The Current Situation in Mexican Immigration

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By 1988, the Mexican-origin population of the United States had grown to 12.1 million, largely from recent, sharp increases in immigration. The policy concerns raised by this phenomenon have been influenced by some perceptions that available research contradicts. Today most Mexican immigrants come to stay, about half are female, and they have increasingly less schooling compared to the native-born population and other immigrants. Nationally, they do not cause adverse economic effects for native-born workers and, across generations, their language and political assimilation is proceeding well. They put greater demands on education than on other public services. However, the Mexican-origin population affects the economy and public services more and differently in the areas where it is concentrated, primarily in the western United States and large urban areas. Further, the recent legalization of 2.3 million Mexican immigrants can be expected to increase the demand on public services, especially in those areas.

MEXICAN IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES HAS grown steadily during this century and has accelerated rapidly since the 1950s. Further, in the last 20 years, the number and proportion of undocumented Mexican immigrants have increased sharply. These phenomena create complex political, social, and economic issues for federal, state, and local governments, with profound policy implications.

Public response and policy debate are influenced by several popular misconceptions about Mexican immigrants: their numbers through time, their status as temporary workers, their socioeconomic characteristics, their integration into U.S. society, their effects on the economy, and their demand for public services. We review what is known about these aspects of Mexican immigration and the meaning for policy considerations.

How and Why Mexican Immigration Has Grown

Legal immigration. There have been three distinct phases of legal Mexican immigration to the United States during this century (Table 1). The first phase began in the early 1900s with a steady increase of Mexican immigrants while aggregate immigration from other countries was declining (*1*). By the 1920s, Mexican immigration represented 11 percent of total legal immigration.

The second phase began after a temporary slowdown during the Depression of the 1930s. As the U.S. economy recovered in the early 1940s, Mexican immigration increased. It was spurred by a 1942 U.S–Mexican treaty providing for the importation of an unlimited number of temporary workers (Braceros) in response to war-induced labor shortages in the agricultural industry. By the Bracero program's end in 1964, more than 4.5 million Mexicans had come to work temporarily in the United States (*2*), exceeding the number of permanent legal immigrants eightfold. This phenomenon has left a lasting impression, on both sides of the border: that Mexican immigrants are temporary, going back and forth and that "their ultimate destination usually lies at the point of origin in Mexico, not somewhere in the United States" (*3*).

The third phase began with the lapse of the Bracero program and the passage of the Immigration Reform Act of 1965. Although the latter placed the first ceiling on immigration from the Western Hemisphere, including Mexico, permanent Mexican legal immigration continued to increase steadily, and more rapidly than total legal immigration, until the late 1970s (*4*).

Further increases in legal Mexican immigration were checked by a 1976 amendment to the 1965 Act. That amendment imposed a maximum annual immigrant quota of 20,000 persons per country (already in place for the Eastern Hemisphere) in the Western Hemisphere, excluding immediate relatives (spouses, parents, and unmarried minor children) of U.S. citizens. Since then, the number of Mexican legal immigrants has stabilized at a yearly average of about 66,000, whereas total legal immigration itself continued to grow at a constant rate of about 30 percent per decade (*5*).

Undocumented immigration. As a glance at Table 1 suggests, legal immigration (temporary and permanent) has been accompanied by continuous flows of undocumented Mexican immigrants (*6*). These flows have historically dominated the debate on Mexican immigration, triggering occasional U.S. enforcement crackdowns—when the volume peaked, and apparently became "intolerable." The Immigration and Naturalization Service conducted its first reported crackdown in 1929, when an estimated 100,000 or more undocumented immigrants were crossing the border yearly (7). After World War II, undocumented immigration resumed, and competition with the Bracero program led to another crackdown in the 1950s. As a result, more than 1 million undocumented immigrants were deported in 1954 (*2*, p. 70).

Following a 20-year hiatus, undocumented immigration became an issue once again when net undocumented immigrants into the United States increased from an estimated 23,000 annually by 1970 to 112,000 annually by 1980. By the early 1980s, an estimated 55 percent of all undocumented immigrants came from Mexico (*8*), and they accounted for an estimated two-thirds of all Mexican immigration.

