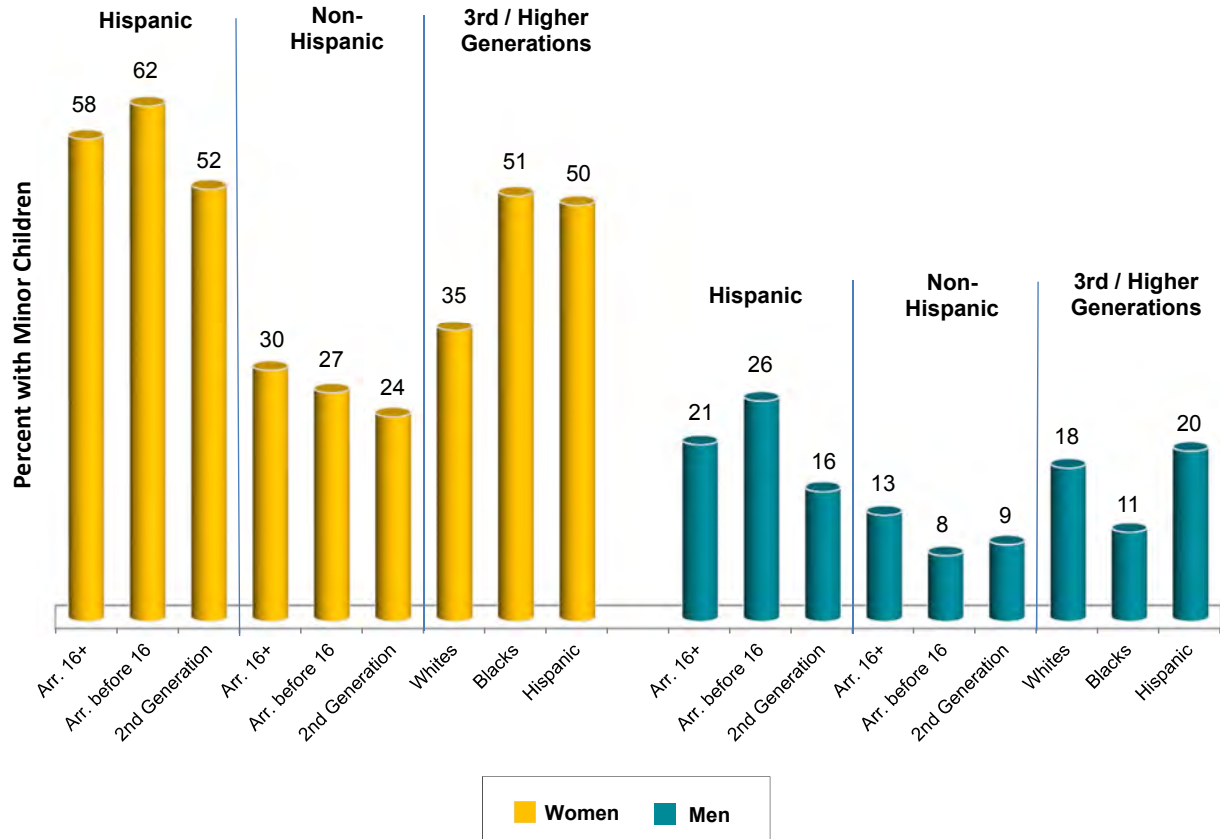
Source: MPI analysis of pooled CPS 2008-10 data.

2. Early Parenting

We further find that late-entering Hispanics, and to an even greater extent, Hispanics who immigrated before age 16, are significantly more likely than other immigrant-origin groups to have children (see Table 6). Rates of early parenting decline between the first and second generations. Overall, though, Hispanic immigrant youth appear to form their own families earlier than other groups, underscoring their need for flexible learning environments and affordable child care. Moreover, regardless of their generation or

Hispanic origin, women ages 25 and 26 are significantly more likely to live with their own young children than are men of the same age (see Figure 7). This asymmetry is particularly notable between Hispanic men and women of all generations but it is also evident between third-generation black men and women, suggesting it is not an issue limited to immigrant-origin youth.

Figure 7. Percent of Young Women and Men (Ages 25 to 26) Residing with Own Minor Children*, 2009



*Refers to biological, step-, or adopted children under 18.
Source: MPI analysis of pooled CPS 2008-10 data.

The presence of children complicates educational access and successful completion of one's education. Research has shown that having children is the most significant explanatory factor for women being disconnected from school and earning lower wages.⁴⁶

D. Poverty

Two in five young adults (or 17.9 million) live in "low-income" families (i.e., those with incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level). Of them, 8.9 million youth are from families that are "poor" (i.e., with incomes that fall below the poverty level).

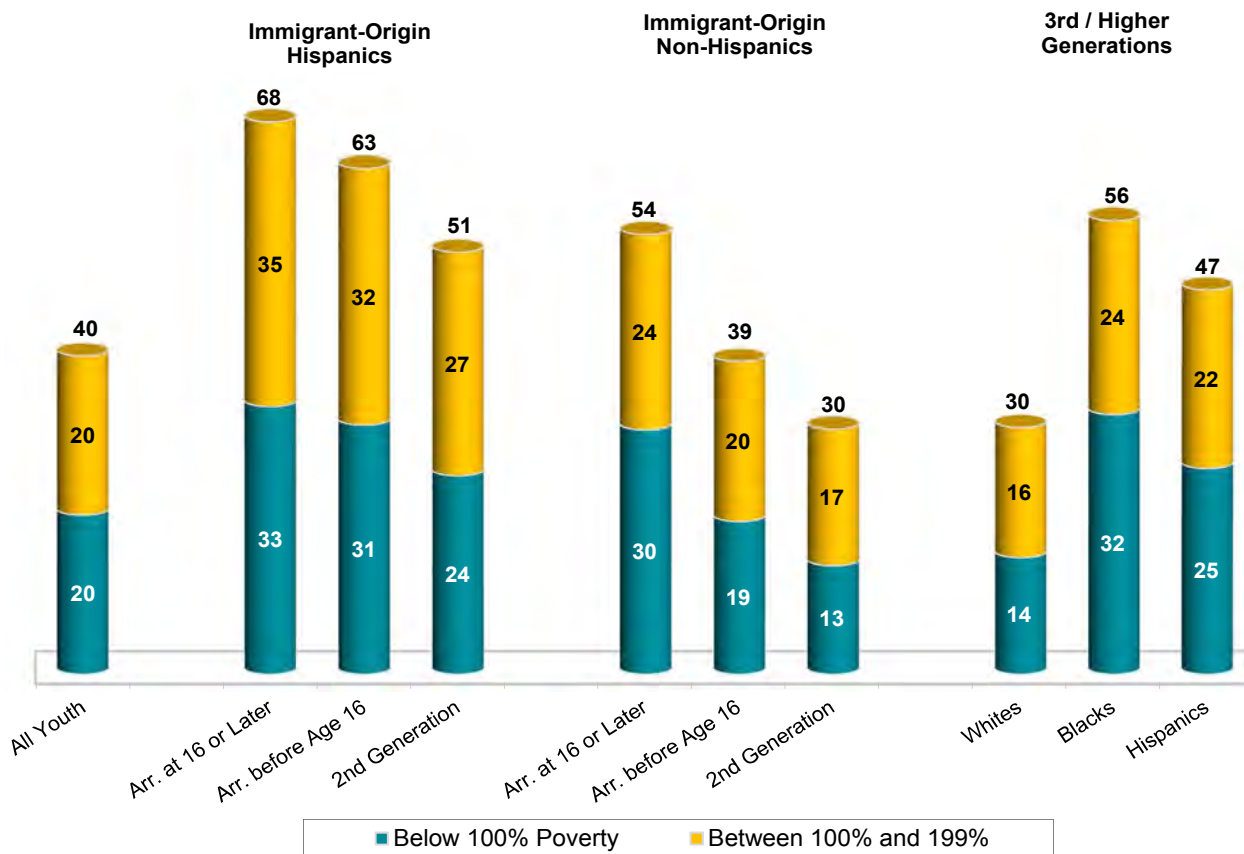
As Figure 8 indicates, the share of youth in families with low incomes is highest among late-entering Hispanics (68 percent), followed by those who arrived as children (63 percent). We find a modest generational decline in the share of low-income Hispanic youth, with 51 percent of the second generation

46 Erica Zielewski, *Young Men and Young Women, Vulnerable Youth and the Transition to Adulthood* (Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services, 2009), <http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/09/vulnerableyouth/6/index.shtml>.



and 47 percent of the third generation living in low-income families.

Figure 8. Percent of Young Adults in Low-Income and Poor Families, 2009



Note: Low-income families are those with family incomes below 200 percent of federal poverty.
Source: MPI analysis of pooled CPS 2008-10 data.

More than half (56 percent) of non-Hispanic blacks in the third generation are low-income, and their poverty rate (32 percent) is the second highest after Hispanic late entrants (33 percent). African American youth remain more socioeconomically vulnerable than other US-born groups. Non-Hispanic immigrants arriving after age 16 are also vulnerable: 54 percent are low income. Thus recency of arrival represents a risk factor for poverty among all immigrant youth, regardless of origin. The prevalence of low incomes across most of our study groups reinforces the widespread need for affordable child care, financial aid, and compressed instructional time in postsecondary education.

Poverty and Legal and Refugee Status

Our analysis of the 2006-08 pooled CPS data with legal status assignments finds that unauthorized youth are the most likely to be low income. But refugees and recently arrived LPRs are slightly more likely to live in poverty (24 percent and 27 percent, respectively) than unauthorized youth (23 percent) (see Table 7).

