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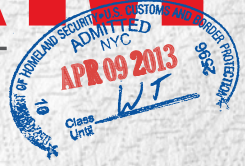
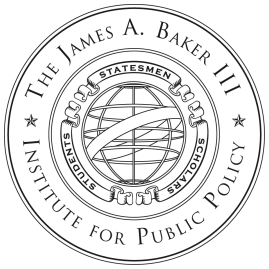
A SYSTEM FOR THE 21st CENTURY



U.S. Immigration, Demography, and Citizenship in a Digital Age

Jason Ackleson, Ph.D.



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U.S. Immigration, Demography, and Citizenship in a Digital Age

by

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Abstract

What role has immigration played in crafting the current demographic fabric of the United States? What will future flows of the foreign-born mean for the future makeup of the country? To what degree are new foreign-born arrivals to the United States becoming citizens, a key indicator of integration? What does citizenship mean for immigrants and the country in the digital age? Answers to these and other related questions are central to understand immigration policy reform in the United States. Blending public-use data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), this paper presents a snapshot of demographic profiles and trends among the foreign-born (immigrant) population in the United Sates. The paper also examines U.S. naturalization patterns as an indicator of civic integration of the foreign-born and discusses a set of barriers to naturalization within the framework of new scholarship on "digital citizenship." The paper concludes by exploring several of the key implications of these findings by sketching two divergent potential immigration and citizenship policy pathways.

Introduction

At its origins as a republic, immigration played a critical role in determining the demographic fabric of the United States. This is no less the case today: demographers predict the United States will have a minority-majority population by 2050.[1] A sizable segment of this population will be foreign-born or second-generation immigrants. American demographic change due to immigration, while remaining fairly constant in general terms, has always shifted in the particular: early waves of northern European immigrants gave way to southern Europeans, which in turn gave way to Latin Americans, notably many from Mexico. This trend appears to be changing yet again: contrary to popular perceptions, for example, the share of the foreign-born from Mexico migrating to the United States peaked in 2007 and has, in fact, declined marginally

[1] U.S. Census Bureau, "An Older and More Diverse Nation by Midcentury" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008).

in recent years.[2] New sending countries, many of which are in Asia, promise to again redefine the demographic fabric of the United States.

The political, socio-cultural, and economic implications of these demographic shifts are both highly complicated and critical for the nation's future. This is particularly the case during a period of intense policy debate about the future of the U.S. immigration system. Accordingly, to explore some of these dynamics, the paper begins by exploring selected research highlights on demography, immigration, and citizenship to paint a broad picture of the current profile of foreign-born individuals in the United States. "Foreign-born" is generally defined as those individuals who do not acquire U.S. citizenship at birth, and thus may include legal permanent residents (LPRs or "green card" holders), non-immigrants (such as temporary workers), the unauthorized, refugees/asylees, and others. In this regard, it is important to note that the term "foreign-born," as used in Census data, is not perfectly analogous to "immigrants," particularly as the latter refers in a legal sense to a broad category of individuals who seek permanent legal status benefits. Moreover, this paper does not consider the issue of unauthorized immigration per se. However, it should be noted that while the size of this population remains large—estimated at approximately 11.1 million (approximately 59 percent of whom are from Mexico)—the growth rate of this group (including among those born in Mexico) has dramatically slowed.[3] This is a trend that, if sustained, should amplify some of the implications outlined below—especially regarding the increased heterogeneity of the foreign-born population in the United States.

To explore these issues, the paper draws on several primary sources, notably publicly available data from the U.S. Census Bureau (primarily the Bureau's American Community Survey [ACS]) and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office of Immigration Statistics (OIS). Where appropriate, the paper presents secondary analysis of this data from immigration scholars and research institutes like the Pew Hispanic Center. The emphasis here is not on providing new tabulations of these data but rather offering a streamlined presentation of the key trends within it

[2] Jeffrey Passell, et al., "Net Migration from Mexico Falls to Zero—and Perhaps Less" (Washington, D.C.: Pew Hispanic Center, 2012).
[3] Michael Hoefer, Nancy Rytina, and Bryan Baker, "Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: January 2011," (Washington, D.C.: DHS Office of Immigration Statistics, 2012); see also Jeffrey Passel and D'Vera Cohn, "Unauthorized Immigrants: 11.1 Million in 2011," Pew Hispanic Center, December 6, 2012.

to set a the foundation for a conceptual and policy-focused discussion about citizenship and immigration reform.

The paper begins by providing a brief descriptive summary of the foreign-born in the United States at present, and analyzes a set of trends that have led up to the composition of the country's current immigrant communities and may continue to shape it in the medium to long term. The second section of the paper focuses on the issue of integration of the foreign-born, which is understood here to be largely represented by the acquisition of citizenship through the naturalization of immigrants (LPRs). Data describing the naturalization patterns of select LPR populations is presented, with a particular focus on the largest foreign-born group of LPRs: individuals from Mexico. With these patterns in mind, the third section of the paper moves on to explore trends and barriers to citizenship. The conclusion of the paper considers these trends within the framework of new scholarship on "digital citizenship." And, with an eye toward contemporary debates on U.S. immigration policy reform, the conclusion also sketches out two additional components: (1) future policy scenarios for immigration and citizenship policy in the United States; and (2) research needs required to support reform and bolster our understanding of demography, immigration, and citizenship in 21st century America.

Research Highlights on Demography, Immigration, and Citizenship

The Foreign-born in the United States: Overall Numbers and Share of Population

The most authoritative source for estimates of the size of immigrant communities in the United States is U.S. Census Bureau data on the foreign-born population, primarily collected from the American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS is a regular, monthly sample used to create annual data for certain geographic areas traditionally sampled using an extended decennial Census form. Overall, the 2011 ACS indicates approximately 40.3 million foreign-born individuals were resident in the United States; this is approximately 12.9 percent of the total U.S. population.[4] Growth in this population was particularly sharp between 1990 and 2000, with 11.3

[4] U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

million new foreign-born individuals, which, as the Census Bureau notes, is "the largest numeric increase of any decade in U.S. history."[5]

The current percentage of foreign born (relative to the overall U.S. population) is high, but not at record levels: historical Census data suggests that the percentage of foreign born peaked around 1890, at 14.8 percent of the U.S. population. Nevertheless, as a percentage of the total population, the trend for the foreign born since the 1980s has been markedly upward; as the Migration Policy Institute reports, in the 1990s, the expansion of the U.S. immigrant population was twice as high as it was during the 2000s (see Table 1 and Figure 1).[6] This population growth rate, however, has leveled off in recent years: recent analysis and revision of Census data conducted by the Pew Hispanic Center confirms growth of the immigrant population between 2009 and 2011 was relatively limited (approximately 2 percent).[7]