Various scholars have associated three major factors with the most recent wave of Mexican immigration: (i) widening disparity be-

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tween Mexican and U.S. earnings, (ii) decreasing job opportunities in Mexico for a population that has grown more than 3 percent per year since 1960 (9), and (iii) self-reinforcing development of Mexican migrant networks between places of origin in Mexico and destinations in the United States, which lower the cost of migration through various kinds of housing, job search, social, and economic support (*10*).

This time, concern over illegal immigration led to the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), which seeks to reduce illegal immigration to the United States by three means: (i) prohibiting employers from hiring undocumented workers, (ii) providing graduated civil and criminal fines for noncompliance, and (iii) increasing border-patrol enforcement across the 2000-mile U.S.–Mexican border (*11*). Under its two amnesty programs, IRCA also provided some 2.3 million undocumented Mexican immigrants the opportunity to become legal permanent U.S. residents (*12*).

Growth in the Mexican-origin population. During the past two decades, the increasing Mexican immigration has resulted in an equally rapid increase in both native Mexican-Americans and Mexican-born immigrants residing in the country. As counted by the Census Bureau, the number of Mexican immigrants in the United States quintupled between 1970 and 1988 to 4.1 million (Table 2). During the same period, the Mexican-origin population tripled, reflecting both immigration and a fertility rate that is some 40 percent higher among Mexican-origin women than among white, non-Hispanic women (*13*). Nearly 45 percent of the increase resulted from immigration, the remainder from natural growth. Today, the Mexican-ancestry population residing in the United States trails only the English, German, Irish, and Italian in size, and is larger than the French, Polish, and Scottish (*14*).

Table 1. Average annual Mexican immigration activities to the United States, 1901–1988 (*34*).

Decade	Immigrants admitted*			Undocumented immigration	
	Mexican born	Percentage of total immigrants	Temporary workers and trainees†	Estimated net undocumented immigrants	Aliens apprehensions‡
			Phase 1		
1901–10	4,964	0.5			
1911–20	29,900	5.2			
1921–30	45,928	11.2		100,000	25,769
1931–40	2,231	4.2			14,745
			Phase 2		
1941–50	6,058	6.0	40,331§		137,721
1951–60	29,981	11.9	348,578§		359,894‖
1961–64	46,748	15.9	250,000§		89,222
			Phase 3		
1965–70	45,393	12.3	3,706	25,000¶	208,578
1971–80	64,029	14.2	2,143	110,000¶	832,498
1981–86	66,936	11.4	5,363	135,000¶	1,260,855**
1987–88	83,675††	13.4	10,502		1,099,165

*Gross yearly average unadjusted for subsequent departures and mortality. †Individuals admitted under the Bracero program from 1942 to 1964 and under its successor H-2 program from 1965 to 1988. ‡Were not recorded until 1925. The number of alien apprehensions exceeds the number of undocumented individuals crossing into the country because the same person may be apprehended more than once. §Represents average number of persons contracted in a given year. These totals are higher than the number of persons working in the United States at any one time. ‖Peaked in 1954 at 1,089,583. ¶Total undocumented Mexican-born immigrants legalized under IRCA distributed according to reported date of first entry into the United States. **Peaked in 1986 at 1,767,400. ††Includes about a yearly average of 15,000 previously undocumented immigrants admitted under the IRCA Registry provision which legalized undocumented immigrants who have continuously resided in the country since 1972.

Table 2. Mexican-born and Mexican-origin population in the United States, 1950–1980, official census estimates (*35*).

Year	Mexican-born (millions)	Mexican-stock* (millions)	Mexican-origin† (millions)
1950	0.4	1.4	
1960	0.6	1.7	
1970	0.8	2.3	4.5‡
1980	2.2		8.7
1988	4.1		12.1

*Mexican-stock includes Mexican-born and native-born with one or both parents born in Mexico. †Mexican-origin population includes all who answered the question on origin or descent in the 1970 and 1980 census. The ordering of the items in the questionnaire was altered between 1970 and 1980. Also, the question in 1970 was asked of the 5 percent sample only; it was asked of all in the 1980 census. ‡Due to a classification error, this figure may be underestimated by 500,000.

