

PRB

INFORM
EMPOWER
ADVANCE

Population Bulletin Update

BY PHILIP MARTIN AND ELIZABETH MIDGLEY

IMMIGRATION IN AMERICA 2010

JUNE 2010

www.prb.org



POPULATION REFERENCE BUREAU

POPULATION BULLETIN UPDATE

IMMIGRATION IN AMERICA 2010

The United States has the most foreign-born residents of any country—three times more than number-two Russia, and more unauthorized residents than any other country. Although it has been a constant feature of America's history since its founding, immigration has become a source of intense policy debate and public divisiveness. With over 1 million legal immigrants arriving in the United States annually, immigration is changing the demographic makeup of the United States as Hispanic and Asian Americans' share of the U.S. population grows. Major questions will continue to be debated for years. How does immigration affect the size of the U.S. population? How will the changing racial and ethnic makeup of the United States change education and economic opportunities? What does it mean to be "American"?

With the wide-ranging economic and social effects of the current recession and the potential for renewed legislative debate, it is an appropriate time to examine the state of immigration in the United States. PRB has published a package of materials with a group of leading experts on U.S. immigration to examine recent data and trends, and their implications for the future of the United States. The discussions, articles, and interviews focus on demographic trends, economic impacts, social and cultural issues, and more:

- **Population Bulletin Update:** "Immigration in America 2010," by Philip Martin and Elizabeth Midgley, is an update to PRB's popular *Population Bulletin*, "Immigration: Shaping and Reshaping America," last published in 2006. This 2010 update examines new data, how the recession has affected immigration, and the ongoing policy debate at the state and federal level.
- **A video interview with Charles Hirschman**, professor of sociology at the University of Washington, focuses on the social and historical aspects of U.S. immigration. www.prb.org/Journalists/Webcasts/2010/usimmigration.aspx
- **Jennifer Van Hook**, professor of sociology and demography at Pennsylvania State University, and **Jennifer Glick**, associate professor of sociology at Arizona State University, discuss health and education challenges facing immigrant children. www.prb.org/Journalists/Webcasts/2010/usimmigrantchildren.aspx
- **Philip Martin** answered questions on how immigration is changing the United States in a **PRB Discuss Online**. <http://discuss.prb.org/content/interview/detail/5113/>

Add your thoughts and join the conversation on **PRB's Facebook page**.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

PHILIP MARTIN is professor of agricultural economics at the University of California-Davis, chair of the University of California's Comparative Immigration and Integration Program, and editor of *Migration News*. He studied labor and agricultural economics at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, where he earned his doctorate. Martin has published extensively on farm labor, labor migration, economic development, and immigration issues.

ELIZABETH MIDGLEY is a long-time observer and analyst of U.S. immigration trends and policy formation, starting with her coverage of immigration issues as a producer for CBS News and during her tenure as a trustee of the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

BECOME A MEMBER OF PRB

With new perspectives shaping public policies every day, you need to be well informed. As a member of the Population Reference Bureau, you will receive reliable information on United States and world population trends—properly analyzed and clearly presented in readable language. Each year you will receive two *Population Bulletins*, the annual *World Population Data Sheet*, and complimentary copies of special publications. We welcome you to join PRB today.

INDIVIDUAL	\$50
LIBRARY	\$75
CORPORATION	\$300
LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP	\$5,000

POPULATION REFERENCE BUREAU

Circulation Dept., P.O. Box 96152
Washington, DC 20077-7553

For faster service, call 800-877-9881
Or visit www.prb.org
Or e-mail popref@prb.org
Or fax 202-328-3937

POPULATION REFERENCE BUREAU

The Population Reference Bureau **INFORMS** people around the world about population, health, and the environment, and **EMPOWERS** them to use that information to **ADVANCE** the well-being of current and future generations.

Funding for this *Population Bulletin* was provided through the generosity of the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

OFFICERS

Faith Mitchell, Chair of the Board

Vice President for Program and Strategy, Grantmakers in Health, Washington, D.C.

