

# MEASURING IMMIGRANT ASSIMILATION IN POST-RECESSION AMERICA

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This report is the fourth in a series of examinations of immigrant assimilation in the United States. It introduces evidence derived from the American Community Surveys of 2010 and 2011. This new information extends a database on the status of immigrants in the United States that goes back to 1900, and provides detailed information for the period since 1980. The new data provide a more complete picture of changes in the immigrant population occurring after the onset of the “Great Recession” in 2007.

The report uses the assimilation index, a summary measure of the degree of similarity or difference between the foreign- and native-born populations in the United States. The assimilation index is computed using three sets of factors: economic (including employment and education indicators), cultural (including English language ability and intermarriage), and civic (including citizenship and military service). The report provides information on a composite index incorporating all three sets of factors, and component indices examining one set each. The major findings are as follows:

- **The immigrant population has shifted dramatically since the recession.** Migration rates from Mexico have been very slow for the past five years, while rates from other parts of the world—notably Asia—have quickened.
- **Between 2006 and 2011, overall immigration from Asia has seen a net increase of 1.4 million people.** This includes major cohorts from mainland China and Vietnam as well as English-speaking countries such as India and the Philippines.
- **By 2011, the total number of Mexican immigrants and the total number of immigrants from all Asian countries were roughly equal.** In 2007, Mexican immigrants exceeded the number of Asian immigrants by 1.5 million.
- **Immigrants are now more assimilated, on average, than at any point since the 1980s.** The rise in assimilation can be attributed to this slowdown and shift in the arrival rate of new immigrants. The rise in assimilation has been most apparent along cultural and civic dimensions.
- **The immigrant population shows signs of recovering from the recession.** Economic assimilation declined as growth slowed, but has regained its pre-recession level.
- **Post-recession immigrants are more assimilated than those who arrived before the recession.** In general, more recently arrived immigrants tend to be less assimilated. In a stark reversal of this historical pattern, post-recession immigrants are more culturally and economically similar to natives than immigrants arriving as much as a decade earlier.
- **The bursting of the housing bubble played a role in increasing assimilation.** Metro areas with the largest increases in immigrant assimilation tend to be those that were most affected by the housing boom-and-bust cycle. The evaporation of easy mortgage credit and construction-related jobs likely reversed the flow of new immigrants to these areas.

The near disappearance of newly arrived, un-assimilated immigrants from American soil may help to explain why initiatives to reform immigration policy have gained traction this year. Since the colonial era, backlash against immigration has focused on cultural and economic differences between immigrants and natives; this report demonstrates that these differences are now less noticeable than they have been in a generation.

The report provides a complete set of assimilation index values for immigrants by country of origin and metropolitan area of residence.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Jacob Vigdor is an adjunct fellow at the Manhattan Institute, a professor of economics and public policy at Duke University's Sanford School of Public Policy, and a research associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research. He received a B.S. in policy analysis from Cornell University in 1994 and a Ph.D. in economics from Harvard University in 1999. His research interests are in the broad areas of education policy, immigration policy, housing policy, and political economy. Within those areas, he has published numerous scholarly articles on the topics of residential segregation, immigrant assimilation, housing affordability, the consequences of gentrification, the determinants of student achievement in elementary and secondary school, the causes and consequences of delinquent behavior among adolescents, teacher turnover, civic participation and voting patterns, and racial inequality in the labor market. These articles have been published in outlets such as *The Journal of Political Economy*, *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, *The Journal of Public Economics*, *The Journal of Human Resources*, and *The Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*. Vigdor has taught at Duke since 1999. His book on assimilation and immigration policy, *From Immigrants to Americans: The Rise and Fall of Fitting In*, published by Rowman and Littlefield in the fall of 2009, received the 2009 IPUMS research award for the best analysis of historical Census data.

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# MEASURING IMMIGRANT ASSIMILATION IN POST-RECESSION AMERICA

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Jacob L. Vigdor INTRODUCTION

The so-called “Great Recession” of 2007–09 occasioned a pause in migration to the United States. For the first time in at least a generation, the foreign-born population declined between 2007 and 2008. Since this temporary drop, immigration has resumed, albeit at a slower pace. Between 1990 and 2007, the foreign-born population increased by more than 1 million per year. Over the past five years, this rate has been cut in half. Nonetheless, Census Bureau statistics show that the foreign-born population has crossed a major milestone—the 40-million mark—for the first time in American history.

This report extends a series of prior studies of immigrant assimilation in the United States, using data collected by the Census Bureau in 2010 and 2011. For the purposes of this report, assimilation is defined as a process whereby the distinctions between foreign- and native-born residents of the United States become less noticeable as foreigners spend more time in the country. The report’s main indicator, the Assimilation Index, summarizes the state of this process at a given point in time. The index factors in a range of economic, civic, and cultural indicators. It can be computed for the foreign-born population as a whole, for individual immigrant groups, for migrants living in particular regions of the United States, and for immigrants who have spent a fixed amount of time in this country. The index can be computed using only one set of indicators—economic, civic, or cultural—or all three simultaneously.



Complete technical details regarding the computation of the assimilation index can be found in earlier reports.<sup>1</sup> The methodology remains unchanged. Essentially, the index is computed first by constructing a statistical algorithm for predicting whether an individual is native-born or foreign-born, as a function of economic, civic, and cultural indicators.

*Economic assimilation* describes the extent to which immigrants, or groups of immigrants, make productive contributions to society indistinguishable in aggregate from the contributions of the native-born. Economic assimilation is low when immigrants cluster at certain points on the economic ladder—most notably, the low-skilled rungs—and high when their distribution on the economic ladder matches that of native-born Americans.

The economic assimilation index is particularly relevant to two major areas of policy debate: the impact of immigration on the labor market; and the fiscal impact of immigration. A simple calculation suggests that immigrant participation in the labor market generates net benefits, through lower consumer prices and higher shareholder returns, of \$50 billion per year. But such benefits are accompanied by reductions in wages for native workers competing in the same market. It has also been argued that the immigration of highly skilled, entrepreneurial workers creates new jobs. The economic assimilation index can help track whether the skills of immigrants are matched to or mismatched with those of native workers.