Characterizing Mexican Immigrants

Given its growing size, the characteristics of this population have critical social, economic, and political implications, both here and in Mexico. In considering those characteristics, it is important to separate image from reality. The popular and scholarly image of the Mexican immigrant is one of a young, single male, uneducated and working in agriculture, residing temporarily in the United States in a predominantly Spanish-speaking residential enclave, and supporting a family that remains behind in Mexico (*3, 15*). But what are the demographic and socioeconomic facts?

Increasing permanence and concentration in the United States. Mexican immigration to the United States can no longer be characterized by the persistent image of the Mexican immigrant as a temporary worker staying here for a short period of time and leaving his or her family behind, if it ever could be so characterized. Although we lack longitudinal data on the mobility of individual immigrants, many aggregate indicators suggest that Mexican immigrants come here to stay (*16*).

To illustrate this point, more than two-thirds of the 1.7 million undocumented immigrants legalized under the pre-1982 provisions of IRCA are Mexican. This proportion is 30 percent greater than was projected by census and INS estimates (*9*, pp. 70–76) and confounded concerns that the 5-year continuous residency requirement would work against undocumented Mexican immigrants—the presumed "cyclical sojourners" (*17*). Indeed, nearly two-thirds of the newly legalized immigrants residing in California have been in the country for 10 years or more, and four-fifths live with their spouses in the United States (*18*). Overall, the 1980 census indicates that more than two-thirds of Mexican immigrants in the United States live here with immediate family members (*19*).

In addition to size and permanency, Mexican immigration is made all the more visible by its geographical concentration. Today more than half of the Mexican-origin population is residing in the western United States (primarily in California), and this regional concentration is increasing. The relative concentration of the Mexican-born population in this region increased from 52 percent in 1960 to 64 percent in 1980. No other foreign-origin population is nearly as concentrated in one region, including Asians (*20*). Also, this population is further highly concentrated within selected county and city jurisdictions. Within the western region, in 1980, 87 percent of the Mexican-born population and nearly 80 percent of the Mexican-origin population lived in metropolitan areas, including Los Angeles, San Diego, Fresno, San Jose, San Antonio, Houston, and Phoenix (*21*). At current relative rates of growth, it will soon constitute a majority population in an increasing number of jurisdictions, most particularly in California (*21*, p. 194).

Socioeconomic characteristics. The personal and labor market characteristics of the Mexican-born population are compared in Table 3 with characteristics of other foreign-born populations and of natives in 1960 and in 1980. Mexican immigrants are younger and more likely to be male and married than members of other immigrant groups and the native-born population. Although recent Mexican immigrants are generally more educated than those who came earlier, their schooling has increased at a slower rate than the schooling of other immigrants and those who are native born. Consequently, the educational gap between Mexican-born and other immigrants and the native-born population has widened over time. In 1960, 82 percent of Mexican immigrants had 8 years of schooling or less compared to 32 percent for native born, a ratio of 2.5 to 1. By 1980, this ratio had increased to 4.8 to 1, that is, 63 versus 13 percent, respectively (*22*).

In part because of less education, Mexican immigrants have lower earnings, experience higher unemployment rates (*23*), and are twice as likely to be working in the crafts and laborers categories than other immigrants and natives are. But, during the last two decades their participation in the agricultural industry has been halved to 15 percent of all native-born Mexicans in the labor force, whereas their role in the manufacturing industry has increased nearly twofold.

Female Mexican immigrants are playing a growing role in the labor force that has yet to be fully recognized. Although females have represented from 45 to 50 percent of Mexican immigrants, relatively few used to join the labor force. This is changing rapidly. In the last 20 years their labor force participation rate increased by 69 percent, compared with 50 percent for native females. Furthermore, the gap in hourly wages between Mexican females and their native counterparts is smaller than it is for males, having narrowed slightly over time. Reasons for this pattern remain to be identified.

Table 3. Characteristics of native and immigrants in 1980 and of Mexican-born population in 1960 and 1980 (*36*).