Martin Vaessen, Vice Chair of the Board

Director, Demographic and Health Research Division, ICF Macro, Calverton, Maryland

Stanley Smith, Secretary of the Board

Professor and Director, Bureau of Economic and Business Research, University of Florida, Gainesville

Richard F. Hokenson, Treasurer of the Board

Director, Hokenson and Company, Lawrenceville, New Jersey

William P. Butz, President and Chief Executive Officer,

Population Reference Bureau, Washington, D.C.

TRUSTEES

George Alleyne, Director Emeritus, Pan American Health Organization/
World Health Organization, Washington, D.C.

Wendy Baldwin, Director, Poverty, Gender, and Youth Program,
The Population Council, New York

Felicity Barringer, National Correspondent, Environment,
The New York Times, San Francisco

Marcia Carlson, Associate Professor of Sociology, University
of Wisconsin, Madison

Elizabeth Chacko, Associate Professor of Geography and International
Affairs, The George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

Bert T. Edwards, Executive Director, Office of Historical Trust
Accounting, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.

Margaret Neuse, Independent Consultant, Washington, D.C.

Francis L. Price, President and Chief Executive Officer, Q3 Stamped
Metal, Inc., and Q3 JMC Inc., Columbus, Ohio

Michael Wright, Managing Director for Coastal East Africa,
World Wildlife Fund, Washington, D.C.

Montague Yudelman, Former Director, World Bank, Washington, D.C.

The suggested citation, if you quote from this publication, is:
Philip Martin and Elizabeth Midgley, "Immigration in America 2010,"
Population Bulletin Update (June 2010).

© 2010 Population Reference Bureau. All rights reserved.

IMMIGRATION IN AMERICA 2010

104,000

foreigners arrive each day in the United States. About 2,000 are unauthorized.

20%

The percentage of the world's migrants who live in the United States.

IN 2009,

about 15% of U.S. workers were born outside the U.S.

The United States is a nation of immigrants unsure about immigration in the 21st century. There is widespread agreement that the immigration system is broken, but not much agreement on how to fix it.

Recent immigration patterns and policies show both continuity and change. Continuity is reflected in the arrival of an average of 104,000 foreigners a day in the United States.

This group includes 3,100 who have received immigrant visas that allow them to settle and become naturalized U.S. citizens after five years, and 99,200 tourists and business and student visitors (see table, page 2). About 2,000 unauthorized foreigners a day settle in the United States. Over half elude apprehension on the Mexico-U.S. border; the others enter legally, but violate the terms of their visitor visas by going to work or not departing.¹

Two developments have rekindled the immigration reform debate. The recent recession, the worst since the Great Depression, exacerbated unemployment and reduced the number of unauthorized foreigners entering the country. However, most unauthorized foreigners did not go home even if they lost their jobs, since there were also few jobs in their home countries. The recession resulted in the loss of 8 million jobs; civilian employment fell from 146 million at the end of 2007 to 138 million at the end of 2009.

There was also stepped-up enforcement of immigration laws, especially after the failure of the U.S. Senate to approve a comprehensive immigration reform bill in 2007, including the proposal to require employers to fire employees whose names and social security data do not match. Experts agree that the stock of unauthorized foreigners fell in 2008-09 for the first time in two decades, but they disagree over why it fell. Some studies stress the recession, suggesting that the stock of unauthorized foreigners will increase again with economic recovery and job growth. Others stress the effects of federal and state enforcement efforts to keep unauthorized workers out of U.S. jobs.²

The second stimulus for a renewed debate is that more states and cities are enacting laws to deal with unauthorized migration, including an Arizona law in April 2010 that makes unauthorized presence in the state a crime. Public opinion polls find widespread dissatisfaction with the "broken" immigration system. Congress has debated comprehensive immigration reform for a decade without passing new legislation. The U.S. House of Representatives approved an immigration reform bill in 2005 and the Senate followed in 2006, but Congress has been unable to agree on a three-pronged package that would toughen enforcement against unauthorized migration, legalize most unauthorized foreigners, and create new guest worker programs and expand current ones. Arizona and a dozen other states require employers to use the federal government's electronic E-Verify system to check the legal status of new hires; private employers with federal contracts must also use E-Verify.