From a fiscal perspective, the economic assimilation index reveals information that can potentially address concerns that immigrants take up welfare benefits at disproportionate rates or rely on charitable provision of health care. Economic assimilation also correlates with immigrants' contributions to the Social Security and Medicare trust funds and may help determine the impact of immigrants' housing demand on property values and local property tax revenues.

The following factors are used to measure economic assimilation:

- Earned income in the year prior to the survey (not available for 1900–1930)

- Labor-force participation
- Unemployment (not available for 1900–1930)
- A quantitative ranking of occupations by average income in that occupation in 1950
- Educational attainment (not available for 1900–1930)
- Home ownership (not available for 1900–1930)

Since the labor-force participation and earnings patterns of males and females have historically been quite distinct, the index measures the immigrant-native differences in these factors separately by gender.

*Cultural assimilation* is the extent to which immigrants, or groups of immigrants, adopt customs and practices indistinguishable in aggregate from those of the native-born. Factors considered in the measurement of cultural assimilation include intermarriage and the ability to speak English, which have been the focus of many previous efforts to track immigrant assimilation in the United States. Cultural assimilation also incorporates information on marital status and childbearing. It is important to note that cultural assimilation is not a measure of a group's conformity with any preconceived ideal. Changes in the customs and practices of the native-born can promote cultural assimilation just as easily as changes among the foreign-born.

Some of the most spirited charges in immigration policy debates concern the cultural aspects of immigrants' integration into American society. While some aspects of this debate, such as the value of traditional American culture, are relatively abstract, other aspects are very concrete. State and local governments, for example, often face cost burdens associated with providing services—most notably, public education—to non-English-speaking immigrant groups. Incorporating childbearing patterns into the index allows it to measure the potential impact of immigration on public schools in the near term, and on broader fiscal issues in the long term. Marital patterns, including the decision to marry a native-born spouse, or the decision to reside in the United States without one's spouse, provide clues as to immigrants' long-term intentions, which are critical to understanding the long-term fiscal impact of immigration.



The following factors are used to measure cultural assimilation:

- Ability to speak English
- Intermarriage (whether an individual's spouse is native-born)
- Number of children
- Marital status

*Civic assimilation* is a measure of immigrants' formal participation in American society, primarily through naturalization. Since native-born residents of the United States are citizens by default, civic assimilation increases as the proportion of immigrants who are naturalized citizens increases. The index of civic assimilation also incorporates information on past or present military service, except in the years from 1900 to 1930. Since military service is more common among males than females, the index measures the immigrant-native difference separately by gender. Both naturalization and military service are signals of a strong commitment to the United States—though the power of these signals is directly influenced by government policy. The government sets standards for naturalization and, to some extent, determines the benefits of naturalization, by setting differential policies for citizens and noncitizens; military recruitment needs determine the number of opportunities for service in the armed forces. Changes in civic assimilation could, in theory, reflect either changes in immigrant civic attitudes or changes—perhaps even anticipated changes—in policy. It is important to note that the Census Bureau collects no information on immigrants' legal status, which means that this study cannot use legal status as a factor in the computation of civic assimilation.

The following factors are used to measure civic assimilation:

- Military service
- Citizenship

To some extent, civic assimilation is an even stronger indicator of immigrants' intentions than cultural assimilation. The choice to become a naturalized citizen, or to serve in the United States military, shows a tangible dedication to this country. Civic

assimilation may thus forecast the long-run impact of immigration, both in a concrete fiscal sense and in a more abstract cultural sense.

When immigrants and natives are very similar, this algorithm will not perform much better than random guessing. When the two populations are distinct, the algorithm will have better success. The assimilation index is a measure of how successful this algorithm is, on average. The index returns a value of zero when immigrants and natives are perfectly distinct from one another. It returns a value of 100 when the two groups are indistinguishable.