**Table 7. Percent of Young Adults in Poor and Low-Income Families by Citizenship, Legal Status, and Length of US Residency, 2007**

	US Born	Naturalized Citizens	Legal Permanent Residents: 5 or Fewer Years	Legal Permanent Residents: 6 or More Years	Refugees	Unauthorized	All Youth
Below 100% Poverty	15.6	12.5	27.0	20.3	24.0	23.4	16.5
Below 200% Poverty	34.0	29.7	55.6	50.0	44.9	58.4	36.3

Note: Legal permanent residents are divided into two groups: those who arrived within the last five years and those who came six or more years ago. Low-income families are those with family income below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

Source: MPI analysis of pooled CPS 2006-08 data, augmented with assignments of legal status to noncitizens by Jeffrey S. Passel, Pew Hispanic Center.

As we mentioned earlier, unauthorized immigrants have been ineligible for most public benefits for years. Legal permanent residents' eligibility largely depends on the amount of time they have been in LPR status. Although there have been restorations of federal benefits for children and in some states benefits for adults, most recent legal immigrants remain ineligible, even following enactment of a recent health care reform law.⁴⁷

In contrast, refugee families are provided short-term cash benefits and other supports upon arrival, and remain eligible for benefits during their first five to seven years in the United States. Despite their eligibility, almost half (45 percent) of refugee youth remained low income; one-quarter lived below poverty. These rates suggest that the narrow focus of the refugee resettlement program on the employment of adults may need to be broadened to encompass the needs of children and youth in refugee families.

Naturalized citizens are the least likely to be poor or low income, closely followed by US-born young adults. However, as we note earlier, immigrant youth are much less likely to be naturalized citizens than the overall immigrant population.

IV. Educational Attainment of the First and Second Generation

Having examined some of the factors that may influence school access and completion, we now turn to patterns of education attainment. We view these trends against the backdrop of disquieting and frequently repeated statistics: only 56 percent of Hispanics and 54 percent of blacks who started ninth grade graduated from high school in 2007, compared with 91 percent of Asians and 77 percent of non-Hispanic whites.⁴⁸ Further, there is growing recognition that enrollment in college and other postsecondary institutions does not guarantee graduation. More than half of all students entering the postsecondary system had not obtained a degree within eight years of enrolling.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Fix, *Immigrants and Welfare*.

⁴⁸ Christopher Swanson, "U.S. Graduation Rate Continues Decline," *Education Week*, June 2010, www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2010/06/10/34swanson.h29.html.

⁴⁹ Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, "Why College Completion," accessed September 6, 2011, www.gatesfoundation.org/postsecondaryeducation/Pages/why-college-completion.aspx.



To gauge the progress of the first and second generation we looked at attendance, enrollment, and completion patterns for three age groups:

- 16- to 18-year-olds, whom we would expect to be in secondary school (with some in postsecondary schools)
- 19- to 24-year-olds whom we would expect to be enrolled in the postsecondary education system
- 25- and 26-year-olds who would be likely to have completed at least their undergraduate education.

In this section, we disaggregate by generation, age at arrival, race and Hispanic origin, and gender. We use data from the pooled 2008-10 CPS. We then compare these three age groups in 1999 and 2009⁵⁰ to examine changes in educational “quality” over the last decade.

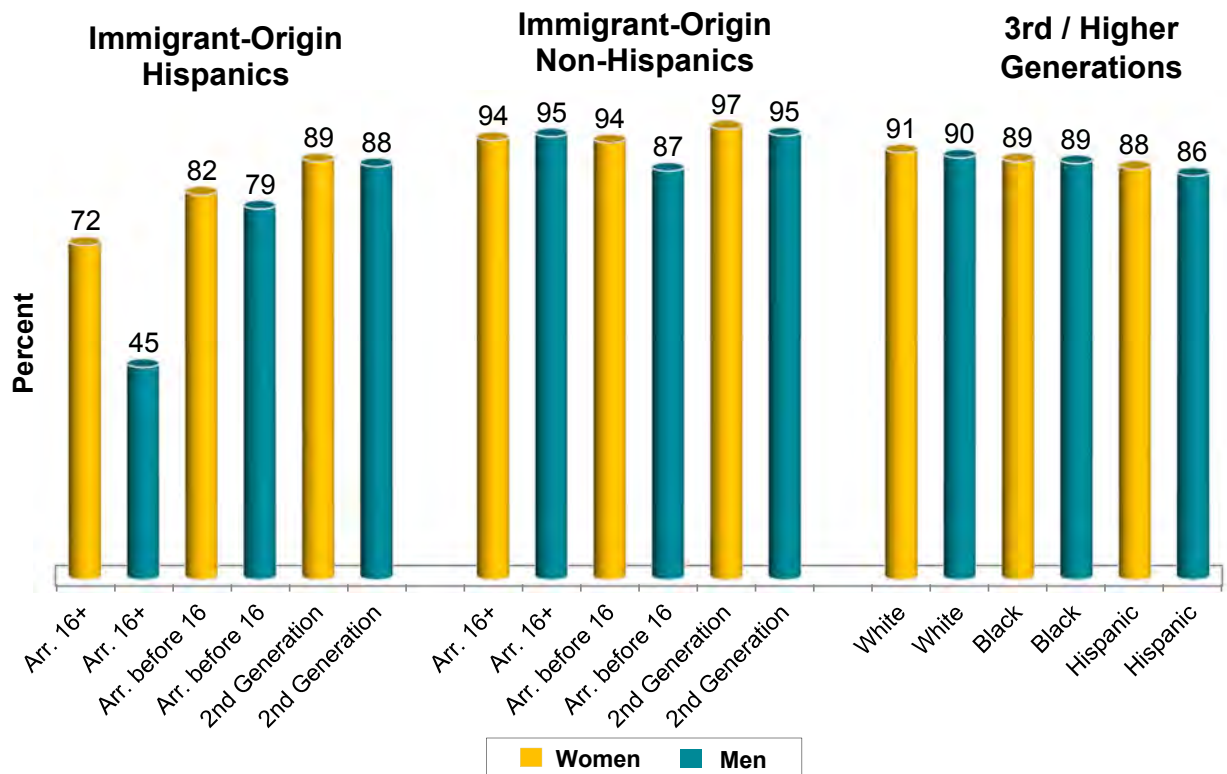
A. Enrollment and Persistence in School

Several clear trends emerge from our analysis. First, immigrant-origin non-Hispanics outperformed the other study groups, including native whites, along all indicators of educational outcomes such as secondary and postsecondary education enrollment and completion. In general, these patterns hold not just for those who came as children but also for non-Hispanic late entrants, many of whom come to the United States to obtain education. Second, we find significant generational progress as second-generation Hispanics’ rates of high school attendance, enrollment in postsecondary institutions, and receipt of a college degree at the associate’s degree or higher level are much greater than those of their first-generation Hispanic counterparts.

With regard to high school attendance, we find that while most 16- to 18-year-olds were enrolled in school, late-entrant Hispanics lagged behind (see Figure 9). The low school attendance rate among Hispanic late-entering men (45 percent) and women (72 percent) probably owes to the fact that most of these youth do not enroll in school, opting instead for work. It has to be noted that these late entrants make up only 0.5 percent of the 13.3 million youth ages 16 to 18. A much larger, faster-growing group — the 1.2 million second-generation Hispanics — had substantially higher rates of school attendance that approximate their third-generation white, black, and Hispanic counterparts. Second-generation non-Hispanics had the best outcomes: 97 percent of women and 95 percent of men were enrolled in school at ages 16 to 18. With the exception of Hispanics who came as adults and non-Hispanics who arrived as children, we find no major gender differences in school enrollment for this age group.

⁵⁰ These are middle points of two sets of pooled Current Population Survey (CPS) data: 1998-2000 and 2008-10.

Figure 9. Percent of Youth (Ages 16 to 18) Currently Enrolled in High School or GED Program, 2009



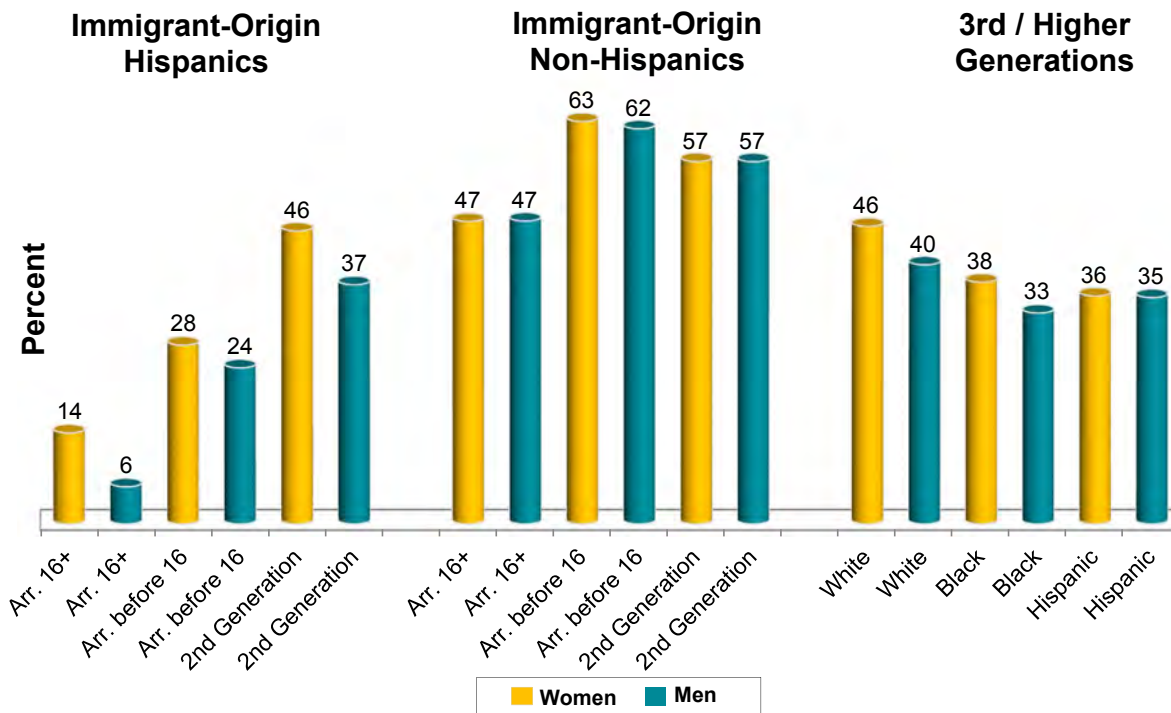
Source: MPI analysis of pooled CPS 2008-10 data.