Immigration and Population

Immigration has a major effect on the size, distribution, and composition of the U.S. population. As U.S. fertility fell from a peak of 3.7 children per woman in the late 1950s to 2.0 today, the contribution of immigration to U.S. population growth increased. Between 1990 and 2010, the number of foreign-born U.S. residents almost doubled from 20 million to 40 million, while the U.S. population rose from almost 250 million to 310 million. Thus, immigration directly contributed one-third of

Entries In and Out of the United States, 2004-2009

CATEGORY	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Legal Immigrants	1,122,373	1,266,129	1,052,415	1,107,126	1,130,818
Immediate relatives of U.S. citizens	436,231	580,348	494,920	488,483	535,554
Other family-sponsored immigrants	212,970	222,229	194,900	227,761	211,859
Employment-based	246,878	159,081	162,176	166,511	144,034
Refugees and asylees	150,677	216,454	136,125	166,392	177,368
Diversity and other immigrants	75,617	88,017	64,294	57,979	62,003
Estimated emigration	-312,000	-316,000	-320,000	-324,000	-328,000
Legal Temporary Migrants	32,003,435	33,667,328	37,149,651	39,381,925	36,231,554
Pleasure/business	28,510,374	29,928,567	32,905,061	35,045,836	32,190,915
Foreign students (F-1)	621,178	693,805	787,756	859,169	895,392
Temporary foreign workers	882,957	985,456	1,118,138	1,101,938	936,272
Illegal Immigration: Apprehensions	1,291,142	1,206,457	960,756	791,568	—
Removals or deportations	246,431	280,974	319,382	358,886	—
Change in unauthorized foreigners	572,000	572,000	572,000	-650,000	—

— Data not available.

Note: The stock of unauthorized immigrants rose from 8.4 million in 2000 to 12.4 million in 2007, and dipped to 11.1 million in 2009.

Sources: Department of Homeland Security; and unauthorized foreigners data from Jeff Passel, Pew Hispanic Center, accessed at <http://pewhispanic.org/topics?TopicID=16>, on June 3, 2010.

Audiocast: Listen to Philip Martin explain the various types of immigrant entries into the United States and how these numbers have changed over the past five years. www.prb.org/PopulationBulletins/2010/immigration1.aspx

U.S. population growth and, with the U.S.-born children and grandchildren of immigrants, immigration contributed half of U.S. population growth.

The United States had 39 million foreign-born residents in 2009; 11 million, almost 30 percent, were in the United States illegally. The United States has the most foreign-born residents of any country, three times more than number-two Russia, and more unauthorized residents than any other country. The United States, with 13 percent foreign-born residents, has a higher share of immigrants among its residents than most European countries, but a lower share than Australia and Canada.³

In recent decades, immigrants have been mostly Asian and Hispanic, changing the composition of the U.S. population (see Figure 1, page 3). In 1970, about 83 percent of the 203 million U.S. residents were non-Hispanic whites and 6 percent were Hispanic or Asian. In 2010, the United States had 310 million residents; two-thirds were non-Hispanic white and 20 percent were Hispanic or Asian. If current trends continue, by 2050 the non-Hispanic white share of U.S. residents will decline to about 50 percent while the share of Hispanics and Asians taken together will rise to one-third (see Figure 2, see page 3).⁴

Economic Impacts of Immigration

Most immigrants come to the United States for economic opportunity; about 100,000 a year, less than 10 percent, arrive