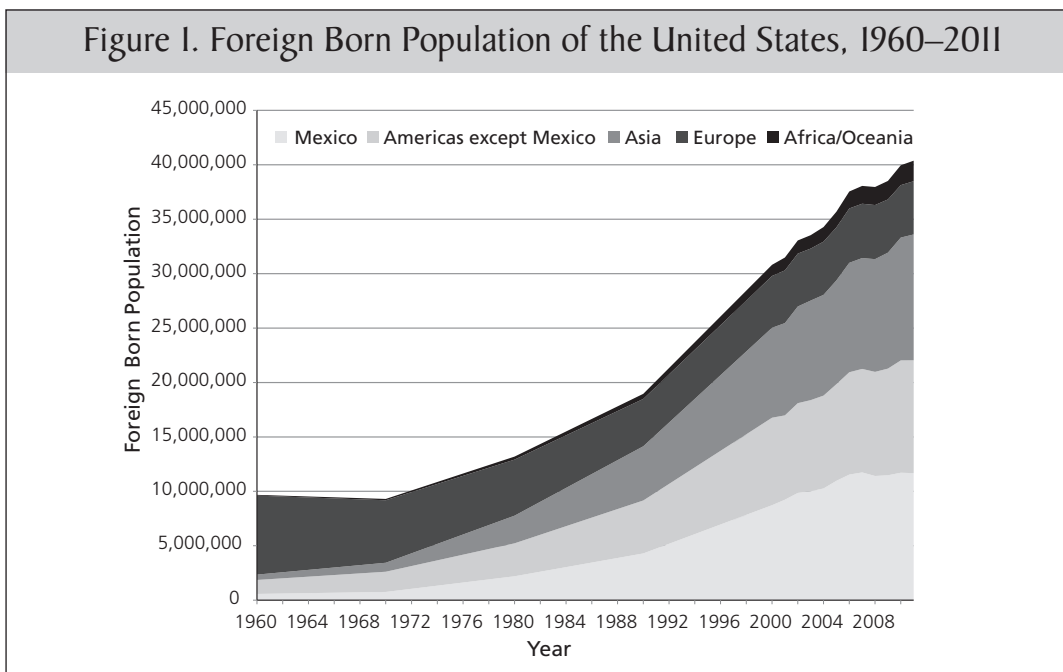
## SETTING THE SCENE

Figure 1 traces the growth of the foreign-born population of the United States from 1960 through 2011. The drop in foreign-born population from 2007 to 2008 was small in absolute terms—only 100,000 out of 38 million, according to Census estimates—but a symbolically significant break in a very long trend. Moreover, immigration in the post-recession years has continued at a slower pace. The number of Mexican-born immigrants in 2011 remained below the 2007 peak. Immigration after 2007 has been dominated by migrants from Asia (a net increase of 1.4 million) and more distant parts of Latin America (a net increase of 850,000). In 2007, the number of Mexican immigrants exceeded the number of immigrants from all Asian countries by 1.5 million. By 2011, the two groups were of roughly equal size.

The slowdown in the arrival rate of new immigrants and the shift in migrant flows away from Mexico portend important changes in the overall assimilation of the foreign-born population. Newly arrived immigrants are the least assimilated, and with fewer of them around, the average level of assimilation is bound to increase.

Moreover, immigrants from Mexico and nearby countries in Central America have been the least assimilated groups in recent decades. The shorter distances involved in moving across the border, rather than across an ocean, make it easy for families with little education or wealth to make the move. The 2011 assimilation

Figure 1. Foreign Born Population of the United States, 1960–2011



index report showed that Latin American immigrants in Spain, for example, are much more assimilated than their North American counterparts. Similarly, North African immigrants in the United States are more assimilated than North Africans in Europe.<sup>2</sup> The lack of legal status among many Mexican and Central American immigrants reduces both their ability and incentive to assimilate into the mainstream. Immigrants without legal status have limited employment options and no path toward citizenship. The uncertain duration of their stay in the country reduces their incentive to learn English or undertake other costly actions that pay off in the long run.

The notion that recession-induced changes in migration patterns would lead to an increase in immigrant assimilation was confirmed in the 2009 assimilation index report.<sup>3</sup> This report introduces data from 2010 and 2011, bringing the time series well into the post-recession period.

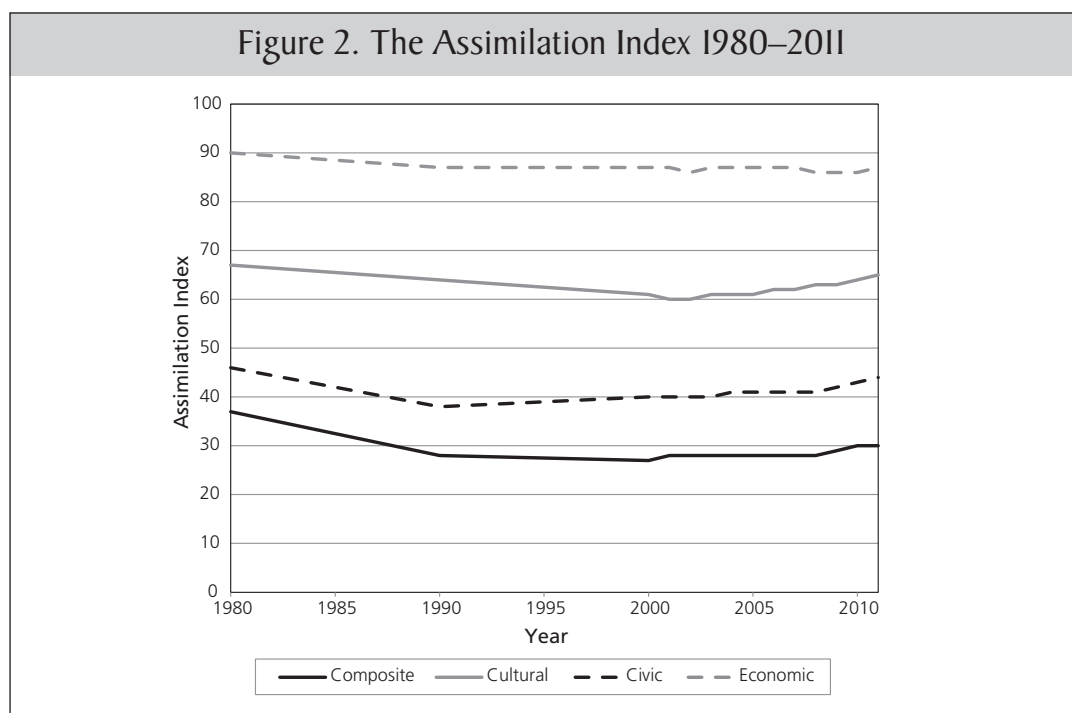
## ASSIMILATION AT ITS HIGHEST LEVEL IN DECADES

Figure 2 displays the long-term trends in the assimilation index from 1980 to 2011. The figure shows

trends in the composite assimilation index, which incorporates data on economic, civic, and cultural indicators, and component indices that consider sets of indicators in isolation. The composite index is always lower than the components. Logically, the algorithm used to predict whether an individual is native- or foreign-born is always more effective when it uses more information. The composite index uses the most information.

All measures, the composite and all components, have shown an increase in recent years. These trends are most obvious using cultural and civic indicators. Since the onset of recession, these two indices have increased steadily. The economic assimilation index, by contrast, fell during the recession, underscoring the particular vulnerability of immigrant families in the American economy. Economic assimilation shows an uptick, however, in the most recent data. The composite index now stands at 30, after spending more than two decades in the 20s.

All four measures now stand at levels that have not been exceeded since the 1980s. The degree of similarity between the foreign- and native-born populations is now higher than it has been in a generation.