Table 1. The Foreign-born: Percentage Share of the U.S. Population

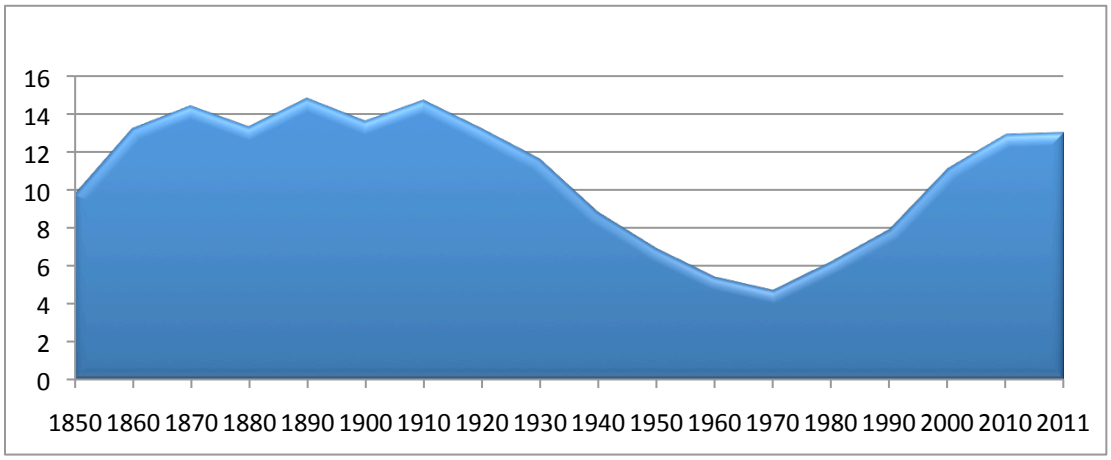
1850	9.7%	1910	14.7%	1970	4.7%
1860	13.2%	1920	13.2%	1980	6.2%
1870	14.4%	1930	11.6%	1990	7.9%
1880	13.3%	1940	8.8%	2000	11.1%
1890	14.8%	1950	6.9%	2010	12.9%
1900	13.6%	1960	5.4%	2011	13.0%

Sources: U.S. Census, 2000 and 2010; American Community Survey (ACS), March Supplements.

[5] Elizabeth M. Greico, et al ,"The Foreign-Born Population in the United States: 2010" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012), 12.
[6] Migration Policy Institute, "Immigrant-Origin Countries and Numbers of U.S. Immigrants, New Green Card Holders, and U.S. Citizens," (Washington, D.C.: Migration Policy Institute), November 8, 2012.
[7] Jeffrey Passel and D'Vera Cohn, "U.S. Foreign-Born Population: How Much Change from 2009 to 2010?" (Washington, D.C.: Pew Hispanic Center, 2012).

Represented graphically, the peaks and valleys of this population flow become quite apparent over time:

Figure 1. The Foreign-born: Percentage Share of the U.S. Population



Sources: U.S. Census, 2000 and 2010; American Community Survey (ACS), March Supplements.

Despite this recent trend of stable (or more limited) growth among this population, the available data still makes it clear that immigration has—and will continue to—remain a very important factor in driving the size and composition of the overall U.S. population. This will likely be the case even if the relative foreign-born share of the U.S. population continues to stabilize, or even drop (as may be possible should current trends sustain themselves).

The absolute flow of the foreign-born legally admitted to the United States is, of course, dependent on the parameters of U.S. immigration policy. As will be discussed in the conclusion of this paper, different policy scenarios may impact the size of this flow, as well as its character. To better understand how, the following section explores some highlights about the current profile of the foreign-born in the U.S., as represented demographically.

The Foreign-born in the United States: Demographic Snapshots

The demographic and geographic dimensions that characterize the immigrant or foreign-born population in the United States are constantly in flux. To describe these dimensions at a broad level and at discrete moments in time, the U.S. government collects limited survey-based data that describes certain categories of the foreign-born, including country of origin, age, geography,

economic status, and several other variables. While a full review of these demographic features is beyond the scope of this paper (and is available elsewhere),[8] snapshots of several key variables—specifically country of origin, age, and geography—are provided at a high level of description for the analysis that follows. This sets the stage for a discussion of key demographic variables impacting the questions that drive the balance of the paper, namely how patterns of immigration impact citizenship, integration, and the basis for potential policy change.

Specifically, this section examines select highlights of country-of-origin changes that have occurred over the past 10 years, using base Census data and tabulations thereof provided by the Pew Hispanic Center.[9] A note of caution on the data that follows, however, is Perez and Hirschman's notion that "the boundaries between racial and ethnic groups are becoming blurred by high rates of intermarriage and the growing number of persons with mixed ancestry."[10] Indeed, issues with Census data on matters of race and ethnicity are a known challenge.[11] Thus, while we can characterize the foreign-born demographically in fairly broad strokes, the fine detail on the picture often remains undefined and complex—and this is an area, as the conclusion of the paper notes, which requires additional research investment.

Country of Origin

U.S. Census data includes region of birth for those identifying themselves as foreign-born. A compilation of this data over the longer term is provided in an October 2012 paper published by the Census Bureau that describes the foreign-born population from 1960-2010.[12] Over this period, the paper identifies and traces the distribution of region of origin among the foreign-born.

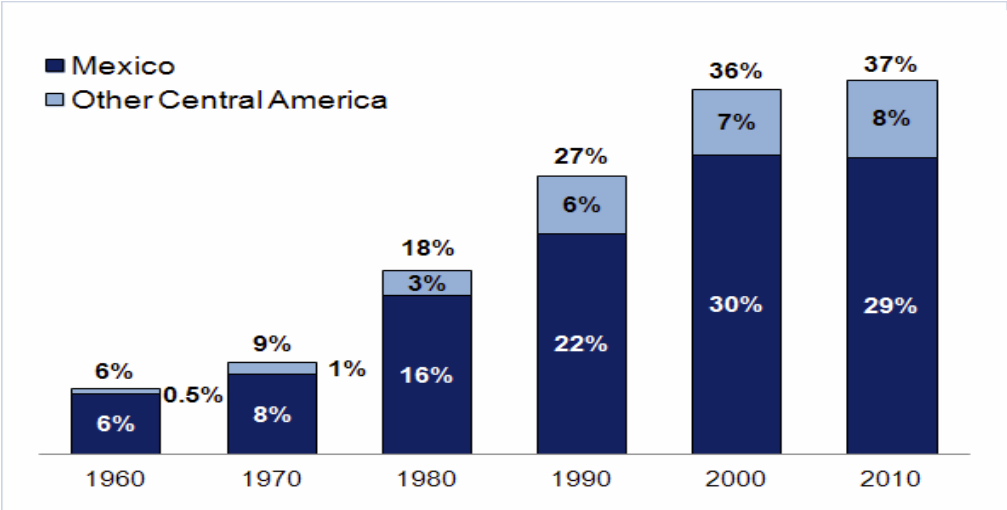
The data makes two shifts clear: first, that the absolute number of foreign-born by region of origin has shifted and second, that the relative distribution of the foreign-born by region of origin