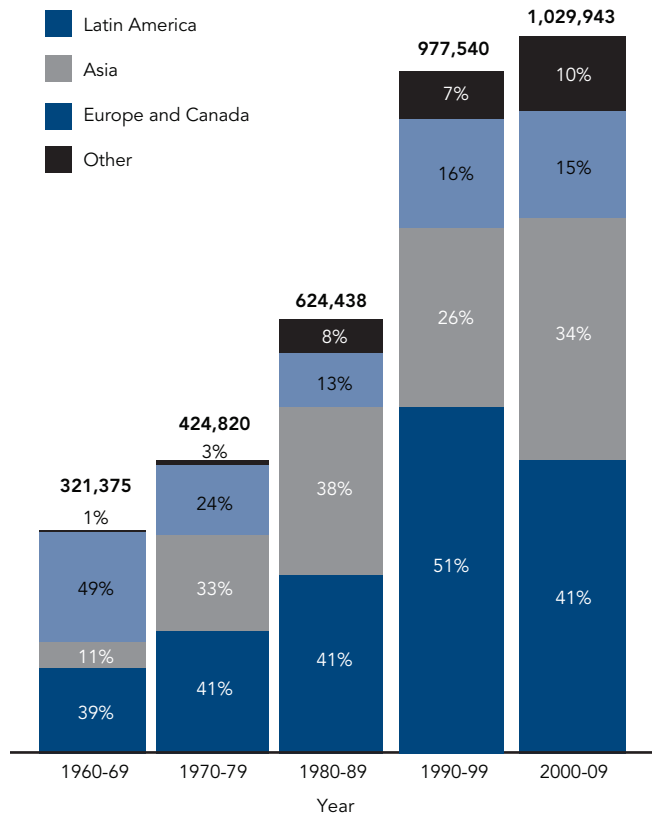
as refugees and asylum seekers fleeing persecution in their own countries. About half of immigrants and U.S.-born persons are in the U.S. labor force—a slightly higher share of foreign-born men and a slightly lower share of foreign-born women. In 2009, about 15 percent of U.S. workers were born outside the United States.

The effects of foreign-born workers on U.S. labor markets are hotly debated. Economic theory predicts that adding foreign workers to the labor force should increase economic output and lower wages, or lower the rate of increase in wages. This theory was confirmed by a National Research Council study that estimated immigration raised U.S. GDP, the value of all goods and services produced, one-tenth of 1 percent in 1996, increasing that year's GDP of \$8 trillion by up to \$8 billion.⁵ U.S. GDP was \$15 trillion in 2010, suggesting that immigration contributed up to \$15 billion. Average U.S. wages were depressed 3 percent because of immigration.

However, comparisons of cities with varying proportions of immigrants have not yielded evidence of wage depression linked to immigration. For example, in 1980, over 125,000 Cubans left for the United States via the port of Mariel. Many settled in Miami, increasing the labor force by 8 percent, but the unemployment rate of African Americans in Miami in 1981 was lower than in cities such as Atlanta, which did not receive Cuban immigrants.⁶ One reason may be that U.S.-born workers who competed with Marielitos moved away from Miami or did not move to Miami.

FIGURE 1

Annual Number of Legal U.S. Immigrants by Decade and Region of Origin, 1960-2009



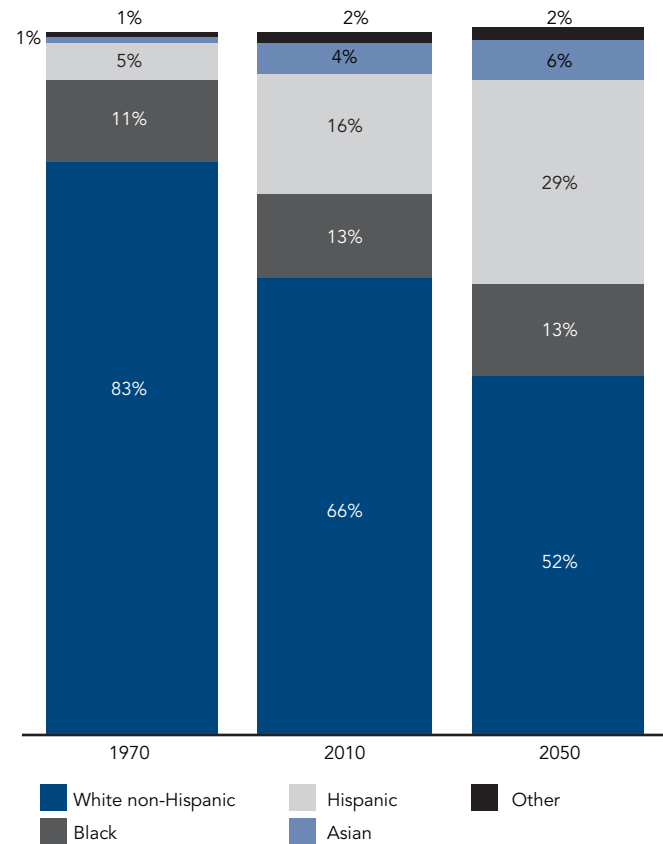
Note: Numbers may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.
Source: Department of Homeland Security Immigration Statistics.