Turning to the population ages 19 to 24, we see pronounced generational differences in postsecondary enrollment among Hispanics. Looking just at Hispanic men, we see that 6 percent of late entrants, 24 percent of those who came as children, 37 percent of the second generation, and 35 percent of the third generation are enrolled in postsecondary education institutions (see Figure 10).

A third major finding is that women consistently do better than men, regardless of their generation or Hispanic origin. They are more likely to be enrolled in school at ages 16 to 18 (see Figure 9), college at ages 19 to 24 (see Figure 10), and to have earned a college degree by ages 25 to 26 (see Figure 11). We should call particular attention to the high level of postsecondary education enrollment among second-generation Hispanic women (46 percent) — levels equal to those of third-generation whites.



Figure 10. Percent of Young Adults (Ages 19 to 24) Enrolled in Postsecondary Education, 2009



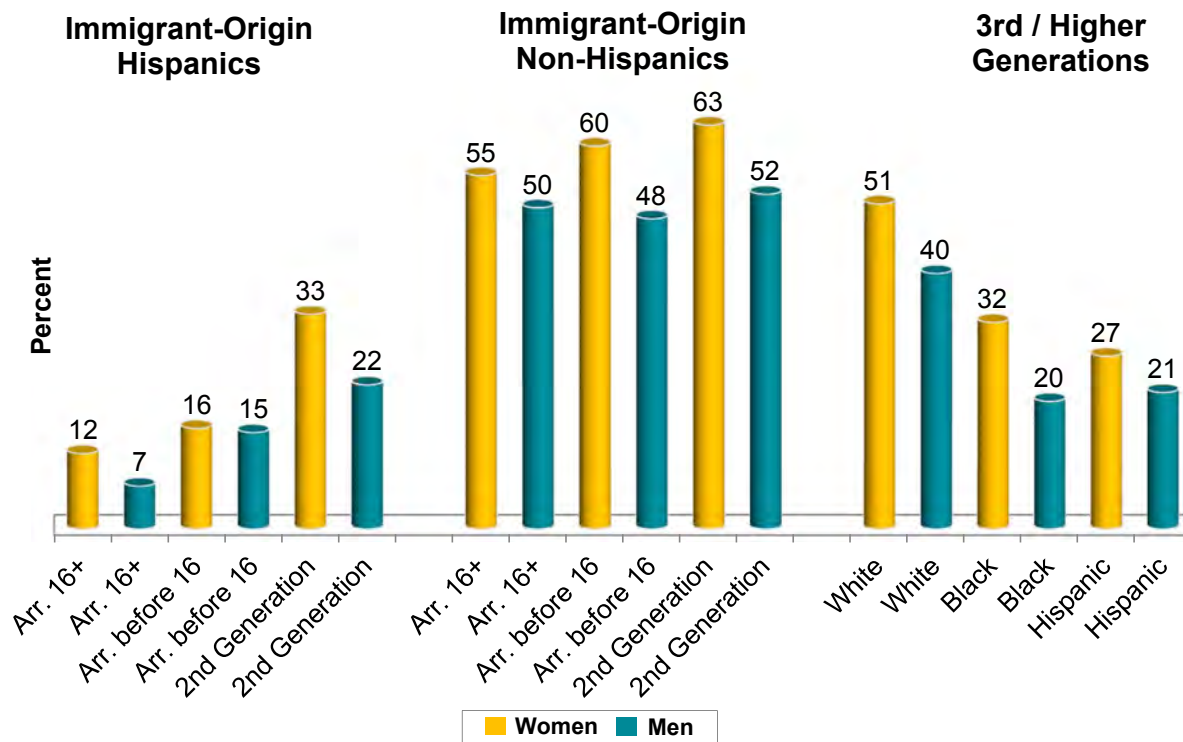
Source: MPI analysis of pooled CPS 2008-10 data.

A fourth finding is that the strong educational gains among second- and third-generation Hispanics are not maintained when it comes to college completion. Among second- and third-generation Hispanics, just 33 percent of second-generation women, 27 percent of third-generation women, and one-fifth of men have obtained an associate's degree or higher by age 25 or 26 (see Figure 11). Only third-generation blacks have comparably low completion rates. As earlier research demonstrates, domestic racial minorities and low-income students are more likely than whites and financially well-off students to drop out of college, and those who persist take longer to finish their degrees.⁵¹ Unlike more "traditional" students who are typically younger, rely on their parents for financial support, and make a transition from secondary to postsecondary education directly, the growing "nontraditional" student population faces multiple barriers to college completion. That group is older, less academically prepared, struggles economically, and faces competing family and work responsibilities.⁵² Non-Hispanic immigrant-origin youth, regardless of generation, overcome completion barriers most frequently: well more than half of the women and half of the men have obtained a two-year or higher college degree by age 25 or 26.

51 Richard D. Kahlenberg, *Left Behind: Unequal Opportunity in Higher Education* (New York: The Century Foundation, 2004), <http://tcf.org/media-center/pdfs/pr19/leftbehindrc.pdf>.

52 National Center on Education Statistics (NCES), *The Condition of Education: Nontraditional Students* (Washington, DC: NCES, 2002), <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/>.

Figure 11. Percent of Young Adults (Ages 25 and 26) with an Associate's or Higher Degree, 2009



Source: MPI analysis of pooled CPS 2008-10 data.

A fifth trend we observe is a modest decline across educational outcomes from the second generation to the third generation for Hispanics. Postsecondary enrollment and college degree receipt are marginally lower for the third generation than the second generation. These reversals by third-generation Hispanics are consistent with other research.

In sum, when we sort out the educational outcomes of immigrant-origin youth, we find widely varying results from the limited enrollment and completion of late-entrant Hispanics to the high success rates of first- and second-generation non-Hispanics. What strikes us, though, is the yet-unrealized gains and promise of the Hispanic second generation in general and women in particular, with their high postsecondary education enrollment but lower college completion rates.

We showed earlier that immigrant-origin young adults have differing legal and linguistic barriers and support structures. Those who are legally present (especially those who are naturalized), who can rely on their families, and who are not poor generally have stronger educational outcomes. However, many foreign-born Hispanic youth lack legal status and, thus, are not eligible for financial aid, have low English proficiency, are poor, and/or have minor children. This group's educational performance levels are low. The demographically important Hispanic second generation might be considered a middle-tier group in terms of endowments and outcomes. These youth are US citizens who speak English: most will graduate from high school; many will enroll in postsecondary education. But as their low college completion rates and the somewhat poorer outcomes of the third generation attest, these gains are up for grabs and cannot be taken for granted.



B. Gains in Educational “Quality” among Immigrant-Origin Youth, 1999 to 2009

To determine whether there have been changes in the educational endowments or “quality” of the immigrant-origin populations, we turn now to our comparison of the 16-to-24 and 25-to-26 age groups in 1999 versus 2009 (see Table 8).⁵³ From an educational attainment perspective, two findings stand out. One is that young adults in the 16-to-24 and 25-to-26 age groups as a whole were better educated in 2009 than in 1999. For example, the shares of “disconnected” (i.e., no high school degree and not enrolled) dropped across almost all groups of 16-to 24-year-old youth (see Table 8). For second-generation Hispanics, the share that is “disconnected” fell to 10 percent from 19 percent, and, for third-generation Hispanics, to 11 percent from 16 percent.

In general, more young adults of immigrant origin went to college in 2009 than a decade earlier. For instance, the share of second-generation Hispanics who ever enrolled⁵⁴ in college rose from 30 percent to 37 percent. Similarly, Hispanic immigrants in 2009 were more likely to have a high school diploma and to have attended college than their counterparts in 1999. Educational enrollment and attainment rates also increased for non-Hispanic immigrants and third-generation young adults.

A second finding is that we see the same hierarchy of educational attainment and disadvantage in 2009 as in 1999. Like a decade earlier, the highest-performing groups in 2009 were second- and first-generation non-Hispanics. Over half of immigrant-origin non-Hispanics had an associate’s degree or higher by age 25 or 26 (see Table 8). Native whites had similar results with 45 percent having obtained a college degree by age 25 or 26 versus 39 percent in 1999. Second-generation Hispanics and their third-generation Hispanic and black counterparts fall into a middle tier. About one-quarter of these young adults had an associate’s degree or more by age 25 or 26, up from a decade ago, but this was still half the rate of the top-performing groups. Finally, the gap in educational attainment between all groups and Hispanics immigrants remained wide.

⁵³ These are middle points of two sets of pooled CPS data: 1998-2000 and 2008-10.

⁵⁴ This includes the shares with “unfinished college,” “enrolled in college, no AA,” and “have at least an AA degree.”