## UNDERSTANDING THE INCREASE IN ASSIMILATION

In theory, the rise in the assimilation index could reflect changes in the assimilation process, or changes in the set of immigrants undergoing it. Figure 3 begins to help us understand how and why the change has occurred. It shows information on the assimilation of newly arrived immigrants—those entering the country within the past five years—at points in time between 1900 and 2011, using a specialized version of the assimilation index that permits comparisons over this period of eleven decades. The United States experienced significant migration waves at both the beginning and end of the twentieth century. During both periods—between 1900 and 1920, and again between 1980 and 2000—the assimilation level of new arrivals declined. The first immigrants to enter a host country must navigate on their own; they stand to prosper only if they possess the ability to integrate rapidly into the mainstream. Successive waves of immigrants can take advantage of the trail blazed by their predecessors. It is not surprising, then, to see this broad pattern of declining assimilation as immigration waves progress.

After 2000, there is some evidence that the pattern of declining assimilation levels among new arrivals stopped, or even reversed. To be fair, by 2000 the recorded assimilation levels of newly arrived immigrants were extremely low—in the low single digits—and simply could not fall much further. But the reversal is consistent with the observation that migration flows have shifted over the course of the past decade, favoring groups that appear more closely integrated into the mainstream at the point of arrival. At the same time, though, the new arrivals of 2011 were still below those of 1990. The overall increase in assimilation, then, reflects more than a shift in the composition of new arrivals.

Figure 4 provides insight into the process of assimilation over time. It uses data from consecutive Census Bureau surveys to track the progress of synthetic cohorts of immigrants as they spend more time in the United States. Immigrants who arrived in the late 1970s are compared to those arriving in the late 1980s, late 1990s, and the pre- and post-recession portions of the past decade. Consistent with the basic premise that assimilation takes time, each group shows a pattern of steady increases in the assimilation

Figure 3. The Assimilation of Newly Arrived Immigrants: 1900–2011

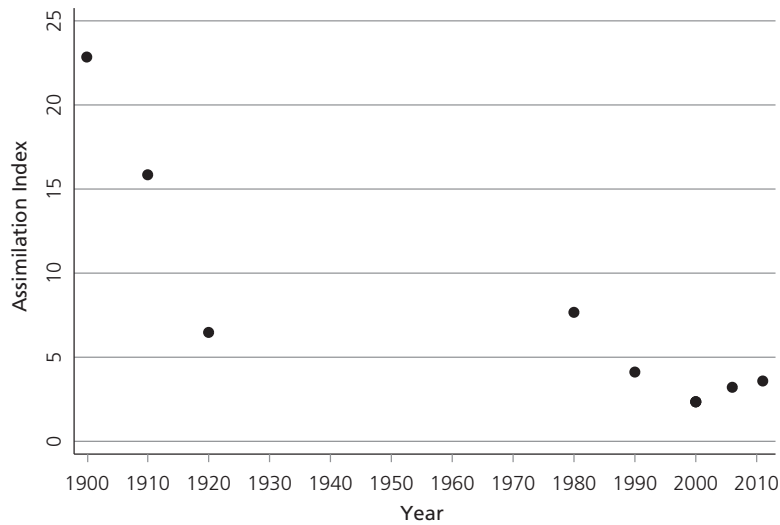
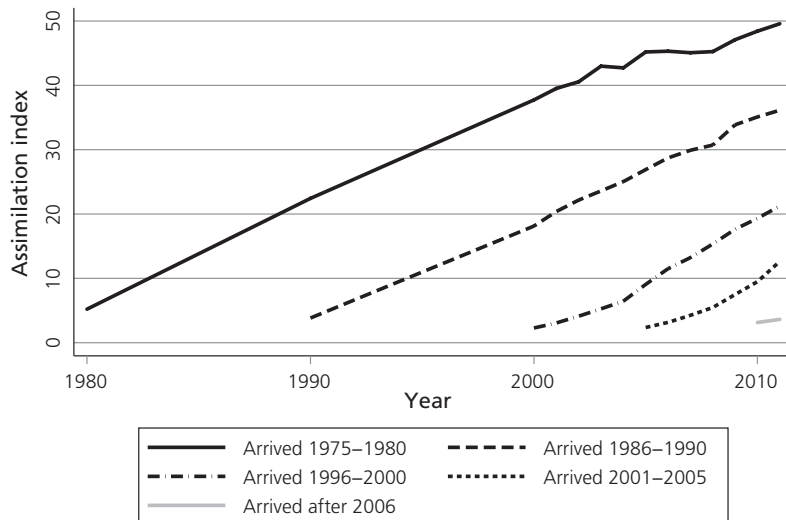


Figure 4. The Progress of Individual Cohorts: Composite



index. This trend occurs for two basic reasons. First, individual immigrants make progress over time—they learn English, obtain better jobs, intermarry, and, in some cases, become citizens. Second, the less-successful exhibit a higher propensity to leave the country. Figure 4 shows the net impact of these two trends and cannot distinguish between them.

Overall, the process of assimilation appears to have changed little over time. Each successive cohort of immigrants begins with assimilation index values in the low single digits, then posts increases to the high teens or low twenties within a decade. Interestingly, in the two oldest cohorts there is some evidence of a stall in the assimilation process after 2000, followed

by a resurgence around the time of the recession. This resurgence is explored in some detail below.

Figures 5 through 7 examine cohort progress using the component assimilation indices. Economic assimilation, examined in Figure 5, shows a remarkable finding. The most recent cohort—those arriving since the onset of recession—boasts

higher economic assimilation than those arriving just before the recession. This is an unprecedented reversal of a well-established pattern. It largely reflects the shift in composition between cohorts: the pre-recession group includes a large proportion of Mexican immigrants; the post-recession group does not. In economic terms, then, the United States finds itself without a significant group of poorly-