Audiocast: Listen to Philip Martin discuss the data on the changing geographic makeup of immigrants over the past 50 years. www.prb.org/PopulationBulletins/2010/immigration1.aspx

Because of internal migration, most economists look for the impacts of immigrants throughout the U.S. labor market rather than in particular cities. Immigrants and U.S.-born workers are often grouped by their age and education in order to determine, for example, how 20-to-25-year-old immigrants with less than a high school education affect similar U.S.-born workers. Economist George Borjas assumed that foreign-born and U.S.-born workers of the same age and with the same levels of education are substitutes, meaning that an employer considers foreign- and U.S.-born workers to be interchangeable.⁷ However, if foreign-born and U.S.-born workers are complements, meaning that a 30-year-old U.S.-born carpenter with a high school education is more productive because he has a foreign-born helper, immigrants can raise the wages of similar U.S.-born workers.⁸ Estimated immigrant impacts depend largely on assumptions, and economic studies have not reached definitive conclusions.⁹

FIGURE 2

U.S. Population by Race and Ethnic Group, 1970, 2010, and 2050



Note: Numbers may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.
Source: U.S. Census Projections With Constant Net International Migration, accessed at www.census.gov/population/www/projections/2009cnmsSumTabs.html, on June 7, 2010.

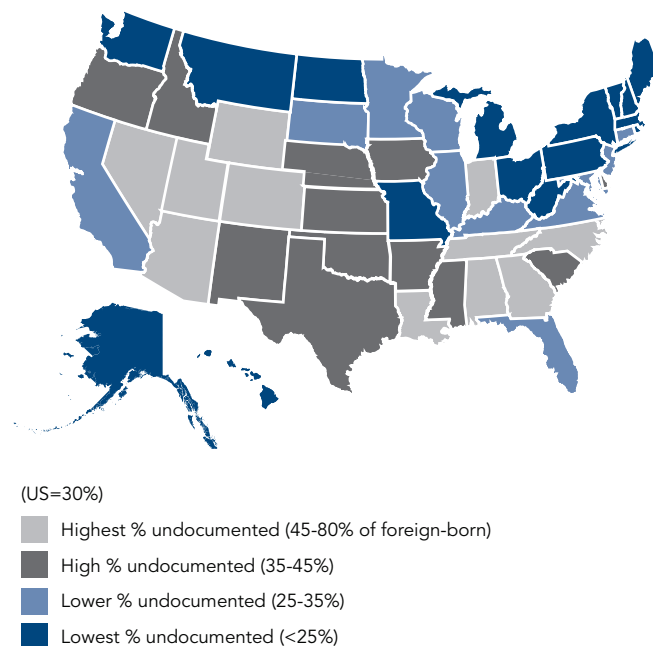
Immigrants do more than work—they also pay taxes and consume tax-supported services. Almost half of the 12 million U.S. workers without a high-school diploma are immigrants, and most have low earnings. Most taxes from low earners flow to the federal government as Social Security and Medicare taxes, but the major tax-supported services used by immigrants are education and other services provided by state and local governments.¹⁰ Because of this, some state and local governments call immigration an unfunded federal mandate and attempt to recover from the federal government the cost of providing services to immigrants.

The Path to Naturalization

Many immigrants become naturalized U.S. citizens and vote; some hold political office, including California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. The U.S. government encourages legal immigrants who are at least 18 years old, have been in the

FIGURE 3

Unauthorized Immigrants as Share of Foreign-Born by State, 2008



Source: Jeff Passel, Pew Hispanic Center, accessed at <http://pewhispanic.org/topics?TopicID=16>, on June 3, 2010.

Audiocast: Listen to Philip Martin describe the settlement patterns of undocumented immigrants across the United States. www.prb.org/PopulationBulletins/2010/immigration2.aspx

United States at least five years, and who pass a test of English and civics to become naturalized citizens.