[8] See, for example, Eileen Patten, "Statistical Portrait of the Foreign-Born Population in the United States 2010," Pew Hispanic Center, February 21, 2012.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Anthony Daniel Perez and Charles Hirschman, "The Changing Racial and Ethnic Composition of the U.S. Population: Emerging American Identities," *Population and Development Review* 35, no. 1 (2009): 1–51.
[11] Charles Hirschman, Richard Alba, and Reynolds Farley, "The Meaning and Measurement of Race in the U.S. Census: Glimpses into the Future," *Demography* 37, no. 3 (2000): 381-393.
[12] Elizabeth M. Grieco, et al., "The Size, Place of Birth, and Geographic Distribution of the Foreign-Born Population in the United States: 1960 to 2010," Population Division Working Paper No. 96 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012).

has altered. Specifically, recent waves of immigration indicate the growth of Latin American and Asian-born populations, relative to past trends centered on sending countries in Europe. In fact, the share of the foreign-born from Europe has declined markedly, from 75 percent in 1960 to approximately 12 percent in 2010. Foreign-born groups from Latin America (as a region) have increased their share of the foreign-born population from 9.4 percent in 1960 to 53.1 percent in 2010. Asian-region origin populations have shown similar growth patterns. According to 2011 ACS estimates, the top countries of origin, following Mexico, are China (5 percent), India (5 percent), and the Philippines (4 percent), with Vietnam, El Salvador, Cuba, and Korea each approximately 3 percent of the foreign-born in the United States.

When one extracts the largest subset of the foreign-born responsible for the high growth rates—those from Central America and Mexico—a set of interesting observations can be made. As Figure 2 illustrates, the share of the overall foreign-born from both Mexico and Central America has dramatically increased from 1996-2010:

Figure 2. Percentage of the Foreign-born Population from Mexico and Other Central America: 1960 to 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 ACS.

More Recent Trends: 2000-2010

Drilling down into the more recent data from 2000-2010, Table 2 elucidates an interesting set of trends in changes among county of origin:

Table 2. Change in the Foreign-born Population, by Region of Birth

	2010 population	2000 population	Change, 2000-2010	Percent change, 2000-2010	Share of total change (%)
Mexico	11,746,539	9,163,463	2,583,076	28.2	29.4
South and East Asia	9,930,118	7,195,764	2,734,354	38.0	31.1
Caribbean	3,730,817	2,954,820	775,997	26.3	8.8
Central America	3,007,288	2,029,383	977,905	48.2	11.1
South America	2,739,594	1,920,007	819,587	42.7	9.3
Middle East	1,421,063	1,137,898	283,165	24.9	3.2
All other	7,341,456	6,732,146	609,310	9.1	6.9
Total	39,916,875	31,133,481	8,783,394	28.2	100.0

Source: Pew Hispanic Center; tabulations of 2000 Census and 2010 ACS.

Among the more notable data points in this table is the growth of the Mexican-born population, which has slowed relative to other groups and in relation to trends since 1960 (as represented in Figure 2). While Mexican-born immigrants still represent the largest share of the foreign-born in the U.S. at approximately 29 percent of the nearly 40 million foreign-born, more recently their share has stabilized and even declined relative to other national groups. For example, Mexicans who arrived before 2005 were 30.4 percent of the total foreign-born population. Mexicans that arrived from 2005 to 2007 were 28 percent of the total foreign-born population, and Mexicans

that arrived in 2008 or later were only 19 percent of the total foreign-born population. A shift (in relative terms) away from Mexico and toward Central America and Asia is clear.

Age

Today's foreign-born population in the United States bears the mark of relative youth. While the native-born population's median age is 46, the foreign-born median age is 41.4 years.[13] The age distribution of the foreign-born is decidedly centered on those between 18 and 44 (50 percent); 80 percent of the foreign-born are between 18 and 64.[14] When age is cross-tabulated with region of origin data, strong patterns of relative youth emerge in the newer foreign-born populations (from Latin America and Asia), relative to the foreign-born from past traditional sending regions, such as Europe.

The New Geography of Immigration

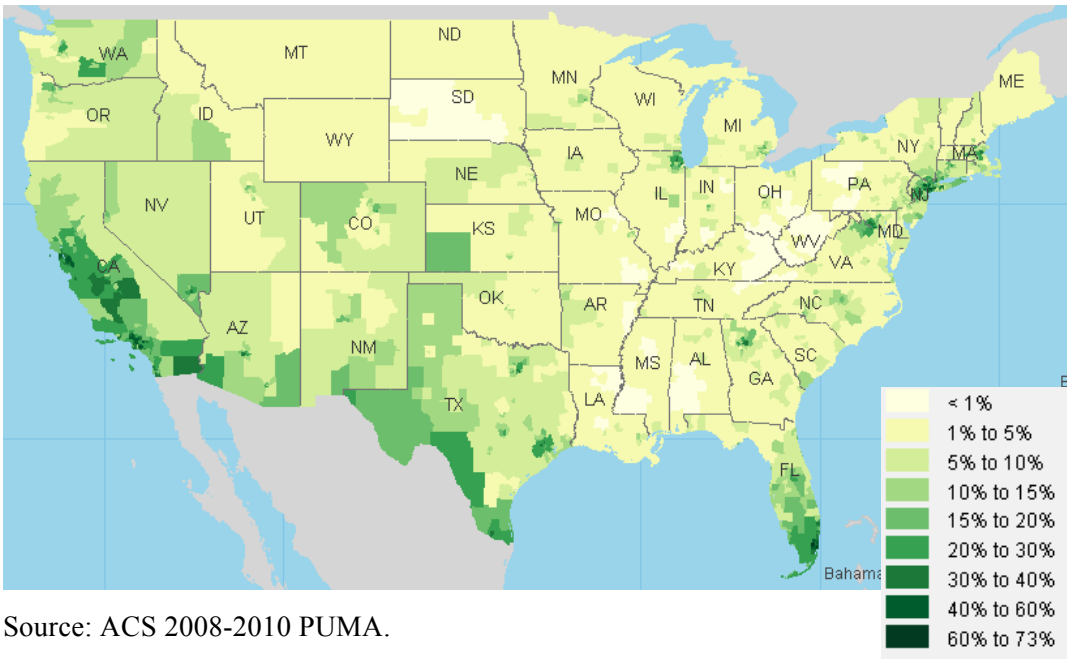
Empirical evidence validates the widespread anecdotal and media reports about changes in the geographic distribution of immigrant populations across the United States in recent years. Scholars such as Massey and Zúñiga, among others, have documented and analyzed the new geographic patterns of immigration settlement in the United States.[15] Their work, combined with primary Census data, makes clear the fact that while the absolute number of immigrant populations in each region or state of the country has shifted, so too has the demography of foreign-born populations within these geographic locations.