**Table 8. Selected Educational Outcomes of 16-to-24 and 25-to-26 Age Groups by Generation and Hispanic Origin, 1999 versus 2009***

	Immigrant-Origin Hispanics			Immigrant-Origin Non-Hispanics			3 rd / Higher Generations			All Youth
	Arrived at 16 or Later	Arrived Before Age 16	2 nd Generation	Arrived at 16 or Later	Arrived Before Age 16	2 nd Generation	Non-Hispanic Whites	Non-Hispanic Blacks	Hispanic	
Population 16 to 24**										
1999										
“Disconnected”	58.6	31.9	19.2	8.6	5.5	5.0	7.3	13.6	16.3	11.1
Enrolled in High School	5.9	27.0	34.6	16.7	30.4	34.2	29.9	32.1	29.2	29.8
Terminal High School Degree	21.6	18.5	16.4	16.8	11.1	11.9	19.8	22.7	22.9	19.4
Unfinished College	5.1	6.4	7.9	7.5	6.7	6.8	8.0	8.5	8.0	7.8
Enrolled in College, no AA	5.9	12.6	17.5	26.9	34.9	31.1	24.9	18.8	17.6	23.1
Have at least an AA Degree	2.9	3.6	4.4	23.6	11.4	11.0	10.1	4.4	5.9	8.8
2009										
“Disconnected”	51.9	24.6	10.2	9.8	3.5	3.5	5.7	10.0	11.1	8.4
Enrolled in High School	5.8	24.8	36.2	10.3	28.8	32.2	29.2	34.1	32.1	29.8
Terminal High School Degree	27.2	22.2	16.9	18.4	9.2	9.3	17.6	21.5	21.3	17.9
Unfinished College	3.5	6.6	6.7	5.7	5.2	6.8	7.8	8.0	8.2	7.5
Enrolled in College, no AA	5.9	16.0	23.1	31.4	37.9	33.3	26.8	20.4	20.8	25.2
Have at least an AA Degree	5.6	5.8	6.9	24.4	15.4	14.9	12.9	5.9	6.5	11.1
Population 25 to 26										
1999										
Have at least an AA Degree	7.6	14.7	23.0	49.4	51.9	55.9	39.0	20.7	21.8	34.4
2009										
Have at least an AA Degree	8.5	15.3	27.1	52.6	53.8	57.3	45.2	26.4	24.2	38.5

Notes: *1999 is the midpoint in our pooled 1998-2000 dataset as is 2009 in our 2008-10 dataset. ***“Disconnected” was defined as youth without a high school degree and not enrolled in school at the time of the survey. Youth with a terminal high school degree were those who earned a high school degree or GED but were not enrolled in college, while those with unfinished college were those with some college credits but not enrolled at the time of the survey.

Source: MPI analysis of pooled CPS 1998-2000 and 2008-10 data.



V. Labor Market Outcomes

We turn next to young adults' labor market outcomes in the periods before and during the recession, as well as immediately following the recession's announced end. We then examine the contributions that rising levels of education have made to the labor market outcomes of immigrant-origin workers.

A. Recession's Impacts

Any discussion of young adults' labor market outcomes has to be placed in the context of the 2007-09 recession and the slow, jobless recovery that has followed. During hard economic times, youth are typically more likely to lose jobs and less likely to find work than more established workers who can tap their social networks and call on their work experience and qualifications. Some young adults might choose to return to school as a way to weather the weak labor market. However, that may not be an option for many young adults. They cannot afford an education, do not meet the entry qualifications for postsecondary education, or have family obligations. One concern is that prolonged joblessness during young adulthood can have "scarring" effects on young adults in terms of future employability and earnings capacity. Research demonstrates that workers with long spells of unemployment experience a higher risk of unemployment and lower future earnings. These effects might have to do with real or perceived deterioration of their human capital. In addition employers might increasingly "screen" for a record of strong labor market attachment as a way to assess worker's productivity.⁵⁵

In this section we analyze data from the 2006 through 2010 CPS to describe labor market experiences of young adults. As before, we disaggregate by generation, age at arrival, and origin, comparing immigrant- and nonimmigrant-origin Hispanics, blacks, and whites.

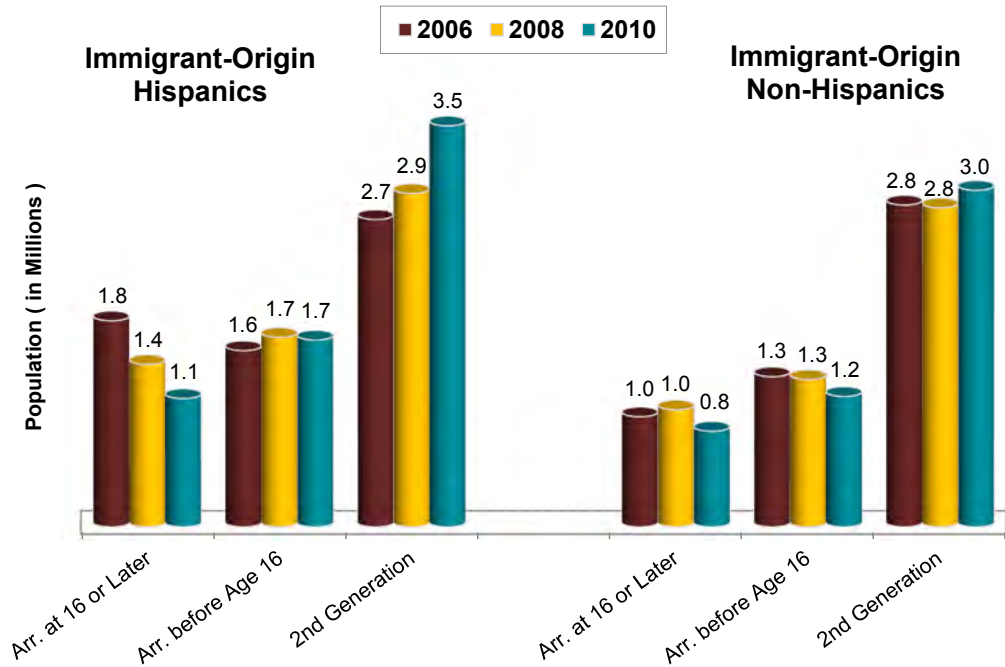
Drop in Number of Immigrant Young Adults between 2006 and 2010

There was a notable drop in the size of all first-generation subpopulations between 2006 and 2010 (see Figure 12). The sharpest decline occurred among Hispanic immigrants who entered at age 16 or over and whose entry is more likely to be unauthorized and labor-driven. The number or stock of young Hispanic late entrants fell by 680,000, or 38 percent, between 2006 and 2010, consistent with recent trends in overall illegal flows.⁵⁶ As we noted earlier, while the number of immigrant youth was falling precipitously in response to the recession, the number of second-generation Hispanic youth was rising as the population aged into adolescence.

55 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Off to a Good Start? Jobs for Youth* (Paris: OECD, 2010); Oskar Nordstrom Skans, "Scarring Effects of the First Labor Market Experience," (IZA Discussion Paper No. 5565, March 2011), <http://ftp.iza.org/dp5565.pdf>.

56 Passel and Cohn, *Unauthorized Immigrant Population: National and State Trends, 2010*.

Figure 12. Size of the Immigrant-Origin Population, 2006-10



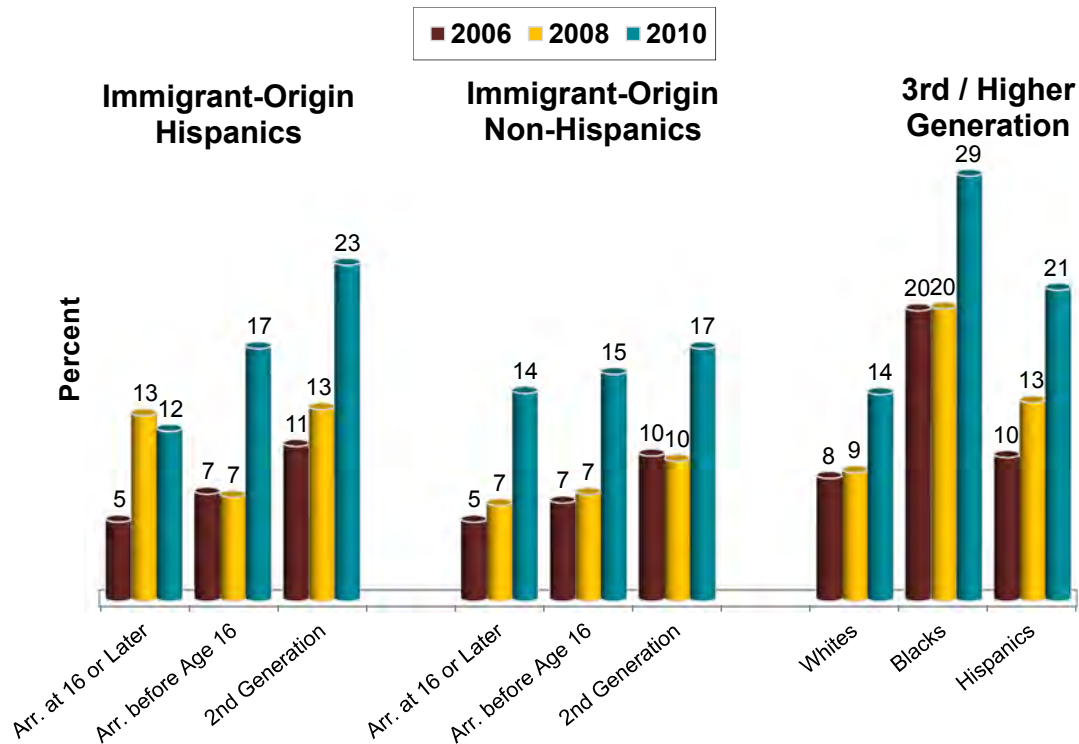
Note: Rounding affects the height of the bars.
Source: MPI analysis of CPS 2006, 2008, and 2010 data.

Hispanics who arrived as adults, many of whom worked in the hard-hit construction industry, felt the impact of the recession earlier than other immigrant groups.⁵⁷ Their rate of unemployment in March 2006 was the lowest (5 percent) among all groups regardless of nativity, with the exception of the rate for non-Hispanic late entrants (also 5 percent). (See Figure 13.) By March 2008, the unemployment rate of late-entering Hispanics had more than doubled (13 percent) and exceeded that of other first-generation groups (7 percent). In fact, only African Americans had a higher unemployment rate (20 percent) in 2008, again underscoring the disadvantaged position of native black youth in the US economy.

⁵⁷ Capps, Fix, and Lin, *Still an Hourglass?*



Figure 13. Unemployment Rates by Hispanic Origin and Generation, March 2006-10



Source: MPI analysis of CPS 2006, 2008, and 2010 data.