Naturalization rates vary by country of origin. Immigrants from countries to which they do not expect to return are far more likely to naturalize than immigrants from countries to which they expect to return. Thus, naturalization rates are far higher for Cubans and Vietnamese than for Canadians and Mexicans.

However, more Mexicans and Latin Americans are naturalizing, in part because their governments have become more supportive of their citizens going abroad to become dual nationals. More people identify themselves as Latinos than as African Americans in the United States. However, during the 2008 elections, African Americans cast almost twice as many votes as Latinos, reflecting the fact that many Latinos are not U.S. citizens.¹¹ Latinos are sometimes called the “sleeping giant” in the U.S. electorate—a giant that could tilt the political balance toward Democrats as their share of the vote increases. Two-thirds of the Latinos who voted in 2008 supported President Obama.

Policy Reactions

The United States has had three major immigration policies throughout its history: no limits for the first 100 years, qualitative restrictions such as “no Chinese” between the 1880s and 1920s, and both qualitative and quantitative restrictions since the 1920s. During the half-century of low immigration, between the 1920s and the 1970s, U.S. immigration law changed only about once a generation.

Beginning in the 1980s, Congress changed immigration laws more frequently. The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 embodied a compromise to reduce illegal migration. For the first time, the federal government set fines on U.S. employers who knowingly hired unauthorized workers and legalized most of the estimated 3 million to 5 million unauthorized foreigners in the United States (see Figure 3). IRCA's sanctions failed to reduce illegal migration, largely because unauthorized workers used false documents to get jobs, and legalization was tarnished by widespread fraud that allowed over 1 million rural Mexican men to become U.S. immigrants because they asserted they had performed qualifying U.S. farm work.¹²

Illegal migration and welfare spending rose in the 1990s, and Congress responded in 1996 with the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) and the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA). Welfare reform reduced federal cash payments to both U.S. citizens and immigrants, and erected stronger barriers between unauthorized foreigners and welfare benefits. IIRIRA required U.S. residents sponsoring their family members for immigrant visas to have incomes above the poverty line to reduce the chances that the newcomers would need welfare assistance.

The Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks were committed by foreigners who had entered the United States legally; the attacks highlighted the failure of the U.S. government to track foreigners despite a mid-1990s law requiring them to be checked as they enter and leave the country. In response, the U.S. government gained the power to detain foreigners deemed to be threats to national security, and most immigration-related agencies were consolidated in the new Department of Homeland Security. However, the number of unauthorized foreigners rose steadily, from 8 million in 2000 to 12 million in 2007, prompting Congress to debate measures to deal with illegal immigration. At the same time, employers complained of labor shortages and the unemployment rate dipped below 5 percent in 2006 and 2007.

The congressional debate mirrored divisions among Americans about how to deal with unauthorized foreigners. In 2005, the House of Representatives approved an enforcement-only bill that would have added more fences and agents on the Mexico-U.S. border and made “illegal presence” in the United States a felony, complicating future legalization.¹³ Hispanic leaders condemned the House bill and organized demonstrations that culminated in a “day without immigrants” on May 1, 2006.

Migration's Economic Tradeoffs: Farm Worker Wages and Food Costs

Migration is often characterized as either good or bad; migration is seen as a benefit for adding needed workers or blamed for depressing wages. In reality, most public policy choices are heated debates about which of two “goods” deserves higher priority, with no easy way to balance the tradeoffs. For example, raising interest rates can reduce inflation but increase unemployment, explaining the ongoing debate over which “good”—low inflation or low unemployment—should get higher priority.

Agriculture provides an example of tradeoffs between the “goods” of low food prices and decent incomes for farm workers. About 75 percent of the workers on U.S. crop farms were born abroad, mostly in Mexico. Over two-thirds of these immigrant farm workers are believed to be unauthorized. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistic's Consumer Expenditure Survey, there were 121 million “consumer units” in the United States in 2008. Each unit consists of an average of 2.5 persons, 1.3 wage earners, and two vehicles. Average annual income before taxes was \$63,600 and expenditures averaged \$50,500 a year.