Specifically, Census data reveals that the foreign-born are distributed widely throughout the United States while also being clustered in key geographic locales (see Figure 3). Many of these are traditional destinations for immigrants (for instance, the U.S.-Mexico border states and New York) while others (Kansas, North Carolina, and others) are relatively new hosts to the foreign-

[13] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (2011); Elizabeth M. Greico et al ,"The Foreign-Born Population in the United States: 2010" (Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012).
[14] Greico, et al., "The Foreign-Born Population in the United States." As the authors note, in more recent years, the median age of the foreign-born has increased slightly (in 2000, it was 40 and 2010, 41.4). This may be due to the relative decrease of foreign-born immigrants from Mexico and other Latin American states, relative to other sending countries, which tend to have older foreign-born immigrants.
[15] Victor Zúñiga and Rubén Hernández-León, eds., *New Destinations: Mexican Immigration in the United States* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2005); Douglas Massey, ed., *New Faces in New Places: The Changing Geography of American Immigration* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2008).

born, relative to past Census enumerations that reflected a much smaller percentage of foreign-born in these state's population.

Figure 3. U.S. Counties by Foreign-born Population



Source: ACS 2008-2010 PUMA.

The key point to be drawn from this snapshot is that immigrants are increasingly settling in nontraditional localities. This fact poses a variety of economic and socio-cultural issues, especially regarding immigrant integration and the receptivity of immigrants among native-born community members. Immigrants may have unique challenges, or possibly even advantages, in nontraditional areas of the country regarding civic participation compared with those in traditional gateway communities. This trend also has a set of key political implications, as new immigrant communities alter the electoral picture in many states.

Other Socio-Economic Issues: High Speed Internet Access and Language Proficiency

Numerous Census data and secondary analyses describe the education, occupation, economic status, and other demographic features of America's immigrant populations. A review of this data is beyond the scope of this paper. However, two key socio-economic variables thart are of particular interest here as they pertain to communities with high numbers of the foreign-born are high-speed Internet access and English-language proficiency. That is because these two

variables, the paper argues, are particularly important in helping to explain immigrant integration outcomes as well as being central to the full realization of American citizenship (both in terms of representation and economic opportunity) in a digital age. Addressing gaps in Internet access and language proficiency are key elements in one of the policy trajectories sketched out in the conclusion of this paper.

Internet Access

Information technology (IT) is widely recognized as a key driver of economic growth and opportunity. IT is responsible for much of the productivity growth in the United States since 1990s; future economic growth and investment is likely not only across "new" IT enterprises but also through IT deployment across "old" economy sectors such as manufacturing.[16] The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects growth rates for all occupational categories. Those occupations requiring IT skill levels will be among the fastest growing over the next decade, expanding at rates that exceed the average rate of all U.S. industrial sectors. Moreover, as the conclusion of the paper argues, access to IT resources such as high-speed Internet services, is crucial to effective "digital citizenship."

Overall rates of Internet access continue to rise in the United States. According to research by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, while 81 percent of American adults use the Internet—a rate that has risen significantly in the last 10 years—significant gaps in Internet access remain among certain population groups, including the foreign-born. Among foreign-born Latinos, for example, only 51 percent use the Internet and only 45 percent have a home Internet connection (rates that are dramatically below native-born Latinos, which are 70 percent or higher).[17] Of the Mexican-born population, less than half have Internet access at home.[18]

An often interrelated set of variables (Table 3) helps explain the likelihood of an IT access barrier. These include income, education, language, geography, and foreign-born status.

[16] Karen Mossberger, et al., *Digital Citizenship: The Internet, Society, and Participation* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2008).
[17] Pew Research Center, "Latinos and Digital Technology," (Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Center, 2010); Gretchen Livingston, "The Latino Digital Divide: The Native Born versus the Foreign-born," (Washington, D.C.: Pew Hispanic Center, 2010).
[18] U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey 2010.

Table 3. Barriers to High-speed Internet Access for Immigrants

Income	Many new immigrants are in low-income brackets, which positively correlates with low Internet access and use. Trend data indicates that in the next five years, the income gap in Internet access will narrow but not be entirely eliminated.[19]
Education	A large portion of the foreign-born have a high school education or less, making Internet usage a high hurdle.
Language	Limited English Proficiency (LEP) is correlated with less Internet access and use.
Geography	Many immigrants reside in areas where high-speed broadband access is still limited.
Country of Origin	Across nationalities, data indicates an increase in access and usage. However, up to 28 percent of recent family-based and employment-based immigration benefit petitioners are from countries where historically there are few home PCs or PCs with Internet access.[20]

Sources: U.S. Census Current Population Survey (2010); Pew Research Center Internet and American Life Survey (2010); U.S. Department of Commerce National Telecommunications and information Administration "Digital Nation" Project (2011).

Even if Internet access is available, fluency and use of the technology is not guaranteed: research indicates that due to limited language skills and different cultural experiences, Internet experience does not directly translate into confidence in one's public "e-government" skills, such as applying for social service or immigration benefits online.

Language Proficiency

English-language proficiency is a persistent integration challenge for a significant share of the immigrant community in the United States. Foreign-born individuals who are not fluent in English may struggle with myriad integration issues as they have difficulties communicating

[19] Kevin Hassett and Robert Shapiro, "Towards Universal Broadband: Flexible Broadband Pricing and the Digital Divide," Georgetown Center for Business and Public Policy, 2009.
[20] U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), 2003 and 2010.

with employers, neighbors, health care providers, law enforcement officials, landlords, teachers, and others.

The data on language proficiency among the foreign-born is primarily available through national survey projects (such as the 2007-2009 American Community Survey [ACS] three-year estimates reported here). Note, however, that in the ACS, language ability is a self-reported item and thus may or may not accurately reflect actual proficiency levels. Moreover, the ACS explores language proficiency only through categories or levels such as speaks "only English," speaks English "very well," speaks "well," speaks "not well," or does not "speak at all." This structure makes determining an accurate estimate of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations among immigrant communities challenging.