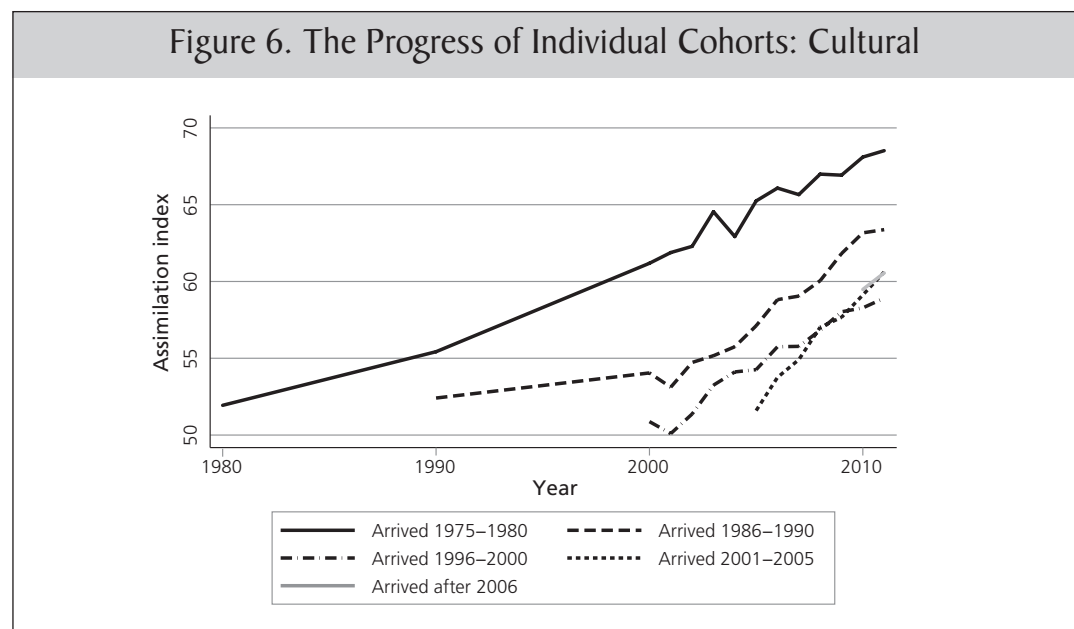
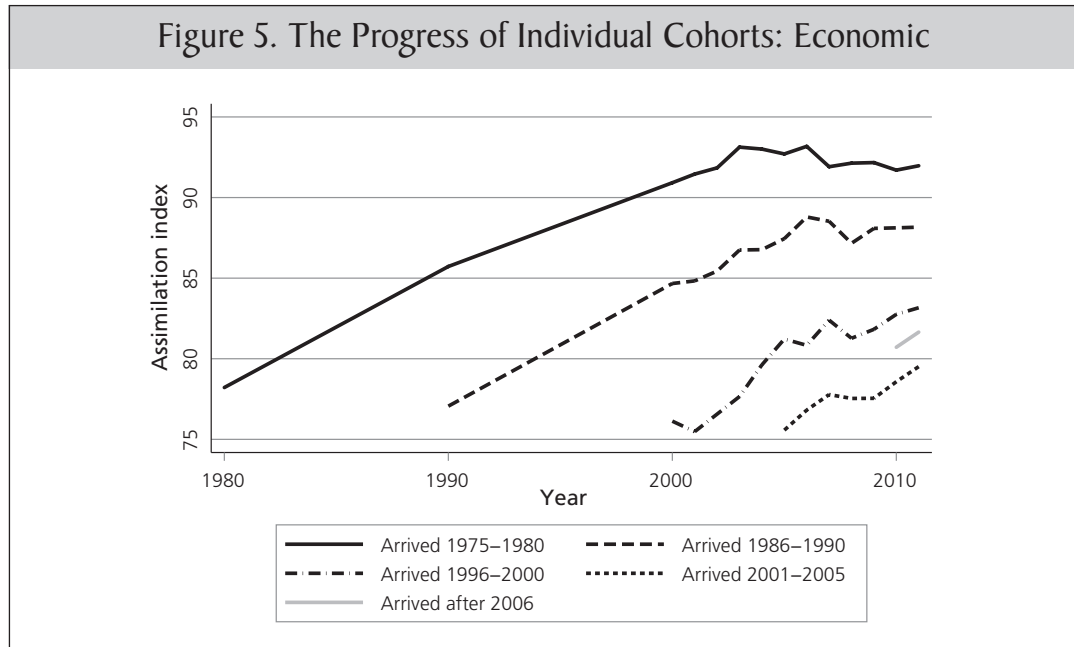
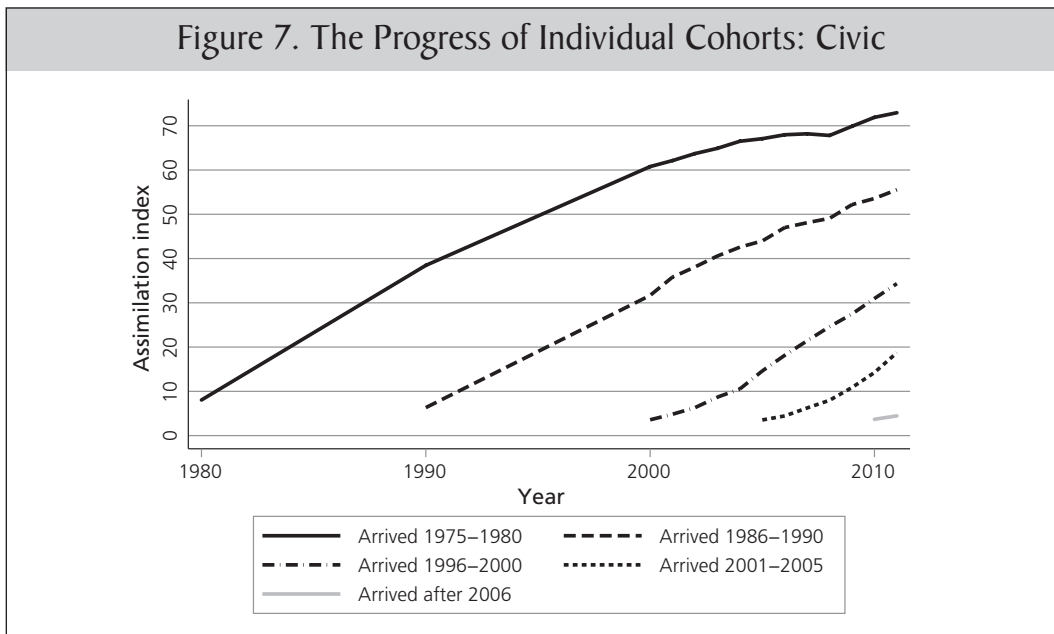


Figure 7. The Progress of Individual Cohorts: Civic



assimilated, newly-arrived immigrants for the first time in decades.