These expenditures included \$6,400 for food (13 percent). Food spending was split between 57 percent for food eaten at home (\$3,700 or \$71 a week) and 43 percent for food bought away from home (\$27,000 or \$52 a week). To put the relatively low proportion of expenditures on food spending in perspective, \$17,100 went toward housing and utilities; \$8,600 for transportation; \$3,000 for health care; \$1,800 for apparel; and \$2,800 for entertainment.

Americans spend relatively little on fresh fruits and vegetables. The average consumer unit spent more annually on alcoholic beverage

(\$444) than on fresh fruits and vegetables (\$434). Even though there is little additional labor involved after some fresh fruits and vegetables leave the farm—strawberries are picked directly into the containers in which they are sold and iceberg lettuce gets its film wrapper in the field—farmers get a small share of the retail food dollar. In 2006, farmers received an average of 30 percent of the retail price of fresh fruits and 25 percent of the retail price of fresh vegetables. Annual expenditures of \$434 per consumer unit come out to \$120 to the farmer, and only one-third of this \$120 went to farm workers, or \$40 a year.¹

What would happen to consumer food costs if farm wages rose and the extra costs were passed on to consumers? The average earnings of field workers were \$9.78 an hour in 2008, according to a U.S. Department of Agriculture survey of farm employers, and a 40 percent increase would raise them to \$13.69 an hour. If this wage increase were passed on to consumers, the 10 cent farm labor cost of a \$1 pound of apples would rise to 14 cents, and the retail price would only rise to \$1.04.

A 40 percent increase in farm worker wages would raise average consumer unit or household spending by just \$16 a year, the cost of two movie tickets. However, seasonal farm workers employed 1,000 hours a year would see their earnings rise from \$9,780 to \$13,600, or from below to above the federal poverty line of \$10,400 for an individual in 2008.

Reference

- 1 U.S. Department of Agriculture, “Food Marketing System in the U.S.: Price Spreads From Farm to Consumer,” accessed at www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/FoodMarketingSystem/Pricespreads.htm, on June 3, 2010.

The Senate took a different approach, approving the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act in 2006 to beef up border and interior enforcement, as in the House bill. However, the Senate bill would have provided an “earned path” to legalization by allowing unauthorized foreigners to pay fees and pass English tests to become legal immigrants and would have created new guest worker programs to satisfy employers complaining of labor shortages.

There was strong resistance to this amnesty for unauthorized foreigners, prompting the Senate to consider a tougher enforcement-and-legalization bill in 2007. For example, unauthorized foreigners would have had to pay fees and learn English and also return to their country of origin and re-enter the United States legally in order to become legal immigrants.

Immigration returned to the headlines in spring 2010 after Arizona enacted the Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act, which made it a crime to be in the state illegally. Immigrants in Arizona now must carry proof of their legal status, and show IDs to police officers who suspect they may be illegally in the United States; violators can be fined or jailed. President Obama criticized the Arizona law and said that its enactment demonstrated the urgency of dealing with

immigration reform. Hispanic groups predicted widespread racial profiling and mistaken arrests and sued to block implementation of the Arizona law. However, polls found broad support for the Arizona law. A May 2010 Wall Street Journal/NBC poll reported that almost two-thirds of U.S. adults supported the Arizona law, even though two-thirds of respondents agreed that it would likely lead to discrimination against legal Hispanic immigrants. In the same poll, 70 percent of Latinos opposed the Arizona law.¹⁴

The U.S. Senate has been trying to develop a bipartisan three-pronged bill like those debated in 2006 and 2007. Just after the Arizona law was enacted, Senate Democrats released a framework for comprehensive immigration reform without Republican support. The framework, which includes more enforcement, legalization, and new guest worker programs, is awaiting Republican supporters.

Under this framework, border enforcement benchmarks would have to be met before legalization can begin. There would be more Border Patrol agents, an entry-exit system for foreign visitors, and a new system under which all U.S. workers would have to present secure cards when hired to prove their identity and right to work. All employers would have to use scanners to check new hires. The Democrats' proposal offers a relatively

simple path to legal status for the estimated 11 million illegal migrants. Unauthorized foreigners in the United States on the date of enactment could register and pay fees to obtain a new Lawful Prospective Immigrant status that would allow them to live and work legally. After eight years, they could become immigrants by passing English and civics tests and paying more fees. The framework would also make it easier for foreigners who earn advanced degrees in science and engineering from U.S. universities to become immigrants, and would create a new guest worker program that would allow low-skilled foreigners to work in the United States for six years and become legal immigrants if they satisfied integration requirements such as learning English.