Characteristics	Native 1980	Immigrant* 1980	All Mexican-born		Mexican-born cohorts	
			1980	1960	1970–1980	1950–1960
Region of residence (%)						
South	33.2	19.8	23.9	36.7	21.2	36.4
West	18.1	26.2	64.5	52.8	66.9	52.0
Personal (%)						
Male	48.6	45.6	52.4	52.5	54.2	49.6
Age 17–24	15.1	10.9	20.4	10.3	27.4	11.3
Age 17–64	61.9	66.3	74.2	75.4	70.7	74.8
Married‡	62.2	63.4	68.4	68.8	66.1	70.8
Educational attainment (%)†						
≤8 years	13.0	27.9	62.6	82.3	66.5	79.8
≥2 years college	28.1	29.6	8.0	3.3	7.0	3.7
Labor force (%)‡						
Male						
Employed	88.3	88.7	91.7	91.9	93.0	92.4
Unemployed	4.2	4.0	7.0	5.6	7.4	6.2
Manufacturing	27.2	29.0	35.3	18.9	37.0	23.8
Agriculture	3.5	1.7	14.8	31.1	15.0	20.7
Operatives/laborers	21.6	18.8	41.0	37.0	43.9	41.5
Female						
Employed	58.7	58.7	47.9	28.3	47.3	31.1
Unemployed	3.0	3.7	5.8	3.5	6.7	4.2
Manufacturing	17.6	25.1	40.1	30.0	50.4	25.9
Agriculture	1.2	.7	7.9	6.7	7.6	5.0
Operatives/laborers	12.2	19.4	40.0	35.7	51.5	35.5
Hourly wage ($)						
Male	9.45	9.26	6.75	1.97	5.83	2.12
Female	7.48	7.60	6.43	1.95	6.02	1.94

*Includes foreign-born from all countries, except Mexico. †Refers to population aged 18 or more. ‡Refers to population aged 25 to 64.

Three Areas of Particular National Concern

The size of this population, its concentration, and its characteristics shape the effects that Mexican immigration has on U.S. society and on the immigrants themselves.

Sociocultural integration. Many people in the United States claim that Mexican immigrants are not acquiring English language skills and adjusting to U.S. political culture as rapidly as other immigrants. Reasons often given are their large numbers and concentration, lower education, and physical proximity to country of origin (*24*).

Addressing these issues fully requires looking at immigrants, their children, and grandchildren separately—that is, across generations. Using 1980 census data, McCarthy and Valdez (*25*) showed that only about 25 percent of Mexican immigrants have a high school degree; 25 percent speak no English at all; only about 40 percent have a working knowledge of English. By the second generation, there is a dramatic improvement in high school completion and in English proficiency. Nearly 90 percent have a working knowledge of English and only a residual 4 percent remain monolingual in Spanish. Although the children of Mexican immigrants catch up rapidly in high school completion, they continue to lag behind other adults in educational achievement. At the post-secondary level, the second and third generations of Mexican immigrants reach about half the level of other adults: 12 versus 24 percent hold a post-secondary degree.

Immigrants' eventual participation in the U.S. political process is a symbolically important dimension of integration in the United States. For immigrants, a step that must be preceded by becoming a U.S. citizen. Overall, fewer Mexican than other immigrants become citizens and, when they do, they take an average of four more years to do so (11 versus 7 years) (*26*). This is also true of immigrants from Canada, which shares a border with the United States. The longer Mexican immigrants stay here, however, the more likely they are to become citizens. By 1980, only 21 percent of Mexican immigrants who entered in the 1960s were naturalized, compared to 56 percent of those who entered before 1950 (*25*, p. 32).

Later immigrants' lower propensity to become citizens also reflects the rising proportion of undocumented entrants. The latter must first convert to legal immigration status before they can even apply to become citizens. However, a random survey of the recently legalized population in California indicates the high naturalization intent of that population, as well as the diversity of immigration status among members of given families. Fifty percent of the IRCA legalized population had at least one family member who already is a U.S. citizen, and four out of five indicated that they intended to apply for citizenship (*18*, pp. 3–10 and p. 11).