Using Census data, a 2011 Migration Policy Institute analysis suggested that "LEP individuals accounted for 25.2 million or 9 percent of the U.S. population over age 5."[21] ACS data also suggests that the LEP population is growing in both absolute and relative numbers: the estimated LEP population grew by approximately 80 percent between 1990 and 2010.[22] As Ortman and Shin report: "The number of people 5 and older who spoke a language other than English at home has more than doubled in the last three decades and at a pace four times greater than the nation's population growth."[23] When combining the key categories of the ACS data that connote LEP status, among the approximately 17 million foreign-born who spoke language other than English at home, over half (8.6 million) spoke English not well or not at all. [24] Among Spanish speakers, the numbers are starker: of approximately 11 million foreign-born whose first language is Spanish, 7 million (62 percent) speak English "not well" or "not at all."

[21] Chhandasi Pandya, Margie McHugh, and Jeanne Batalova, "Limited English Proficient Individuals in the United States: Number, Share, Growth, and Linguistic Diversity," (Washington, D.C.: Migration Policy Institute, 2011), 1.
[22] Pandya, et al., "Limited English Proficient Individuals in the United States," 3. See also Hiroshi Ono and Madeline Zavodny, "Immigrants, English Ability and the Digital Divide," *Social Forces* 86 no. 4 (2008): 1455-1479.
[23] Hyon B. Shin and Robert A. Kominski, "Language Use in the United States: 2007 American Community Survey Reports" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010), 1.
[24] U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2009 American Community Survey. See also Shin and. Kominski, "Language Use in the United States."

As the LEP population grows, so too does linguistic diversity (i.e., the heterogeneity of languages spoken in the United States). And while linguistic diversity is projected to continue, "English is expected to continue to be the only language spoken by a substantial majority of all U.S. residents 5 years and over"—reinforcing its role as the gateway language to economic and cultural integration. [25]

Implications

It is important to note that analyses of the foreign-born based on Census data are conditioned by definitional challenges (as noted above) as well as survey limitations. With this caveat in mind, the above documented trends make several things clear about immigration to the United States in the early 21st century. First, immigration will continue to play a vital role in shaping the demographic future of the United States. As Greico makes clear, the impact on population growth alone due to the growth of the foreign-born (and their children) is significant: "over one-third of the growth in the total population of the United States between 1970 and 2010 was due to the increase in the foreign-born population and their native-born children."[26] While fertility rates are generally on the decline, this trend can reasonably be expected to be sustained. Second, the diversity of the foreign-born population continues to shift: we are experiencing a change in the flow from major sending countries as increasing heterogeneity in the country's immigrant communities (and languages) emerges. These immigrants retain a youthful profile, important for labor market and entitlement policy discussions. Third, the foreign-born appear to be settling increasingly in non-traditional localities, posing important questions about their reception and integration. Finally, while the data is incomplete, significant gaps in broadband Internet access and language proficiency appear to pose socio-economic challenges in some foreign-born populations. When these two challenges are combined in one group—i.e., the foreign-born who are LEP and do not have Internet access or technological fluency—especially significant socio-economic and political barriers exist. Taken together, these implications have a direct bearing on immigrant integration, an issue explored in the next section of this paper.

[25] Hyon Shin and Jennifer Ortman, "Language Projections: 2010-2020," (paper presented at Federal Forecasters Conference, Washington, D.C., April 21, 2011).
[26] Greico, et al, "The Size, Place of Birth, and Geographic Distribution of the Foreign-Born Population in the United States," 16.

The Integration of the Foreign-born: Toward Citizenship

A full review of the literature on immigrant integration is beyond the scope of this paper. However, on a broad and basic conceptual level, Brown and Bean's formulation of immigrant integration as a process by which the characteristics of immigrants and host societies come to resemble one another is a good general starting point.[27] Other scholars have examined the integration process and prepared models that explore a set of demographic, economic, behavioral, socio-cultural, and other variables to explain integration outcomes.[28]

For this paper's purposes, civic integration—the process of educated engagement and participation as a U.S. citizen—is the primary integration component of interest. This is because the U.S. currently lacks a broad federal immigrant integration policy beyond the promotion of naturalization. Indeed, integration has been largely understood, at the federal level at least, as tantamount to citizenship—and has accordingly been fostered mainly through the promotion of naturalization. While certain programs to promote English and American culture were initiated as the naturalization process became standardized and federalized in the early 20th century, most programs were eventually discontinued. This has left federal policy centered on the naturalization process itself and the conduct of naturalization ceremonies that convey citizenship.

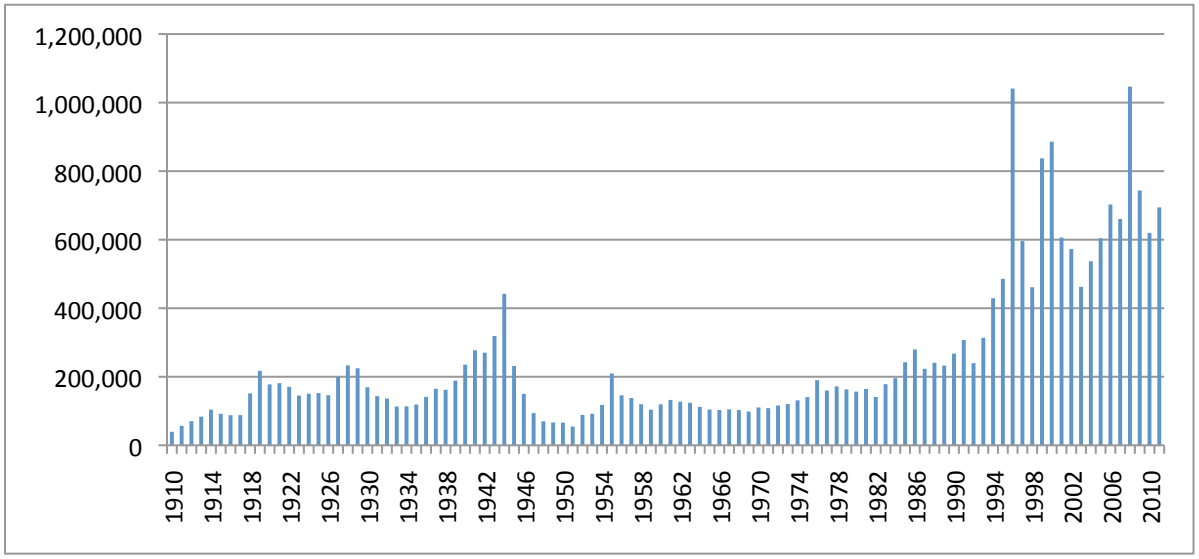
Naturalization represents perhaps the strongest indicator of civic integration and also is often correlated with higher levels of educational, economic, and social success for the foreign-born; it may "be considered a measure of assimilation and adaptation in the United States."[29] As Sumption and Flamm put it, citizenship provides a "premium" to immigrants, bolstering their