From 2008 to 2010, the jobless rate for late-entering Hispanics actually dropped a point (to 12 percent), while unemployment soared for all other groups. As a result, by March 2010, late-entering Hispanics had the lowest unemployment rate of any of the race/ethnic and nativity group. In March 2010, native blacks, third-generation Hispanics, and second-generation Hispanic youth all had unemployment rates exceeding 20 percent. Sharply increased unemployment can even be seen among typically highly educated non-Hispanic immigrants: non-Hispanics who arrived as children saw their unemployment rate double to 15 percent in 2010 from 7 percent in 2008 (see Figure 13). The slight drop in unemployment for late-entering Hispanic immigrants between 2008 and 2010 stands in marked contrast to the rapid rise for other youth.

We further examined employment of first- and second-generation young adults in three industries: construction, hospitality, and health care. Each has comparatively long career ladders and experienced substantial immigrant and native labor force growth before the recession.⁵⁸ Construction was still providing jobs to a large share of Hispanic young adults (almost entirely men) in early 2008 (see Table 9). However, two years later, the share of late-entering Hispanics employed in this industry dropped from 32 percent to 23 percent, while the relatively small share of second-generation Hispanics in construction was cut nearly in half (to 4 percent from 7 percent).

⁵⁸ Ibid.

Table 9. Selected Labor Market Outcomes of Young Adults (Ages 16 to 26) by Generation, Age of Arrival, and Hispanic Origin, 2008-10*

	Immigrant-Origin Hispanics			Immigrant-Origin Non-Hispanics			3rd / Higher Generations			All Youth
	Arrived at 16 or Later	Arrived Before Age 16	2 nd Generation	Arrived at 16 or Later	Arrived Before Age 16	2 nd Generation	Non-Hispanic Whites	Non-Hispanic Blacks	Hispanic	
March 2008										
Employed (000s)	921	964	1,465	595	613	1,340	15,246	2,486	1,174	25,266
<i>Shares (%)</i>										
Construction	32.4	14.8	6.8	7.1	4.9	3.6	5.8	2.8	7.0	6.9
Hospitality	19.6	17.4	13.5	12.1	11.7	15.3	17.9	17.9	16.8	17.2
Health	2.6	4.2	7.5	8.1	10.2	8.3	7.9	10.9	6.6	7.8
Median Income in 2007 (in \$2009)	17,139	18,540	15,450	20,600	15,450	16,480	15,450	15,450	16,480	15,450
March 2010										
Employed (000s)	753	833	1,436	396	466	1,310	13,744	2,225	1,052	22,543
<i>Shares (%)</i>										
Construction	22.8	9.8	3.8	6.2	2.6	3.1	4.8	1.6	5.0	5.1
Hospitality	22.1	19.5	18.6	13.0	14.7	14.0	17.2	18.1	18.2	17.3
Health	2.3	5.6	8.2	5.9	12.9	8.6	8.0	11.9	9.2	8.2
Median Income in 2009 (in \$2009)	15,500	15,000	13,000	18,000	16,000	15,000	14,400	12,002	12,000	14,240

*Income refers to wages and salaries of all who worked in the prior year, excluding self-employed. Income is expressed in 2009 dollars.

Source: MPI analysis of 2008 and 2010 CPS data.

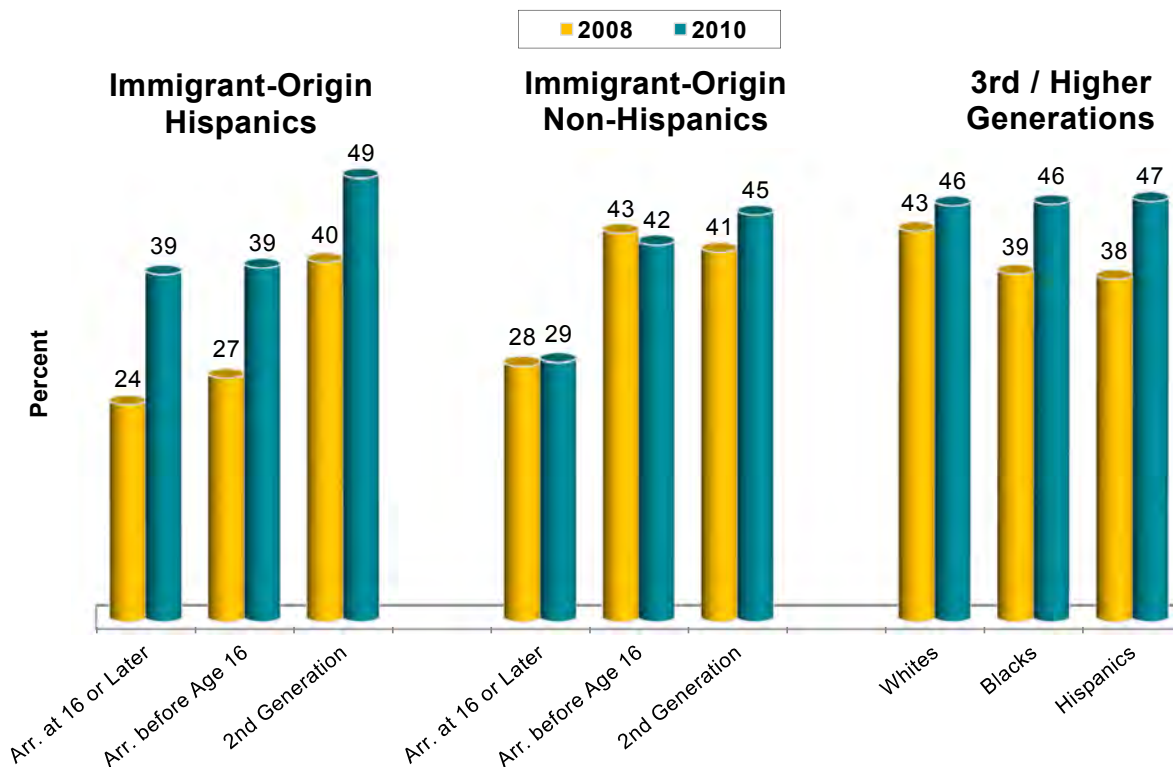
Non-Hispanic immigrants who arrived as children were more likely to work in higher-skilled health care than in lower-skilled hospitality industries, a reflection of their education levels and English skills. Other immigrant and native Hispanic young adults were much more likely to work in hospitality. As our earlier work has shown,⁵⁹ the hospitality industry offers shorter job ladders, fewer middle-skilled positions, and fewer family-sustaining jobs than health care. While the industry provides much needed postrecession employment to an increasing number and share of minorities and recently arrived immigrants, the future prospects for career and earnings mobility are likely to be limited.

We also see a sharp rise in part-time employment among all youth groups — with the exception of non-Hispanic immigrants and third-generation whites who were both better educated and more likely to be in school. Here again Hispanics arriving after age 16 had singular results as they saw the most rapid increase in part-time work, in both relative and absolute terms, from 24 percent in 2008 to 39 percent in 2010 (see Figure 14). Nonetheless, even after the recession, the rate of part-time work was lower for Hispanic immigrants than any other group except late-entering non-Hispanics.

⁵⁹ Ibid.



Figure 14. Rate of Part-Time Employment by Hispanic Origin and Generation, 2008-10



Source: MPI analysis of 2006, 2008, and 2010 CPS data.

The somewhat surprising decline in unemployment we find for Hispanic late entrants between 2008 and 2010 can be explained in part by the fact that some Hispanic immigrants left and those who remained were more likely to work part-time. Some groups — Hispanics who came as children, second-generation Hispanics, and third-generation Hispanics and blacks — appeared to lose on both accounts. Their rates of unemployment rose sharply and their rates of full-time work dropped.

We also observe a substantial decline between 2008 and 2010 in the median incomes of first- and second-generation youth who worked. Nonetheless the groups whose incomes fell furthest during the recession were third-generation Hispanics and blacks (see Table 9).

In sum, at a time when the National Bureau of Economic Research was declaring the recession to be over, for first- and second-generation Hispanics and their third-generation minority counterparts, in most cases unemployment was up, full-time work was down, and the incomes of young workers had fallen.

B. Who Makes Economic Progress?

How have differing levels of educational attainment promoted better labor market outcomes for first- and second-generation youth? Which groups at what education levels manage to succeed? To begin to answer these questions we examine two measures of success: holding a job that pays a family-sustaining wage and employment that offers a pension and/or health insurance benefits.

For many workers, a job, even a stable one, is not enough to keep them and their families out of poverty. Therefore, our first measure of economic success is access to jobs that pay a “family-sustaining wage.”

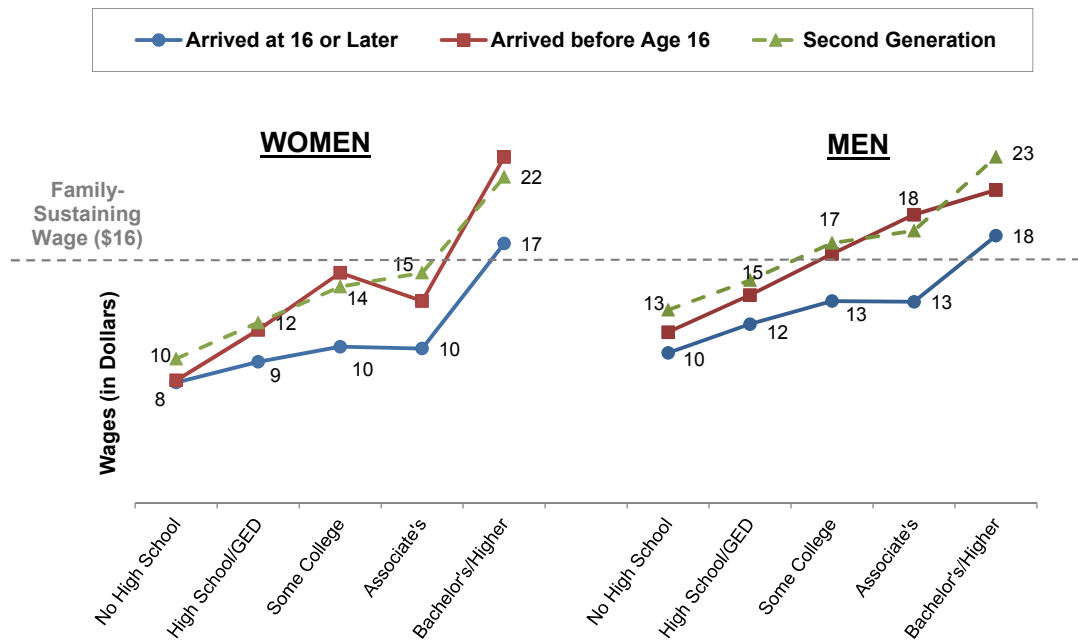
Following the recent work of Wider Opportunities for Women,⁶⁰ we define “family-sustaining wage” as \$34,000 a year or half of what a dual-earner couple with two young children has to earn annually to cover basic costs such as housing, child care, health care, transportation, savings, and retirement.⁶¹ These annual earnings translate to \$16 per hour assuming that the work is full-time, full-year (or 2,080 hours annually).