Once immigrants of Mexican origin are U.S. citizens, available evidence suggests they behave like other groups of eligible voters. After accounting for educational differences, registration rates and voting patterns of Mexican-origin and Hispanics, more generally, do not differ significantly from those of blacks or whites (*27*). Hence, the main reason Hispanics have not yet fully translated their increasing numbers into proportional increases in political representation and power is because most are not eligible to vote because of either age or lack of citizenship. As more Hispanics reach voting age and more immigrants acquire citizenship, particularly among the recently legalized population, their voting strength will potentially increase accordingly.

Growth and distributional effects. Many investigators have attempted to identify and quantify how immigrants affect economic growth, in general, and distribution of wealth among the native-born, in particular (*19, 28*). The general consensus is that immigrants in the United States (legal or undocumented) have little effect on earnings and employment opportunities of native-born people but significantly affect earnings and employment opportunities of earlier immigrants. For example, a 10-percent increase in the number of all immigrants decreases the wage of the foreign-born individual by at least 2 percent (*19*, p. 19).

Although these generalizations hold for the nation and for immigrants as a whole, they may not hold for smaller geographical areas that experience a large and sustained influx of low-skilled immigrants. Looking at the California experience, two recent studies (*25, 29*) documented that growth in Mexican immigration in the 1970s and 1980s coincided both with the more rapid growth of the California, and in particular the Los Angeles economies, and with slower earnings growth for all workers. These studies argue that heavy immigration into California, which accounted for 65 percent of the population growth between 1970 and 1980, let many low-wage industries continue expanding while their counterparts nationwide were contracting in the face of foreign competition. As Table 4 shows, this is most evident in manufacturing, which grew five times the national average whereas wages grew 12 percent more slowly in the state, and 15 percent more slowly in Los Angeles.

The studies found no evidence that this influx of immigrants affected native workers' job opportunities adversely. However, it appears that (Table 4) they may have slowed the growth-rate of native workers' earnings, with a disproportionate effect on low-skill occupations. Blacks as a group were not more affected than whites and, consistent with the national pattern, immigration had the largest wage-dampening effects on immigrants themselves. Their wage rates grew twice as slowly as other workers' rates.

However, other factors may enter into the equation, undercutting generalization from these findings. Muller and Espenshade (*29*) noted that, during the 1970 to 1983 study period, there was a sharp decline in migrants from other parts of the country, especially low-skill migrants, with whom Mexican immigrants primarily compete for jobs. There was a net loss of 134,000 low-skill workers to other states, whereas there was a net gain of 205,000 white-collar workers (*29*, p. 53). The extent and nature of this dynamic interregional adjustment process are yet to be analyzed.

Demand for public services. A frequent question is whether immigrants "pay their way" (through taxes) for the public services they consume. That question cannot be precisely answered. There is no information available on the service use and tax payments of individual immigrants and their families over time and disaggregated by level of government. Again, indirect approaches provide a partial answer to this question.

Table 4. Selected labor market changes in California and Los Angeles, 1970–1980 (*37*).

Indicator	Ratio to nationwide 1970–1980	
	California	Los Angeles
Employment growth in manufacturing	5.91	2.83
Earnings growth*		
Total manufacturing	0.88	0.85
Total all occupations	0.93	0.84
Blacks	0.93	0.94
Latinos	0.71	0.59
Labor force participation rate†		
Total adults	1.03	1.02
Blacks	1.01	1.00
Unemployment rate†		
Total adults	0.66	0.61
Blacks	0.62	0.60

*Includes year-round, full-time workers only. †Refers to population aged ≥16.

Among public services, education has been the most affected by Mexican immigration, both legal and undocumented. Although undocumented immigrants are ineligible to receive certain federal public assistance benefits (including Aid to Families with Dependent Children and foodstamps), they are eligible to receive state-funded public assistance benefits, where available, and their children have full access under law to public education. Because Mexican immigrants tend to be young and have large families, they consume more educational services than native-born families do. For example, in 1980, Mexican immigrant households enrolled 2.25 more children in Los Angeles elementary and secondary schools than the average for Los Angeles households (*29*, p. 143). In the 1980s, the number of students of limited English proficiency doubled in that district. Statewide, more than one out of six of today's Californians speaks a language other than English at home (*30*).

Mainly because of this disproportionate demand on educational services and the lower earnings of Mexican immigrants, they probably get more in educational and other federal, state, and local services than they pay (*31*). However, this kind of static accounting fails to consider the longer term effects of immigration on public outlays. Education, in particular, is both a consumption good and an investment in human capital.