The same pattern appears when we examine cultural assimilation. Figure 6 shows the remarkable finding that the post-recession cohort of immigrants is more culturally assimilated than cohorts arriving as much as a decade before them. Even the immediate pre-recession cohort boasts higher cultural assimilation levels than those arriving in the late 1990s. Recalling that the immigrant population dropped slightly in the wake of recession, it would appear that departing migrants were drawn from the less-culturally-assimilated portion of the most recently arrived cohorts. The pre-recession cohort begins, after all, with a typically low cultural assimilation index, but shows unprecedentedly rapid progress over time.

Should Congress and the administration pass an immigration reform bill this year, academic conversation will surely turn to the question of why legislation proved feasible this year after having failed in the past. That the United States has witnessed the near disappearance of newly-arrived culturally and economically distinct migrants might help answer this question. Culturally-based opposition to immigration—among those hoping to preserve English as

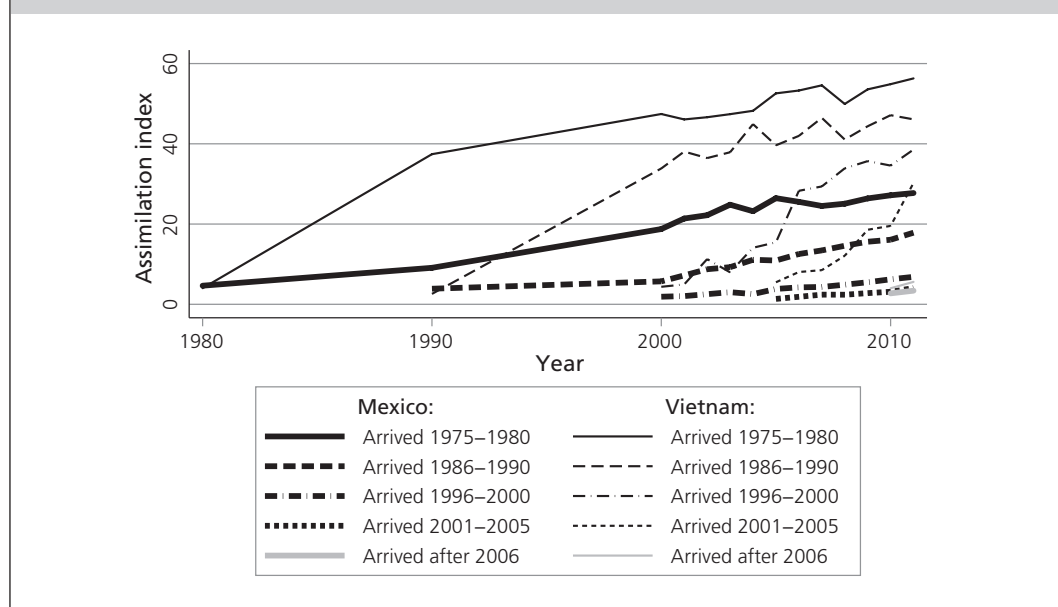
the nation's preeminent language, for example, may have softened in part because there are simply fewer migrants with poor language skills than there were a few years ago.

Figure 7 shows that the remarkable inversion of cohort rankings does not extend to the civic assimilation index. The rate of civic assimilation is not governed so much by migration patterns as it is by law. As there have been no significant changes in law over the past decade, it is not surprising that the most recently arrived immigrants—those least likely to qualify for citizenship—remain the least assimilated. The low civic assimilation of new arrivals explains why the composite assimilation of that group remains low.

Civic assimilation patterns among older immigrants—those arriving in the 1980s or earlier—do much to explain the post-recession uptick in composite assimilation rates observed in those cohorts. In recent years, older immigrants have seen little in the way of economic progress, continued cultural assimilation, and a clear renewal of interest in citizenship and other civic indicators.

In the end, then, the evidence indicates that the increase in assimilation largely reflects a shift in migration patterns rather than wholesale changes in

Figure 8. Progress Among Mexican and Vietnamese Immigrants



behavior. Immigrant groups more disposed to low levels and rates of assimilation have been less likely to enter and remain in the country in recent years. To underscore this point, Figure 8 replicates a figure derived from the first assimilation index report, updated to include the most recent data. It compares the assimilation progress of Mexican and Vietnamese immigrant cohorts. Vietnamese immigrants have been, and continue to be, one of the groups exhibiting the highest rates of assimilation over time; Mexican immigrants lie at the other end of the spectrum. There is no evidence that the average experiences of immigrants belonging to either group have changed much over time. The immigrant population, rather, has shifted towards having a higher proportion of Vietnamese-type immigrants, and fewer Mexican-type immigrants.

## ASSIMILATION BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Figure 9 presents additional detail on assimilation patterns by immigrants' country of origin. It shows composite assimilation index values for migrants from the ten largest countries of origin as of 2011. A complete list of index values, including component index values, can be found in the appendix to this report.

Among the ten largest groups, four are from Latin America: Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Cuba. With the clear exception of Cuba, these groups are the least assimilated, with index values in the teens, roughly half the overall average for the foreign-born population as a whole. Among Cuban immigrants, assimilation more closely resembles the patterns seen in Asian-origin groups, including migrants from the Philippines, Vietnam, and Korea. All four groups have index values well above the overall average. The country of origin exhibiting the greatest assimilation is, unsurprisingly, Canada.