Further, while finding employment and receiving decent wages are important steps toward self-sufficiency, other less financially tangible aspects of work — such as opportunities for job training and career advancement, fair and safe employment conditions, health insurance, and pension benefits — are indispensable for young adults’ upward mobility.⁶²

Since most of the 16-to-26 population is still in school or relatively new to the labor market, we examine wages and benefits for workers ten years older than our study group. We look at the three labor market outcomes of the 26-to-36-year-old cohort of workers using pooled CPS data from 2008-10.⁶³

For all groups we examined, the median hourly wages and the share of workers with employer-provided pension and health insurance rise with each increment of education (see Figures 15 and 16 for Hispanic immigrant-origin men and women and Tables 10 and 11 for all groups). This pattern is to be expected.

Figure 15. Median Hourly Wages of Hispanic Workers (Ages 26 to 36) by Generation and Gender, 2009



Note: Workers worked at least 25 weeks or 700 hours and had positive wages in the prior year, excluding self-employed.
Source: MPI analysis of pooled CPS 2008-10 data.

60 Wider Opportunities for Women and the Center for Social Development, *Basic Economic Security Tables* (Washington, DC: Wider Opportunities for Women, 2011), www.wowonline.org/documents/BESTIndexforTheUnitedStates2010.pdf.

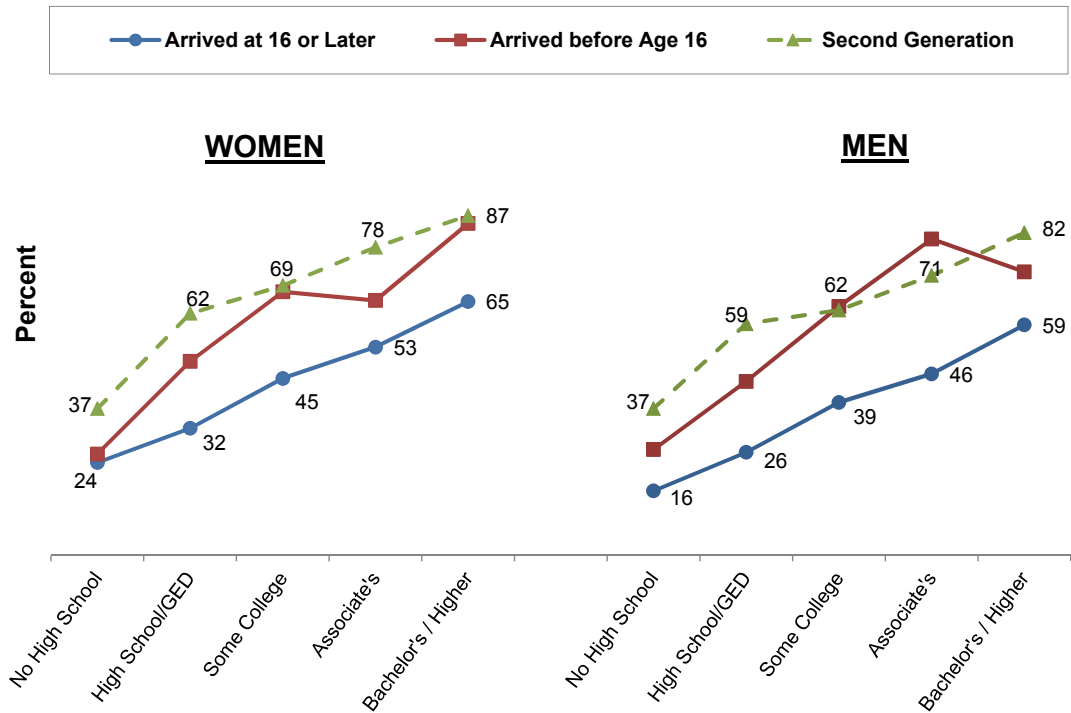
61 MPI’s earlier report (*Still an Hourglass?*) used a different measure of family-sustaining wage (i.e., \$30,000 or 60 percent of the median national household income) that was based on a methodology developed by the Economic Policy Institute. For this report, we are using the Wider Opportunities for Women measure, a postrecession estimate that encompasses a broader and more recent set of measures. Austin Algernon, “Getting Good Jobs to People of Color,” (Briefing Paper No. 250, Economic Policy Institute, 2009), www.epi.org/publications/entry/getting_good_jobs_to_people_of_color/.

62 Elizabeth Lower-Basch, *Opportunity at Work: Improving Job Quality* (Washington, DC: Center for Law and Social Policy, 2007), www.clasp.org/admin/site/publications/files/0374.pdf.

63 CPS data do not permit identification of whether it is the worker or the worker’s spouse who is covered by an employer-provided pension plan or health insurance.



Figure 16. Share of Hispanic Workers (Ages 26 to 36) with Employer-Provided Health Insurance by Generation and Gender, 2009



Note: Workers worked at least 25 weeks or 700 hours and had positive wages in the prior year, excluding self-employed.
Source: MPI analysis of pooled CPS 2008-10 data.

**Table 10. Hourly Wage, Health Insurance, and Pension Benefits of Male Workers (Ages 26 to 36) by Generation, Age at Arrival, and Hispanic Origin, 2009**

	<u>Immigrant-Origin Hispanics</u>			<u>Immigrant-Origin Non-Hispanics</u>			<u>3rd / Higher Generations</u>		
	Arrived at 16 or Later	Arrived Before Age 16	2 nd Gen.	Arrived at 16 or Later	Arrived Before Age 16	2 nd Gen.	Non-Hispanic Whites	Non-Hispanic Blacks	Hispanics
Median Hourly Wage (\$) by Education:									
No High School	10	11	13	11	-	-	13	10	12
High School / GED	12	14	15	13	15	15	16	13	14
Some College	13	17	17	17	14	18	17	15	16
Associate's	13	-	18	17	20	17	20	16	18
Bachelor's / Higher	18	21	23	29	29	26	25	22	22
Percent of Workers with Employer-Provided* Health Insurance by Education:									
No High School	16	27	37	37	-	-	46	34	36
High School / GED	26	44	59	42	70	66	70	58	61
Some College	45	67	69	61	82	74	74	66	66
Associate's	46	-	71	74	73	76	83	75	75
Bachelor's / Higher	59	72	82	85	86	88	88	85	81
Percent of Workers who are Included in Employer-Provided* Pension Plan by Education:									
No High School	7	10	14	10	-	-	21	15	21
High School / GED	12	17	33	21	35	33	41	34	38
Some College	12	36	41	21	32	45	47	43	38
Associate's	14	-	48	39	41	42	56	50	43
Bachelor's / Higher	38	42	55	46	56	57	62	62	57

Notes: Workers worked at least 25 weeks or 700 hours and had positive wages in the prior year, excluding self-employed. Median wages are expressed in 2009 dollars. "-" indicates that the estimate could not be reported due to small sample size.

*Provided by own or spouse's employer.

Source: MPI analysis of pooled CPS data from 2008-10.



Table 11. Hourly Wage, Health Insurance, and Pension Benefits of Female Workers (Ages 26 to 36) by Generation, Age at Arrival, and Hispanic Origin, 2009

	<u>Immigrant-Origin Hispanics</u>			<u>Immigrant-Origin Non-Hispanics</u>			<u>3rd / Higher Generations</u>		
	Arrived at 16 or Later	Arrived Before Age 16	2 nd Gen.	Arrived at 16 or Later	Arrived Before Age 16	2 nd Gen.	Non-Hispanic Whites	Non-Hispanic Blacks	Hispanics
Median Hourly Wage (\$) by Education:									
No High School	8	8	10	-	-	-	8	8	9
High School / GED	9	12	12	11	14	12	12	11	12
Some College	10	15	14	13	13	16	13	13	14
Associate's	10	13	15	14	16	17	16	13	15
Bachelor's / Higher	17	23	22	24	24	24	21	20	20
Percent of Workers with Employer-Provided* Health Insurance by Education:									
No High School	24	26	37	-	-	-	38	32	31
High School / GED	32	49	62	48	60	63	67	53	62
Some College	45	67	69	61	82	74	74	66	66
Associate's	53	65	78	82	67	81	81	65	72
Bachelor's / Higher	65	85	87	89	90	86	91	87	84
Percent of Workers who are Included in Employer-Provided* Pension Plan by Education:									
No High School	8	9	19	-	-	-	14	16	17
High School / GED	11	22	28	21	30	35	33	27	31
Some College	16	35	37	33	32	43	41	39	31
Associate's	28	39	46	34	37	43	47	40	34
Bachelor's/ Higher	32	56	55	47	54	57	63	58	57

Notes: Workers worked at least 25 weeks or 700 hours and had positive wages in the prior year, excluding self-employed. Median wages are expressed in 2009 dollars. "-" indicates that the estimate could not be reported due to small sample size.

*Provided by own or spouse's employer.

Source: MPI analysis of pooled CPS data from 2008-10.