Another concern over immigration, generally, and Mexican immigration, particularly, is the extent to which immigrants become dependent on income-transfer programs such as welfare and medical care. In 1980, immigrant households were only slightly more likely than native households to receive welfare, 9 percent versus 8 percent, respectively. However, Mexican immigrants were nearly twice (12 percent) as likely as the native-born and other immigrants to receive welfare. This reflects, in part, their lower education and, thus, their earning potential (*19*, pp. 153–157). Immigrants' use of welfare and other income-transfer programs also appear to increase with length of stay and achievement of legal status (*28, 32*). One study suggests that, with legalization, use of services can be expected to more than double over time (*33*).

Conclusions and Implications

Our review of the current situation in Mexican immigration leads to several conclusions.

1) Mexican immigration to the United States has changed in character. In growing numbers, Mexican immigrants come here to stay, not to work awhile and return home. There are numerous indications of this shift to permanence besides the number of newly legalized who have been in this country for more than 10 years: for example, the high percentage living with families and with naturalized citizens, the rise in school enrollment for children of Mexican immigrants, and the number who intend to naturalize.

2) This population is highly concentrated in certain areas and is growing. That concentration tends to be self-perpetuating and to promote further immigration.

3) Until 1980, evidence suggests that intergenerational integration of Mexican immigrants was proceeding well. However, the process may be slowing for newer immigrants. There are indications that the educational gap of Mexican immigrants is increasing and their earnings growth is being slowed by relatively low educational levels and the large size of newer immigrant cohorts.

4) Among public services, education is affected most, and most immediately, by the growth in Mexican immigration.