These patterns across countries of origin have held fairly steady since the first assimilation index report. Figure 10 looks more specifically for evidence of changes in assimilation since the onset of recession. The assimilation index has posted increases of about two points—comparable to the increase observed in the immigrant population as a whole—for the five largest country-of-origin groups, including Mexican immigrants. There has been little change in assimilation among immigrants from El Salvador and Canada. The biggest surprise in this chart pertains to immigrants from Cuba, the only group to post a large decline in assimilation since 2006. The decline most likely reflects the continued arrival of Cuban migrants



Figure 9. Assimilation of the Ten Largest Immigrant Groups, 2011

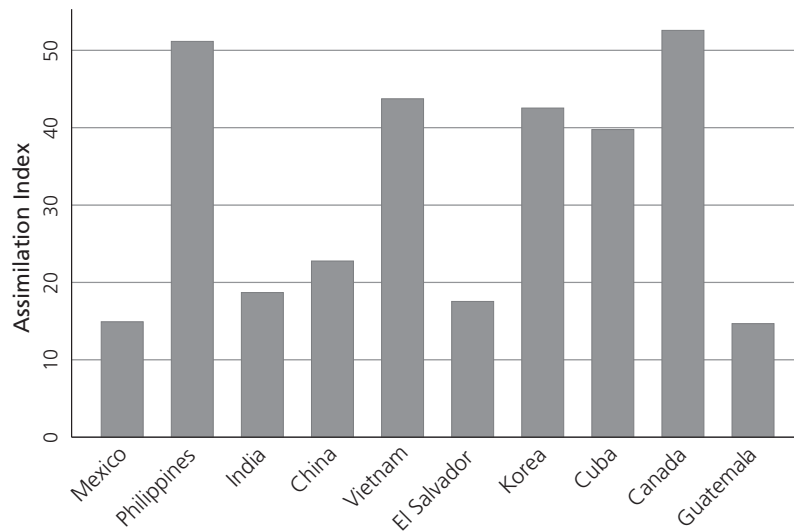
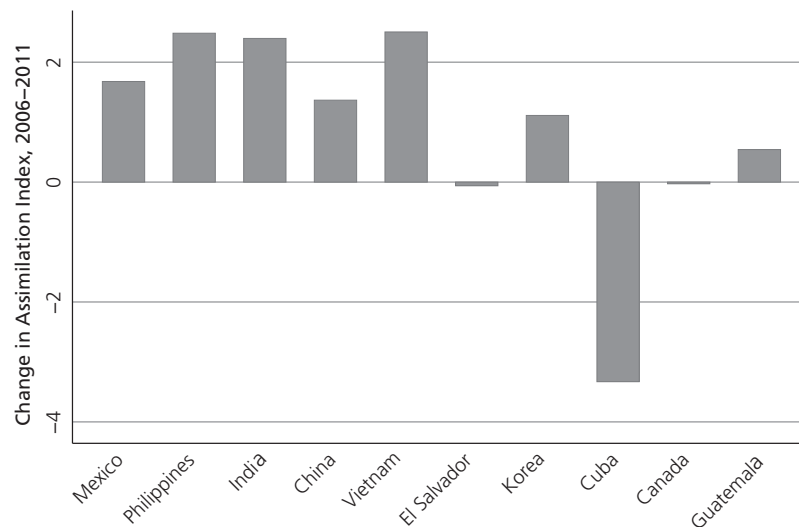


Figure 10. Change in Assimilation Since the Recession



in the post-recession years—Census estimates indicate that the Cuban-born population has doubled over the past 10 years. This, in turn, most likely reflects the political, rather than economic, impetus for much migration from Cuba. Immigrants seeking jobs are likely to be deterred by a recession; those seeking more fundamental rights or family reunification are not.

## ASSIMILATION BY METROPOLITAN AREA OF RESIDENCE

Figure 11 plots composite assimilation index values for the ten metropolitan areas with the largest number of foreign-born residents as of 2011. For the most part, these metro area-specific indices cluster around the

national value of 30. The most noteworthy departures from average occur in Houston and the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, where assimilation levels fall well below average—in the high teens in the Dallas area. Low assimilation in Texas cities reflects the high concentration of immigrants from Mexico and Central America in that region. Mexican immigrants are also found in significant number in Southern California; the Los Angeles area posts the third-lowest assimilation level among the top ten immigrant destinations. The simultaneous presence of large numbers of Asian

immigrants has a moderating effect; in spite of its proximity to the Mexican border, the San Diego metro area posts an assimilation index above the national average. New York and Miami top the list of destination areas with the most assimilated immigrants.

The increase in assimilation observed since the onset of recession in 2007 can be seen in all 10 of these destination areas, as shown in Figure 12. Assimilation has increased most rapidly in the “inland empire” encompassing Riverside and San Bernardino in Southern

Figure 11. Assimilation in the Ten Largest Destinations, 2011

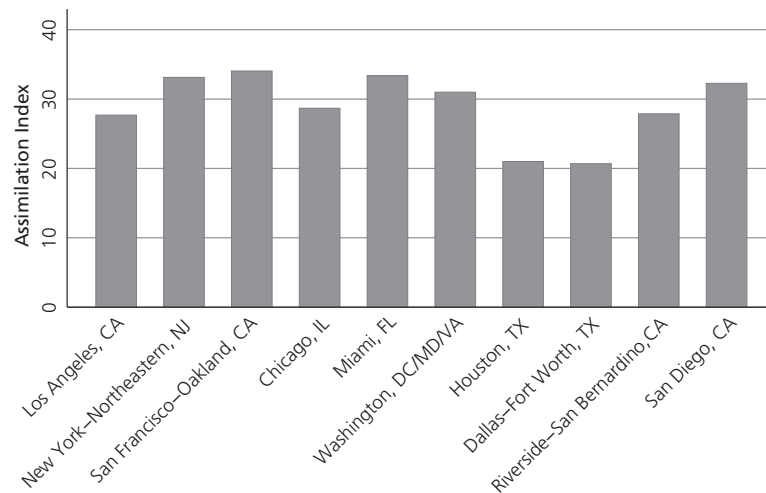
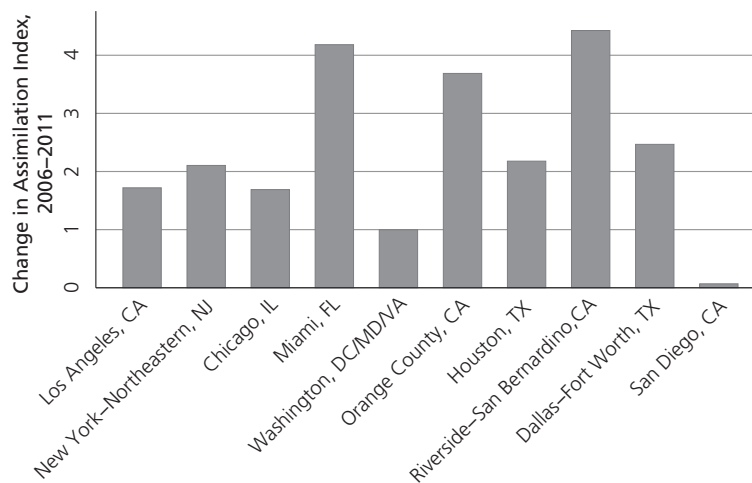