Among men, whites tend to earn more, except at the bachelor's level or higher. First- and second-generation non-Hispanic men earned the highest median hourly wage among those with a bachelor's degree or higher, with white men lagging slightly. At nearly every level of education, Hispanic men who arrived before age 16 earned the least of all groups, while the wages of second-generation Hispanic men fell in between the wages of third-generation whites, on the one end, and Hispanic and black counterparts on the other.

While these trends confirm other research results, our analysis also points to less intuitive aspects of the education-wage interaction:

We reported that first- and second-generation women outperformed their male counterparts regarding school outcomes. However as Tables 10 and 11 make clear, median wages of working women 26 to 36, both native and foreign born, generally trail those of their male counterparts. The gender gap narrows at the bachelor's degree level and higher but only among Hispanic and native black workers. For instance, Hispanic women appear to catch up with their male counterparts at the bachelor's degree level and higher, mostly because Hispanic men's wages do not rise as steeply as those of non-Hispanics or third-generation whites.

We also find a clear trend towards generational progress among Hispanic women. At every educational level, second-generation women and immigrant women who arrived as children earned more than those who entered the country as adults. Their earnings approximated those of whites and third-generation Hispanic women (see Table 11).

In general we find that the educational payoff of having some college was only slightly higher than having a high school degree or GED. In turn, the return on investment from having an associate's degree was only slightly higher than of having uncompleted college education. In most cases, the median wages of adults with an associate's degree were only \$1 to \$3 per hour higher than those with some college; for late-entering immigrants, wages were only \$1 to \$4 per hour higher than for those with just a high school degree.⁶⁴

There was, however, a substantial wage premium for graduates with four-year college degrees, especially women. For instance, the wages of second-generation Hispanics with a bachelor's degrees or higher grew by \$5 per hour for men and by \$7 per hour for women, compared to their counterparts with an associate's degree (see Tables 10 and 11). The hourly wage difference was even higher for non-Hispanics who came as adults (\$12 per hour for men and \$10 per hour for women). Even the wages of the lowest earners — late-entering Hispanics — rose slightly beyond the \$16-per-hour family-sustaining wage threshold if they had at least a bachelor's degree (the median hourly wage was \$18 for men and \$17 for women).

In terms of job-quality indicators, we find that the share of workers with access to employer-provided health insurance and pension plan benefits improved more significantly with rising increments of educational attainment than did wages. For example, only 37 percent of second-generation Hispanic men with less than a high school degree had access to employer-provided health insurance. That compared with 62 percent of those with some college and 82 percent of those with a bachelor's degree or higher.

In sum, despite stronger educational outcomes, women lagged men in terms of earnings. Across all groups, the surest way to earn a family-sustaining wage appears to be to obtain a bachelor's degree. However receipt of other important employment benefits, such as health insurance and a pension, appeared less tied to completing college.

⁶⁴ There are a few exceptions to this general pattern. For instance, the median hourly wage of non-Hispanic male workers who arrived as children is \$14 per hour for those with some college and \$20 per hour for those with an associate's degree.



VI. Conclusions and Policy Implications

We have explored whether first- and second-generation youth ages 16 to 26 are on track to enroll in and complete postsecondary education and to obtain jobs that pay family-sustaining wages. The immigrant-origin population is diverse in its legal status, English language ability, age at arrival in the United States, poverty status, and family composition. In some instances these characteristics represent clear strengths (e.g., bilingualism, having parental/family support). In others, they represent risks to educational and economic incorporation (e.g., early parenting, unauthorized status, poverty).

From a demographic perspective, the first- and second-generation population ages 16 to 26 is particularly striking for two reasons. One is its size. The 11.3 million immigrant-origin youth make up one-quarter of the nation's youth and accounted for half of the growth of the 16-to-26 population between 1995 and 2010. Immigrant-origin youth represent 30 percent of low-income youth ages 16 to 26; their overall and low-income shares are much higher in a number of states (e.g., California, New York, and Florida).

The population is also striking because of its rapid generational transformation. Two demographic trends coincided around 2007: a sharp recession-driven drop in illegal inflows and a rise in the number of US-born children in immigrant families reaching their teen years. Together they contributed to a rising share of the second generation and consequently the lower share of first-generation young adults. Moreover, it is likely that these trends will continue in the future. The shifting generational structure of immigrant-origin youth will mean that increasing shares will be eligible for full education and social benefits.

Our analyses of immigrant-origin youths' educational and employment outcomes are encouraging at several levels. Along most dimensions studied, non-Hispanic immigrant-origin youth performed as well or better than their third-generation white counterparts. Further, we see gains in the level of education attained by the 2009 cohort of Hispanics and non-Hispanic immigrant-origin young adults versus their 1999 counterparts. Put differently, there is a rise in educational "quality" within the immigrant-origin population over the past decade.

Second, we see broad education and employment gains achieved by the second generation (those born in the United States) *versus* immigrants who came to the country as adults and those arriving as children. We do, however, find some modest declines among Hispanic youth by the third generation.

*The population is striking because of its rapid
generational transformation.*

The 3.2 million second-generation Hispanics between ages 16 and 26 are of particular interest. They represent a demographically important population as they account for nearly one-third of the immigrant-origin population ages 16 to 26 and for more than half of second-generation youth. They have shown substantial gains over the immigrant generation in terms of their high school attendance, enrollment in postsecondary institutions, and their receipt of college degrees. Indeed, the share (46 percent) of second-generation Hispanic women enrolled in postsecondary education is equal to that of third-generation white women. Nonetheless, while trends in access to higher education are up, second-generation Hispanics lag behind non-Hispanics and third generation whites in obtaining college degrees. So while this fast-growing group is making progress, its postsecondary education success has yet to be fully realized. Second-generation Hispanics are vulnerable to cuts in postsecondary education institutions and, as a result, their educational and labor market success is up for grabs.



Our analyses raise other concerns. While second-generation Hispanics can take advantage of their bilingual skills, citizenship status, and family/parental support, their Hispanic first-generation counterparts face multiple barriers to obtaining education, training, and family-sustaining employment. The 1.3 million Hispanics who arrived after age 16 are the most hard-to-serve group from both instructional and political points of view. About 85 percent of these late entrants are Limited English Proficient (LEP), 58 percent of 25- to 26-year-old women have minor children, and more than 70 percent are unauthorized. Despite strong labor force attachment and low unemployment rates relative to other groups, our analysis shows that Hispanic late-entrant adults who worked full-time earn the lowest hourly wage. The group also has limited access to employer-provided health insurance and pension plans and is essentially trapped in low-paid jobs with limited mobility.

Our findings point to a number of policy and program lessons that we intend to further explore and expand in the next phase of this project:

- ***A growing number of immigrant-origin young adults will be nontraditional students.*** They are likely to come from low-income families, have minor children, and work while in school. To both enroll *and* complete postsecondary institutions, or adult education and language classes, these prospective students will need flexible scheduling and financial aid. Their chances to succeed educationally given competing work and family-related pressures will be greatly improved if they are offered fast-track remedial courses, counseling, and mentorship programs on college campuses.
- ***College education matters.*** Our findings, perhaps hardly surprising, show the return on education investment in the labor market is highest with a college education. For women especially, having a bachelor's degree or higher is generally required to obtain family-sustaining employment. These findings reinforce the need for accessible pathways that allow students to make the transition among adult basic education, non-credit occupation training, and for-credit postsecondary certificate and degree programs without losing credentials. States can help this transition by determining which courses and programs are fully transferable from two-year institutions to four-year institutions.
- ***Policies and programs with a greater focus on the first generation.*** As we have seen, the 3 million LEP youth need English as a Second Language (ESL) programs at both the adult education and postsecondary levels, which should in turn be aligned with credit-bearing vocational and academic pathways to degrees. Our results strongly suggest the need for policies that go beyond the postsecondary education system. In particular, our finding regarding the comparatively low educational success rate and high LEP rates of first-generation Hispanic youth who arrived *before* they were 16, and presumably were educated in US schools, indicates a need to focus on English Language Learner (ELL) programs and supports in the K-12 systems.
- ***The educational and economic future of a large number of first-generation youth depends on legislative immigration reform.*** The fact that a large share of first-generation youth is unauthorized suggests that access to many postsecondary education institutions and to good jobs will require immigration reform, such as enactment of legislation like the DREAM Act or more comprehensive measures.

In sum, youth of immigrant origin represent a large, economically vital, and remarkably diverse population: one that is in the process of a rapid demographic change from the foreign-born first- to the US-born second generation. While we document striking patterns of generational progress along many fronts, postsecondary education completion rates — especially among the large Hispanic second generation — lag. As a result the economic prospects of many remain up for grabs in this period of severe fiscal retrenchment.



Appendices

Appendix A. Description of the Datasets Used

Terms	Definitions
ACS	The American Community Survey , conducted by the US Census Bureau, is an annual survey of about 3 million US households. As a replacement of the long form on the decennial census, ACS' goal is to collect detailed socioeconomic, educational, economic, and housing characteristics of the US population. Unlike the Current Population Survey (CPS), ACS respondents are asked to self-assess their spoken English abilities. However, as ACS does not provide information on parental nativity, populations of interest cannot be analyzed by immigrant generation.
CPS	The Current Population Survey is a monthly survey of about 60,000 households. It is conducted by the US Census Bureau and Bureau of Labor Statistics and covers economic and labor market characteristics and outcomes of the US civilian, noninstitutionalized population. The CPS March Supplement includes questions about citizenship status, birth country of the respondents and their parents, year of entry into the United States, poverty status, cash and noncash income, health insurance and pension benefits, household and family characteristics, and marital status, among other questions.



Appendix B. Population Projections Methodology

To project the size of the 16-to-26 population and its generational composition in 2015, we first estimated the size of the 11-to-26 population by generation, single year of age, sex, and Hispanic origin by analyzing 2010 CPS data. Then each of the three generations of youth — first, second, and third/higher generations — was separately carried forward from 2010 to 2015 as follows:

Third/higher generations:

We aged forward the 11-to-26 population by using death rates by age, sex, and Hispanic origin from the National Center for Health Statistics.