A Nation of Immigrants Unsure About Immigration

The United States is a nation of immigrants unsure about immigration in the 21st century. The UN estimates that 214 million people lived outside their country of citizenship in 2010—3 percent of the world's population are international migrants—and the United States has about 20 percent of the world's migrants. There is widespread agreement that the U.S. immigration system is “broken”—nearly 30 percent of foreign-

born residents are unauthorized and drug-related violence and death is widespread on the Mexico-U.S. border. But there is little agreement on how to fix the system. How should the U.S. government prevent illegal migration? What hurdles should unauthorized foreigners have to overcome before they can become legal U.S. immigrants? Should new guest worker programs make it easier for employers to hire migrant workers?

Interest groups from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to the AFL-CIO, and from La Raza to the Catholic Church, favor comprehensive immigration reform but disagree on vital details that range from exactly how to keep unauthorized workers from getting jobs to how many additional guest workers should be admitted. States and cities are complicating matters by entering the fray; some enact sanctuary laws prohibiting police from asking about immigration status, while others require police to check immigration status.

Meanwhile, the status quo, though generally deplored, continues in part because the economic actors most directly affected—unauthorized workers and their employers—are generally getting what they want. Migrant workers earn more than they could at home, and their employers pay lower wages than if immigration were more effectively controlled.

References

- 1 The U.S. Department of Homeland Security reported 1.1 million immigrants and 36.2 million nonimmigrants in 2009, excluding Canadian and Mexican border crossers. There were 724,000 apprehensions in 2008, almost all along the Mexico-U.S. border.
- 2 For a review of the debate, see http://migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/more.php?id=3433_0_2_0.
- 3 According to the UN, immigrants make up 11 percent of France's population and 11 percent in the UK, while they make up 21 percent of Canada's population and 22 percent of Australia's.
- 4 These projections assume that net international migration will be 975,000 a year between 2010 and 2050 (www.census.gov/population/www/projections/2009cnmsSumTabs.html).
- 5 James Smith and Barry Edmonston, eds., *The New Americans: Economic, Demographic, and Fiscal Effects of Immigration* (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 1997).
- 6 David Card, “The Impact of the Mariel Boatlift on the Miami Labor Market,” *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 43, no. 2 (1990): 245-57.
- 7 George Borjas, “The Labor Demand Curve Is Downward Sloping,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 118, no. 4 (2003): 1335-74.
- 8 Giovanni Peri, “Economic Impacts of Migrants,” in *Migration in the 21st Century: Rights, Outcomes, and Policy*, ed. Kim Korinek and Thomas Maloney (New York: Routledge, 2010).
- 9 Roger Lowenstein, “The Immigration Equation,” *New York Times Magazine*, July 9, 2006.
- 10 However, immigrants cannot “save” Social Security unless their number rises each year. Social Security is a pay-as-you-go system, meaning that taxes paid by current workers support retirees. Immigrants earn benefits as they age, increasing the number of retirees who will receive Social Security benefits in the future.
- 11 According to the Pew Research Center, non-Hispanic whites cast 76.3 percent of the 2008 vote, blacks 12.1 percent, Latinos 7.4 percent, and Asian-Americans 2.5 percent (<http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1209/racial-ethnic-voters-presidential-election>).
- 12 Philip Martin, “Good Intentions Gone Awry: IRCA and U.S. Agriculture,” *The Annals of the Academy of Political and Social Science* 534 (1994): 44-57.
- 13 Foreigners convicted of U.S. felonies are normally denied immigrant visas.
- 14 Questions 34 and 35 on the Wall Street Journal/NBC poll May 6-10, 2010. Some 46 percent of all respondents strongly supported the Arizona law, while 58 percent of Latino respondents strongly opposed the law. Two-thirds of all adults, and 82 percent of Latinos, thought the Arizona law will lead to discrimination against legal Hispanics.