Our review also suggests several implications for policy of the recent legalization of over 2 million undocumented Mexican immigrants. First, the sheer size of the newly legalized population will affect not only the speed and nature of their assimilation but that of their children, of other immigrant groups, and of future immigrants. Their economic progress will have a major effect on the nation's economic future, which will, in turn, depend on public and private investments that will be made in their education. Second, the legalized population will increase its demand for public services—including adult education—over time, as the 5-year ineligibility period for some service programs expires in 1992. The only uncertainty is by how much. Most affected will be California, Texas, Florida, and the large urban areas in these states where legalized immigrants are concentrated. Third, together, the newly legalized immigrants, naturalized Mexicans, and native Mexican-Americans will exert an increasing political influence on local and national affairs. At the national level, the Mexican-American community will probably be increasingly involved in formulation of U.S. policy toward Mexico and Central and Latin America.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. Prior to 1900, Mexican legal immigration to the United States never exceeded 500 individuals a year [U.S. Department of Justice, *1983 Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Service* (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 1984), table 2].
2. E. Galarza, *Merchants of Labor: The Mexican Bracero History* (McNally & Loftin, Charlotte, VA, 1964), p. 79.
3. Bilateral Commission on the Future of United States-Mexican Relations, *The Challenge of Interdependence: Mexico and the United States* (University Press of America, New York, 1989), p. 97.
4. The 1965 Immigration Reform Act placed a ceiling of 170,000 and 120,000 on the annual number of visas for entries from the Eastern (EH) and Western (WH) hemispheres, respectively. Parents, spouses, and children of adult U.S. citizens were exempt [C. B. Keely, *U.S. Immigration: A Policy Analysis* (The Population Council, New York, 1979), table 3].
5. Enactment of the per country limit also caused an increase from 30 to 54 percent in the proportion of the total number of Mexican immigrants entering under the quota exempt category of spouses and children of U.S. citizens [U.S. Department of Justice, "Immigration statistics: FY1989, advance report," (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, April 1990), table 4].
6. The Bureau of Census estimated counting 2.06 million undocumented immigrants in 1980. Depending on assumptions made regarding the undercount, the number of undocumented immigrants in 1980 was estimated in the range of 2.5 to 4 million (*8*). As for net flows (that is, net yearly increase in the undocumented population in the United States), the Census Bureau uses an estimate of 200,000 a year, the middle point of an estimated range of 100,000 to 300,000 a year [U.S. Department of Justice, *1988 Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Service* (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 1989), p. xxii].
7. L. A. Cardoso, *Mexican Immigration to the United States 1897–1931* (Univ. of Arizona Press, Tucson, 1980), p. 94.
8. R. Warren and J. S. Passel, *Demography* **24**, 375, (1987).
9. For a review of the changes in the Mexican economy since the 1950s, see (*3*), pp. 876–90, and F. Alba, in *Mexican and Central American Population and U.S. Immigration Policy*, F. D. Bean, J. Schmandt, S. Weintraub, Eds. (Univ. of Texas, Austin, TX, 1989), pp. 5–32. Since 1982, real wages in Mexico have declined in excess of 30 percent.
10. D. S. Massey and F. Garcia Espana, *Science* **237**, 733 (1987).
11. F. D. Bean *et al.*, *Opening and Closing the Doors: Evaluating Immigration Reform and Control* (RAND and Urban Institute, Santa Monica, CA, 1989), pp. 25–32.
12. About 1.2 million Mexican undocumented immigrants applied for legalization under the IRCA provision that they had resided in the United States continuously since 1982 and about 1.1 million under the Special Agricultural Worker (SAW) provisions of IRCA [U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, "Provisional application statistics (Washington, DC, 27 August 1990)].
13. F. D. Bean and M. Tienda, *The Hispanic Population of the United States* (Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1987), table 7.1.
14. R. Farley, "An investigation of the quality of ancestry data in the United States Census," paper presented at the 59th Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, Toronto, Canada, May 1990. These percentages reflect responses to an open-question added to the 1980 Census.
15. This description emerges from several studies conducted in the 1970s and early 1980s, most of which are cited by W. A. Cornelius ["Mexican immigrants in California today," keynote presentation at a conference on California Immigrants in World Perspective, University of California, Los Angeles, 26 April 1990].
16. Defining "permanency" is the object of controversy. As used here, we mean an intent to stay in the United States for an indefinite period of time as indicated by at least a full year of residence and the presence of their immediate family (spouses, children, and parents) in the United States. It does not imply that some immigrants may not eventually return to Mexico after spending several years or even their working life in the United States.
17. J. Bustamante, in *Immigration and International Relations: Proceedings of a Conference on the International Effects of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act*, G. Vernez, Ed. (RAND and Urban Institute, Santa Monica, CA, 1990), pp. 73–85.
18. Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS), *A Survey of Newly Legalized Persons in California* (CASAS, San Diego, 1989), figures 2.5, 2.6, and 2.13. The survey randomly sampled 4172 pre-1982 and 795 SAW-legalized immigrants from the California legalized population enrolled in IRCA-funded educational programs. The demographics of this sample are generally similar to those of the entire legalized population (figures 2.7, 8, 9, 10, and 12). About 55 percent of the IRCA legalized population resides in California.
19. G. J. Borjas, *Friends or Strangers: The Impact of Immigrants on the U.S. Economy* (Basic Books, New York, 1990), p. 187.
20. A. Rogers and A. Belanger, "The internal migration and spatial redistribution of the foreign-born population in the United States, 1965–1970 and 1975–1980," paper presented at the 59th Annual Meetings of the Population Association of America, Toronto, Canada, May 1990.
21. In 1980, 87 percent of the Mexican-born population and nearly 80 percent of the Mexican-origin population lived in metropolitan areas, including Los Angeles, San Diego, San Antonio, Houston, El Paso, Dallas–Fort Worth, San Jose, Fresno, and Phoenix [F. D. Bean, W. P. Frisbie, B. L. Lowell, E. E. Telles, *Mexican and Central American Population and U.S. Immigration Policy*, F. D. Bean, J. Schmandt, S. Weintraub, Eds. (Univ. of Texas Press, Austin, TX, 1989), tables 3.6 and 3.7.
22. 1960 figures for immigrants and natives comparable to the figures for 1980 contained in Table 3 were computed by the authors using the 1960 Public Use Sample of the U.S. Bureau of the Census. These figures are available from the authors.
23. The strong relation between schooling and earnings has been well documented. For instance, see J. Smith and F. R. Welch, *Closing the Gap: Twenty Years of Economic Progress for Blacks* (R-3330-DOL, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 1986), and Borjas (*19*, p. 111). Other factors influencing the earnings of immigrants include length of stay and English-language proficiency [Borjas (*19*), pp. 110–112; R. M. Stolzenberg, *Am. Soc. Rev.* **55**, 143 (1990)].
24. M. Tienda, in *Mexican Migration to the United States*, W. A. Cornelius and J. A. Bustamante, Eds. (Center for U.S. Mexican Studies, University of California, San Diego, 1989), pp. 113–114 and 125; G. Bikales and G. Imhoff, in *U.S. Immigration in the 1980s*, D. E. Simcox, Eds. (Center for Immigration Studies, Washington, DC, 1988), pp. 137–149.
25. K. F. McCarthy and R. B. Valdez, *Current and Future Effects of Mexican Immigration in California* (R-3365-CR, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 1986), tables 5.1, 5.3, and 5.4 and figures 6.2 and 65. Because of the nature of the census, first-generation Mexican-origin adults were defined as having both parents of Mexican origin and second-generation Mexican-origin as having only one parent of Mexican origin.
26. U.S. Department of Justice, *Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1986 and 1988* (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 1987 and 1989), table F. Permanent legal immigrants must have resided in the United States for at least 5 years before they can apply for U.S. citizenship.
27. R. de la Garza, R. B. Brischietto, T. Weaser, *The Mexican-American Electorate: An Explanation of Their Opinions and Behavior* (Center for Mexican-American Studies, University of Texas, Austin, 1984). Also, the 1988 national telephone survey of Hispanic immigrants by the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) indicates that 81 percent of Hispanic immigrants who are naturalized are registered to vote compared to 70 percent for all U.S. citizens.
28. G. J. Borjas and M. Tienda, *Science* **235**, 645 (1987); J. Simon, *The Economic Consequences of Immigration* (Basic Blackwell, Cambridge, MA, 1989).
29. T. Muller and T. J. Espenshade, *The Fourth Wave: California's Newest Immigrants* (Urban Institute Press, Washington, DC, 1985).
30. G. Vernez and K. F. McCarthy, *Meeting the Economy's Labor Needs Through Immigration: Rationale and Changes* (N-3052-FF, RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 1990), p. 45.
31. Although using different methodologies, both McCarthy and Valdez (*25*) and Muller and Espenshade (*29*) conclude that (i) the average Mexican immigrant pays less in taxes than he or she receives in public services and (ii) the primary reason for the deficit is the higher use of education services.
32. D. S. Massey *et al.*, *Return to Aztlan: The Social Process of International Migration from Western Mexico* (Univ. of California Press, Berkeley, 1987).
33. D. S. Massey *et al.*, "Estimates of the probability of new migration starts from Mexico," paper presented at the conference of the Program for Research on Immigration Policy, Washington, DC, July 1989. This, as all studies that have used a direct surveying measurement approach to this question are limited by their relatively small sample size and geographic representation. At this time, they should be considered to be suggestive of the differential effects of time and immigration status.
34. U.S. Department of Justice, *Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1943 to 1988* (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC). See also Galarza (*2*), pp. 53, 59, and 79; Cardoza (7), tables 3.1 and 5.3 and p. 94; and CASAS (*18*), figures 2.5 and 2.6.
35. U.S. Census Bureau, *1950 Population Census Special Report* P-ENO.3A, tables 12 and 14; *Census of Population: 1960, Characteristics of Population,* vol. 1, tables 69 and 163; *1970 Census of Population, Characteristics of the Population,* vol. 1, table 192; 1970 Census of Population, Subject Reports PC(2)-1C, table 3; *1980 Census of Population, General Population Characteristics,* PC80-1-B1, table 39; *1980 Census of Population, General Social and Economic Characteristics,* PC80-1-C1, table 79. Published, respectively (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1954, 1963, 1973, 1983); 1988 figures estimated from 1988 Current Population Survey user tape.
36. Authors' tabulation from the 1960 and the 1980 Public Use Sample of the U.S. Bureau of the Census.
37. McCarthy and Valdez (*25*), tables 5.1, 5.3 and 5.4; Mueller and Espenshade (*29*), tables 10, 11, 14, and 16.