[27] Susan Brown and Frank Bean, "Assimilation Models, Old and New: Explaining a Long-Term Process," (Washington, D.C.: Migration Policy Institute, 2006).
[28] See, for instance, work by Barry Chiswick and P.W. Miller, "Immigrant Earnings, Language Skills, Linguistic Concentrations and Business Cycle," *Population Economics* 15 (2002): 31-57; George Borjas, *Heaven's Door: Immigration Policy and the American Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Guillermina Jasso, et al., "The New Immigrant Survey Pilot: Overview and New Findings about U.S. Legal Immigrants at Admission," *Demography* 37 (2000): 127-138; Irene Bloemraad, "Citizenship and Immigration: A Current Review," *Journal of Immigration and Integration* 1, no. 1 (2000): 9-37; Richard Alba and V. Nee, "Rethinking Assimilation Theory for a New Era of Immigration," *International Migration Review* 31, no. 4 (1997): 826-874; Alejandro Portes and J. Borocz, "Contemporary Immigration: Theoretical Perspectives on its Determinants and Modes of Incorporation," *International Migration Review* 37 no. 3 (874-892); Karen Woodrow-Lafeld," Assessing Immigrant Naturalization: Longitudinal Research, Findings, and Challenges," Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology Meeting (2009).
[29] Bryan Baker, "Trends in Naturalization Rates" (Washington, D.C.: DHS Office of Immigration Statistics, 2007), 1.

chances of stronger economic, social, cultural, and political outcomes in their new country.[30] Indeed, citizenship continues to be seen by many U.S. policymakers as important for political, civic, social, and economic integration, and as Young has persuasively argued in a broader, more theoretical sense, citizenship signals important and universal relationships of equality between all members of the political community.[31]

Consider the legal representation of citizenship as the administrative conveyance of naturalization. The rate of naturalizations in the U.S. has oscillated over time, but expanded dramatically in the later half of the 20th century, when larger immigrant inflows became a reality, partly due to reconfigurations in U.S. immigration policy. Figure 4 depicts this pattern by presenting U.S. naturalization rates from 1910 (an early bookend for consistent federal records) to 2011:

Figure 4. U.S. Naturalizations, 1910-2011



Source: DHS Office of Immigration Statistics, Yearbook of Immigration Statistics (various years).

[30] Madeleine Sumption and Sarah Flamm, "The Economic Value of Citizenship for Immigrants in the United States," (Washington, D.C.: Migration Policy Institute, 2012).
[31] Iris Marion Young, "Polity and Group Difference: A Critique of the Ideal of Universal Citizenship," *Ethics* 99, no. 2 (1989): 250-274.

Many scholars have done important work on explaining trends in these flows.[32] Passel, for instance, points to a set of variables that can predict the odds of naturalizing, including time in the U.S.; gender; education levels; the availability of "dual" citizenship, legal and rights; age; political climate; and country of origin. In addition, Internet access and English proficiency appear to be other key variables associated with the propensity to naturalize. Conversely, these variables suggest representation challenges for those immigrants who do not naturalize.

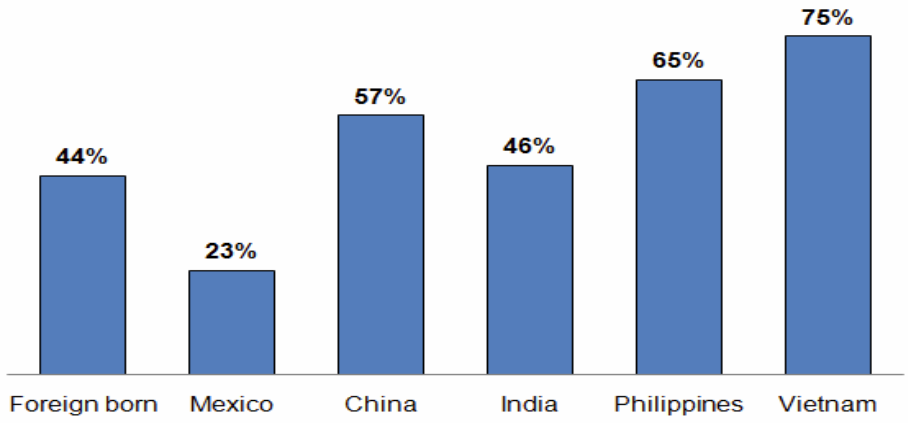
Despite the relatively large absolute number of naturalizations in the U.S.—reaching over 1 million in 2008, for example—there is still a sizable population of LPRs in the country who are eligible to naturalize, but who have not: 8.1 million LPRs (out of a total LPR population of 12.6 million) were eligible to naturalize in 2010.[33] The naturalization rate of the United States falls below other similar English-speaking immigrant destination countries, such as the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia, where up to 80 percent of eligible (comparable) populations tend to naturalize.[34]

Naturalization Rates for Key Subgroups

Even within the group of eligible LPRs who do not naturalize, significant differences by country of birth emerge. As Figure 5 illustrates, certain Asian-region origin LPRs, such as those from Vietnam and the Philippines, naturalize at higher rates than others.

[32] Jeffrey Passel, "Growing Share of Immigrants Choosing Naturalization" (Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Hispanic Center, 2007). See also Scott Bittle and Jonathan Roch, *A Place to Call Home: What Immigrants Say Now about Life in America* (New York: Carnegie Corporation, 2009).
[33] Nancy Rytina, "Estimates of the Legal Permanent Resident Population in 2010" (DHS: Office of Immigration Statistics, October 2012).
[34] Sumption and Flamm, "The Economic Value of Citizenship," 3.

Figure 5. Percentage of the Foreign-born Population Who are Naturalized Citizens by Country of Birth: 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2010).