Second generation:

Similarly, we aged the 11-to-26 population forward by using death rates by age, sex, and Hispanic origin.

First generation:

1. For those who were already in the country (or the stock): We aged the 11-to-26 population forward by using death rates by age, sex, and Hispanic origin as well as emigration rates. To approximate the number of first-generation youth who might have left the United States (voluntarily or due to deportation), we used the annual emigration rate of the foreign-born population (Mexican versus non-Mexican men and women) developed by Jennifer Van Hook and Weiwei Zhang.⁶⁵
2. For new arrivals: To estimate the number of first-generation youth who might arrive through legal or illegal channels, we first estimated the size of the 2010 flow of legal permanent residents (LPRs) between ages 11 and 26. These estimates were based on the number of LPRs who arrived in 2010 under different immigrant visa categories (i.e., family reunification, employment sponsorship, diversity lottery).⁶⁶ Second, we aged this LPR youth population forward by applying age-adjusted death rates. Third, to estimate the unauthorized portion of the new arrivals we made projections employing three alternate scenarios: (1) a net illegal inflow of 0; (2) an illegal inflow equal to the current annual legal immigration flow, and (3) an illegal inflow twice that of the current annual legal flow. For scenarios 2 and 3, we used estimates of the 2010 LPR youth size as the base for the illegal flow. We also applied age-adjusted death and emigration rates to unauthorized youth as we aged them forward.
3. We added the stock and new arrival data to generate the overall number of first-generation youth in 2015.

⁶⁵ Jennifer Van Hook and Weiwei Zhang, "Who Stays? Who Goes? Selective Emigration Among the Foreign Born," *Population Research and Policy Review*, 30, no. 1(2011): 259-77.

⁶⁶ We used data tables from the Department of Homeland Security Office of Immigration Statistics' *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics Fiscal Year 2010*, www.dhs.gov/files/statistics/publications/yearbook.shtm.



Appendix C. State-Level Estimates of First- and Second-Generation Young Adults, 2010

Geography	<u>Immigrant-Origin Population by State</u>		<u>1st and 2nd Generation as Share of Total State Population</u>		
	1 st and 2 nd Generation (000s)	State Share of All Immigrant- Origin Youth (%)	All Young Adults (000s)	1 st Generation Share (%)	2 nd Generation Share (%)
United States	11,304	100.0	46,326	10.3	14.1
Alabama	-	-	-	-	-
Alaska	18	0.2	113	6.8	9.6
Arizona	299	2.6	964	11.1	19.9
Arkansas	-	-	-	-	-
California	3,103	27.5	5,879	20.8	32.0
Colorado	110	1.0	734	6.3	8.7
Connecticut	130	1.2	513	10.8	14.6
Delaware	15	0.1	125	8.5	3.5
District of Columbia	26	0.2	102	11.6	14.2
Florida	917	8.1	2,422	16.1	21.7
Georgia	289	2.6	1,482	8.7	10.8
Hawaii	70	0.6	193	15.0	21.4
Idaho	30	0.3	224	6.4	7.0
Illinois	502	4.4	2,079	11.7	12.5
Indiana	-	-	-	-	-
Iowa	55	0.5	494	7.6	3.5
Kansas	46	0.4	440	5.1	5.4
Kentucky	68	0.6	641	7.6	3.0
Louisiana	-	-	-	-	-
Maine	15	0.1	187	2.6	5.3
Maryland	206	1.8	905	13.6	9.2
Massachusetts	282	2.5	1,016	9.2	18.5
Michigan	187	1.7	1,564	3.9	8.1
Minnesota	94	0.8	824	7.8	3.6
Mississippi	-	-	-	-	-
Missouri	55	0.5	913	3.0	3.1
Montana	-	-	-	-	-
Nebraska	46	0.4	280	9.3	7.0

(Continued on next page)

Geography	Immigrant-Origin Population by State		1 st and 2 nd Generation as Share of Total State Population		
	1 st and 2 nd Generation (000s)	State Share of All Immigrant-Origin Youth (%)	All Young Adults (000s)	1 st Generation Share (%)	2 nd Generation Share (%)
Nevada	134	1.2	409	13.4	19.4
New Hampshire	20	0.2	180	5.1	5.9
New Jersey	498	4.4	1,306	19.8	18.3
New Mexico	63	0.6	306	8.0	12.4
New York	1,170	10.3	3,127	13.2	24.2
North Carolina	158	1.4	1,275	9.6	2.9
North Dakota	-	-	-	-	-
Ohio	123	1.1	1,668	2.8	4.5
Oklahoma	58	0.5	579	3.5	6.5
Oregon	104	0.9	495	11.9	9.1
Pennsylvania	198	1.8	1,887	3.0	7.5
Rhode Island	50	0.4	157	11.6	20.0
South Carolina	48	0.4	649	3.7	3.7
South Dakota	11	0.1	137	4.2	3.5
Tennessee	86	0.8	922	3.5	5.8
Texas	1,199	10.6	3,747	13.3	18.7
Utah	66	0.6	497	6.8	6.4
Vermont	-	-	-	-	-
Virginia	181	1.6	1,171	6.6	8.8
Washington	225	2.0	934	9.2	15.0
West Virginia	-	-	-	-	-
Wisconsin	82	0.7	799	3.4	6.9
Wyoming	-	-	-	-	-

Notes: “-” means that the state did not have a sufficient sample size. The highlighted states are the five states identified for MPI’s subsequent quantitative and qualitative research.

Source: MPI analysis of CPS 2010 data.



Appendix D. Percent of Young Adults (Ages 19 to 24) Enrolled in Postsecondary Education by Generation and Race/Ethnicity

Top 20 States with the Largest Share of the Immigrant-Origin Population Among All 16-to-26 Year-Olds

Geography	Immigrant-Origin Hispanics		Immigrant-Origin Non-Hispanics		3 rd / Higher Generations		
	1 st Generation	2 nd Generation	1 st Generation	2 nd Generation	Non-Hispanic Whites	Non-Hispanic Blacks	Hispanic
United States	16.5	39.7	54.6	55.5	43.1	35.2	34.8
Arizona	11.4	27.4	-	-	39.1	-	32.5
California	18.0	43.1	65.0	56.0	49.3	42.5	41.0
Colorado	5.5	19.1	-	41.2	40.1	27.8	29.1
Connecticut	41.1	35.1	38.2	67.2	54.5	35.7	26.7
District of Columbia	19.5	-	50.2	46.9	43.1	39.0	-
Florida	24.1	45.3	50.8	56.2	40.7	34.2	43.8
Georgia	6.4	-	52.2	53.3	44.0	35.0	-
Hawaii	-	-	44.8	46.3	36.3	-	26.5
Illinois	18.2	37.2	50.5	64.9	46.3	37.7	36.3
Maryland	18.4	-	53.3	53.4	46.2	36.1	-
Massachusetts	-	50.7	56.5	64.1	51.2	-	-
Nevada	13.3	22.3	46.8	52.8	36.0	13.7	25.4
New Jersey	20.7	37.2	52.1	53.0	53.9	31.3	-
New Mexico	13.3	39.0	-	-	54.3	-	45.7
New York	23.0	49.9	51.5	59.5	48.6	34.8	41.2
Oregon	10.2	-	-	-	37.5	-	-
Rhode Island	21.7	31.8	46.0	49.3	45.8	25.8	-
Texas	16.6	32.3	53.6	53.1	42.1	37.2	29.0
Virginia	12.8	46.1	56.8	66.6	37.6	34.7	-
Washington	17.6	37.8	45.3	53.2	33.9	-	37.7

Notes: "-" means that the state did not have a sufficient sample size. The highlighted states are the five states identified for MPI's subsequent quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Source: MPI analysis of pooled CPS 2006-10 data.



Appendix E. Percent of Young Adults (Ages 22 to 26) with an Associate's or Higher Degree by Generation and Race/Ethnicity

Top 20 States with the Largest Share of the Immigrant-Origin Population Among All 16-to-26 Year-Olds

Geography	Immigrant-Origin Hispanics		Immigrant-Origin Non-Hispanics		3 rd / Higher Generations		
	1 st Generation	2 nd Generation	1 st Generation	2 nd Generation	Non-Hispanic Whites	Non-Hispanic Blacks	Hispanic
United States	9.2	23.4	44.9	45.6	37.5	20.1	20.0
Arizona	7.6	11.8	-	-	35.2	-	20.2
California	9.4	22.4	48.6	44.5	41.9	21.0	22.4
Colorado	4.2	13.9	-	44.8	43.8	31.7	20.0
Connecticut	6.7	14.9	58.2	48.6	45.9	18.7	-
District of Columbia	21.5	-	63.6	81.5	91.5	25.9	-
Florida	17.5	34.8	32.9	37.3	38.5	24.5	32.8
Georgia	7.7	-	47.9	45.7	37.6	24.1	-
Hawaii	-	-	27.1	38.0	37.2	-	29.3
Illinois	6.9	24.6	46.9	54.4	43.1	18.7	23.8
Maryland	10.3	-	43.8	50.0	44.5	23.0	-
Massachusetts	-	21.8	39.7	55.1	45.6	-	-
Nevada	6.3	13.3	28.7	27.0	24.5	6.8	16.6
New Jersey	10.0	29.0	46.9	55.6	50.8	17.6	-
New Mexico	8.2	-	-	-	28.5	-	15.9
New York	15.4	27.7	40.9	52.1	51.1	25.8	30.4
Oregon	-	-	-	-	32.1	-	-
Rhode Island	21.8	27.4	39.2	48.0	41.9	-	-
Texas	3.7	17.9	44.9	41.4	31.7	22.6	15.0
Virginia	3.7	-	61.2	-	41.6	21.7	-
Washington	9.6	-	60.4	34.7	34.2	-	-

Notes: "-" means that the state did not have a sufficient sample size. The highlighted states are the five states identified for MPI's subsequent quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Source: MPI analysis of pooled CPS 2006-10 data.



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