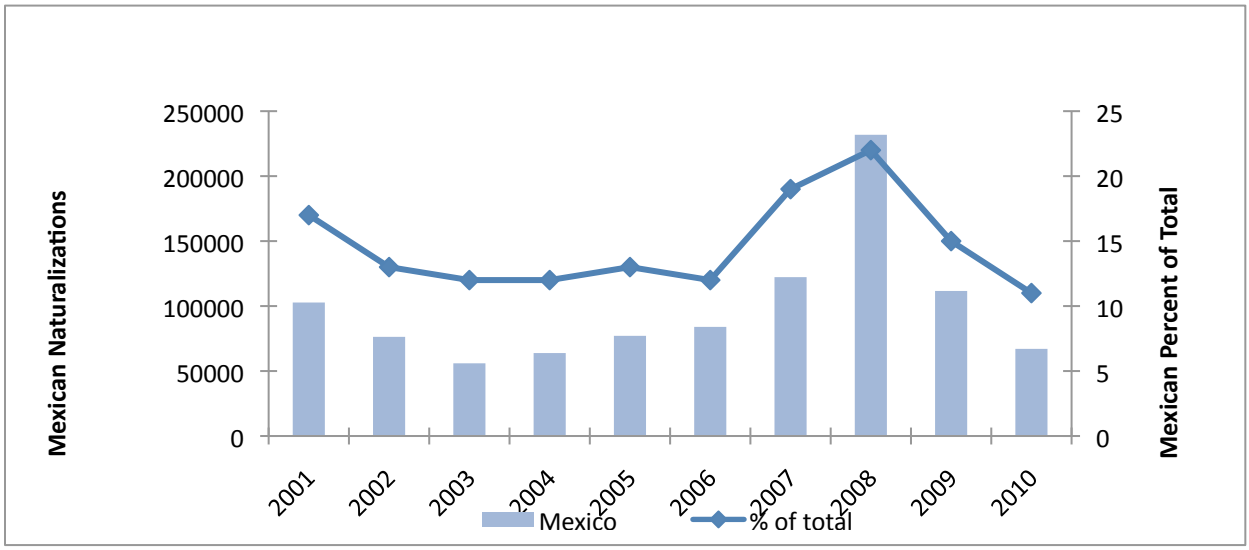
Notably, while their share of the overall foreign-born population is the largest, Latin American-born LPRs naturalize at a significantly lower rate than others: according to recent Pew Hispanic Center analysis, the naturalization rate among legal immigrants from Latin America and the Caribbean trails that of other legal immigrants by a sizable margin—49 percent versus 72 percent."[35]

The Mexican-born population is, in relative terms, especially less likely to naturalize: from 2008 to 2010, Mexican naturalizations decreased from 23 percent to 13 percent of total naturalizations. In a 2007 analysis, DHS's Office of Immigration Statistics concluded that "the comparison of 10-year naturalization rates to cumulative rates reveals that Mexican LPRs were slower to naturalize than European or Asian LPRs."[36]

[35] Paul Taylor, et al., "An Awakened Giant: The Hispanic Electorate Is Likely to Double by 2030," (Washington, D.C.: Pew Hispanic Center, November 14, 2012).
[36] Baker, "Trends in Naturalization Rates," 2.

These trends are illustrated in Figure 6:

Figure 6. Mexican Naturalizations as a Percent of Total Naturalizations



Source: DHS Office of Immigration Statistics, Yearbook of Immigration Statistics (2010).

These gaps, in both the specific instance for certain country-of-origin populations as well as in the general rate of uptake in naturalization, pose important conceptual and policy questions. For instance, do they reflect larger challenges to the traditional models of citizenship—such as increased global mobility, migration, identity shifts, group representation, or changes in territoriality—or increasing mistrust of traditional political institutions? Alternatively, do naturalization decisions rest less on the meanings of citizenship and instead primarily on pragmatic reasons (such the time required, the naturalization test, or the cost to petition)? A variety of hypotheses exist. Passell, for instance, found that immigrants who travel back and forth to the U.S. from nearby countries have lower rates of naturalization.[37] Others have pointed to barriers such as language access, naturalization fees, income, and other variables as explaining these gaps.[38] However, in general we do not yet have adequate empirical data, such as a nationally representative survey of LPRs, to fully explain these gaps.

[37] Jeff Passell, "Growing Share of Immigrants Choosing Naturalization," (Washington, D.C:. Pew Hispanic Center, 2007).
[38] See, for example, Richard Ramirez and Olga Medina, *Catalysts and Barriers to Attaining Citizenship* (Washington, D.C.: National Council of La Raza, 2010); Claire Bergeron and Jeremy Banks, "Behind the Naturalization Backlog: Causes, Context, and Concerns" (Washington, D.C.: Migration Policy Institute, 2008); Sumption and Flamm, "The Economic Value of Citizenship," 2012.

Thus, while a full exploration of these questions is beyond the scope of this paper, the key point is that gaps in naturalization rates, especially among key immigrant groups, remain an important barrier to fuller integration of immigrants in the United States. When this fact is coupled with other factors, such as the high undocumented population currently resident in the U.S. or deficits in resources for certain foreign-born populations (such as limited English proficiency and access to high speed Internet resources), the goal of fully realizing engaged citizens is put at risk.

Conclusion: Alternative Policy Paths in a World of "Digital" Citizenship

Consistent with traditional liberal views of citizenship and broad, inclusive social rights, T.H. Marshall's famously argued in 1949 that "citizenship is a status that is bestowed on those who are full members of a community."[39] In light of this important definition, the data presented in this paper make it clear that while the foreign-born in the United States are an increasingly diverse, youthful, geographically diffuse, and growing group, barriers to citizenship mean that a significant portion of their numbers remain less-than-full members of the (American) community and thus are at risk for being sub-optimally integrated.

With Marshall's notion in mind, this conclusion makes the case that while naturalization is a significant indicator and realization of integration and citizenship, two other interrelated resource issues—particularly deficits in digital and linguistic capital—remain problematic for key segments of the foreign-born population in the United States. Combined, these deficits pose an interdependent risk to both immigrants and the United States: they hamstring immigrants' ability to not only naturalize but also to achieve stronger social, economic, and political opportunities in a "digital age."

To explore this idea, consider the concept of "digital citizenship," the ability to regularly and actively participate in society online. The notion, as developed by Mossberger and others,

[39] T.H. Marshall, "Citizenship and Social Class," in Bryan Turner and Peter Hamilton, eds., *Citizenship: Critical Concepts* (London: Routledge, 1944).

includes two main components.[40] The first concerns "civic republicanism" or civic and political engagement—notably the ability to participate fully in society online in the information age. This idea developed as some scholars began to rethink the meaning of participation and civic engagement in a digital age where traditional notions of "citizenship as participation" (such as in as religious groups, associations, neighborhood groups, and other settings) have declined in favor of "virtual" engagement through online means and sources. This is not necessarily a deleterious trend: evidence exists that Internet use, for example, has positive political effects on matters such as voter turnout, feedback to elected officials and government agencies, issue awareness, and general political mobilization.[41] Online media is correlated with greater political knowledge and civic engagement. Civic republicanism as digital citizenship is also represented in the trend for governments to provide services online to increase public sector access, efficiency, and effectiveness. These "E-government" services (for instance, filing for social services online, or, as is currently underway, petitioning for immigration benefits online) have been growing for at least a decade. It seems clear that in the 21st century, civic republicanism—for both native-born individuals and immigrants—will increasingly be realized over a high-speed Internet connection.

The second component of digital citizenship involves a variant on liberalism, namely the ability to achieve equality of opportunity in an economy whose growth and productivity depends on ever-higher degrees of "digital capital," the skills and intellectual creativity required to work in a digital environment.[42] Globally, the Internet is estimated to have produced 21 percent of the GDP growth in mature economies from 2006-2011.[43] In the United States, IT is responsible for much of the economy's low-inflation development in the last 20 years; IT knowledge and skills are strongly correlated with higher wages, education levels, and greater job mobility.

[40] See Karen Mossberger, et al., *Digital Citizenship: The Internet, Society, and Participation* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008).
[41] Brian Krueger, "Assessing the Potential of Internet Political Participation in the United States: A Resource Approach," *American Politics Research* 30 (2002): 476-498; Bruce Bimber, "Information and Political Engagement in America: The Search for Effects of Information Technology at the Individual Level," *Political Research Quarterly* 54, no. 1 (2001): 53-67; John Clayton Thomas and Gregory Streib, "The New Face of Government: Citizen-Initiated Contacts in the Era of E-Government," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory,* No. 1 (2003): 83-102.
[42] Kevin J. Stiroh, "What Drives Productivity Growth?" *Economic Policy Review*, 7, no. 1 (March 2001).
[43] James Manyika and Charles Roxburgh, "The Great Transformer: The Impact of the Internet on Economic Growth and Prosperity," *McKinsely Global Institute* (October 2011).

Technological change has been demonstrated to impact wage disparities, especially between low- and high-skilled workers.[44]

As technology use accelerates in all sectors of the U.S. economy, "digital capital" will increasingly be a prerequisite for full digital citizenship. Indeed, the realization of digital citizenship, in both its civic and economic dimensions, requires the regular and effective use of technology resources. This, in turn, requires both digital capital and related-linguistic resources. However, because of the existing disparities in Internet access pointed out above, as well as persistent Limited English Proficiency challenges, disparities and divides remain among major segments of the immigrant community in America.

Toward the Future: Two Divergent Policy Paths

This discussion leads to at least two divergent paths for U.S. immigration policy, each with important implications. Manifestations of either approach are apparent in contemporary debates about policy reform and both offer starkly different outcomes.

Policy Pathway #1: Immigration and Citizenship Status Quo

The first pathway continues the immigration and citizenship policy status quo. This would, at least in the short- and medium-term, provide an increasingly diverse foreign-born population flow into the United States and would sustain at least some the trends about the foreign-born discussed in this paper. While flows from Mexico may stabilize, or even decline under this scenario, groups from emergent sending countries in Central America and Asia will likely increase (the long-term picture about these flows is less clear given declining fertility rates among immigrants).[45] Non-immigrant and immigrant admission policies would remain misaligned with many U.S. labor needs, particularly in a sharpened context of global competition for high-skilled labor. As status quo visa backlogs and limits persist, some of the foreign-born may increasingly turn to other competing destination counties, leaving the United States at a

[44] David Brauer and Susan Hickok, "Explaining the Growing Inequality in Wages Across Skill Levels," *Economic Policy Review* 1, no. 1 (1995): 1-15.

[45] The Pew Research Center recently reported that immigrant births in the U.S. fell from 102 per 1,000 women in 2007 to 87.8 per 1,000 women in 2012; the overall U.S. birthrate is at approximately 64 per 1,000 women, a rate below replacement level. See Gretchen Livingston and D'Vera Cohn, "U.S. Birth Rate Falls to Record Low; Decline is Greatest Among Immigrants" (Washington, DC: Pew Research on Social and Demographic Trends, 2012).

disadvantage in an increasingly competitive global economy driven by ever-higher skills. A major diversion of flows, coupled with high deportation rates, would potentially make the country less able to support its aging native population.

In this scenario, the approximately 11 million undocumented individuals in the United States would remain unauthorized, in limbo, and unable to realize citizenship and full integration in American society. In addition, the key segments of the foreign-born population without high speed Internet access, technological fluency, and sufficient English proficiency would continue to face an uncertain future, lagging behind in digital citizenship in both its civic and economic integration dimensions. Their exclusion from dominant digital and linguistic capital resources and opportunities, coupled with lower-than-ideal naturalization rates, would present significant economic, political, and social challenges to the United States.

Policy Pathway #2: Alternative Futures for Immigration and Citizenship

An alternative pathway offers a different vision: the U.S. undertakes a significant reform to its immigration policy to advance citizenship in a digital age. This path would include major changes in both immigrant and non-immigrant visa policies to better meet labor market needs at both the high and lower ends of the skill spectrum, thereby better matching skills and talents with demand and bolstering economic growth. The policy would continue the country's tradition of family reunification and reform non-immigrant programs that provide temporary labor. It would regularize the status of undocumented workers and extend a framework of citizenship to all eligible persons within U.S. borders. While illegality in the system cannot not be eliminated, it can at least be blunted in this scenario if reform also addresses backlogs and lags in the legal immigration system. This pathway's changes may also help provide a young labor force that can help support the country's growing elderly population (through, for instance, contributions to Social Security). The future demographic implications of this pathway are unknown but deserve exploration.

The alternative pathway would also involve a stronger national resource commitment designed to bolster digital and language capital resources for LPRs. This would potentially not only increase naturalization rates but also better optimize the chances that LPRs can achieve stronger

economic, social, and political success and integration in a largely service- and IT-driven American economy. And, as this paper points out, because some segments of the foreign-born are settling in nontraditional areas of the country—some of which lag behind on broadband Internet access—addressing digital capital gaps geographically may also reduce disenfranchisement and advance economic growth. This component of the alternative pathway would require bolstered national leadership and investment in legal and digital citizenship to advance key civic and economic integration goals. This alternative pathway offers the ability for newcomers to the United States to join as community members under a legal framework that applies to all.

Regardless of which of these two paths (or variants thereof) policymakers in Washington choose to follow, policymakers a better research foundation is required to bolster our understanding of demography, immigration, and citizenship in 21st century America. While the ACS and other Census sources provide the basis to tell rich stories of the foreign-born and their experiences in America in broad terms, they are limited in a number of ways, including the number and depth of questions on the immigrant experience that can be posed.[46] Scholarship on immigrant integration would benefit by a new effort to mount a large, nationally representative survey of LPRs that explore their naturalization decisions. Comparative analyses of integration outcomes by visa class, generation, country of origin, and other variables would be very useful to policymakers. A new focus on "digital citizenship," as well as evaluations of proven, innovative programs to address digital and linguistic capital deficits and promote integration would also be welcome. While some of this research may not be available in time to inform rapidly evolving policy debate, it will be critical to any implementation of immigration policy reform, either whole scale or confined to the margins.

[46] For example, no question on parental birthplace appears on the ACS; the inclusion of such an item would offer researchers important insights on the matter of generational immigration impacts.