Figure 12. Assimilation Trends Since the Recession, by Metro Area



California. This area was also significantly effected by the bursting of the housing bubble over the same time period. Two other metropolitan areas with significant housing price fluctuations in recent years—Orange County, California and Miami, Florida—have also witnessed large increases in assimilation. In all three areas, the rise in assimilation nearly doubled the rate observed in the nation as a whole.

The rupture of the housing bubble most likely led to increased assimilation largely by affecting the mix of immigrants choosing to live in a metropolitan area. The housing bubble fed a construction boom, and the disappearance of moderately-skilled jobs in the construction industry may have led some immigrants to move on. The subprime mortgage boom that fed the housing bubble may also have played a role. Access to easy credit would have helped low-income immigrants afford homes in these relatively expensive regions. The evaporation of mortgage credit following the housing bust, in turn, would have shut off this access route.

## CONCLUSION

The first Manhattan Institute assimilation index report, issued in 2008, used Census Bureau data through the year 2006 and reported a long period of stability in immigrant assimilation from 1990 through that year. During this period of stability, the steady progress of existing immigrants toward the mainstream was offset by the continued arrival of economically and culturally distinct newcomers.

The five years since that initial report have witnessed a significant disruption of that period of stability. The economic recession and its aftermath have altered the

flow of migrants and upended historical patterns of immigrant assimilation. Opposition to immigration reform has traditionally focused on newly arrived, unassimilated, and often undocumented immigrants from Mexico and nearby countries in Central America. This archetype is rapidly vanishing from American soil. The effects of this shift on the average characteristics of immigrants, particularly newly arrived immigrants, are tangible.

There remains some question as to whether the post-recession pattern will persist. Although the United States has officially been in economic recovery since 2009, growth has come slowly, and unemployment rates remain high. The absence of lower-skilled immigrants may reflect this underlying labor market weakness; hypothetically, a decline in unemployment could renew the flow of immigrants across the U.S.-Mexico border.

In the longer run, however, demographic trends raise the possibility that the era of rapid immigration from Mexico is already behind us. The era of intense migration coincides with a period of rapid population growth in Mexico, driven by high fertility rates. As demographers have noted, fertility rates have declined precipitously in Mexico in recent decades, to the point where population growth in that country barely exceeds that in the United States.

While uncertainty remains regarding future immigration trends, it is clear that the demographic environment in the United States is very different than it was prior to the recession. Recognizing and understanding these important shifts will be critical to the formulation of a forward-looking immigration policy.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Vigdor, Jacob, *Measuring Immigrant Assimilation in the United States*, Manhattan Institute Civic Report 53, May 2008, [http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/cr\\_53.htm](http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/cr_53.htm).

<sup>2</sup> Vigdor, Jacob, *Comparing Immigrant Assimilation in North America and Europe*, Manhattan Institute Civic Report 64, May 2011, [http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/cr\\_64.htm](http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/cr_64.htm).

<sup>3</sup> Vigdor, Jacob, *Measuring Immigrant Assimilation in the United States*, Manhattan Institute Civic Report 59, October 2009, [http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/cr\\_59.htm](http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/cr_59.htm).

Table I. Assimilation by Metropolitan Area, 2010–11

Metropolitan Area	Assimilation Index							
	Composite		Economic		Cultural		Civic	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
Akron, OH	41	36	94	98	59	68	59	48
Albany-Schenectady-Troy, NY	44	44	97	99	78	68	55	54
Albuquerque, NM	30	35	78	83	71	70	35	42
Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton, PA/NJ	43	34	98	91	71	62	55	54
Amarillo, TX	18	22	71	76	71	65	26	30
Ann Arbor, MI	37	27	99	97	75	69	52	36
Athens, GA	18	22	73	80	59	80	27	28
Atlanta, GA	25	29	87	87	60	64	37	41
Atlantic City, NJ	34	42	94	91	63	69	51	58
Augusta-Aiken, GA-SC	53	37	96	85	81	80	55	45
Austin, TX	19	22	77	79	59	61	27	28
Bakersfield, CA	19	17	64	69	50	54	31	30
Baltimore, MD	35	37	93	98	70	71	47	48
Baton Rouge, LA	23	23	86	78	71	65	40	25
Beaumont-Port Arthur-Orange, TX	21	20	76	73	60	57	29	31
Bellingham, WA	55	37	99	92	97	90	59	37
Biloxi-Gulfport, MS	34	29	80	67	72	67	46	35
Birmingham, AL	24	20	79	79	65	68	29	25
Boise City, ID	27	27	88	84	62	67	39	31
Boston, MA	31	33	92	91	71	68	43	49
Lawrence-Haverhill, MA/NH	32	36	93	89	59	55	53	54
Lowell, MA/NH	33	36	93	95	62	62	54	56
Bremerton, WA	55	47	100	100	97	96	56	53
Bridgeport, CT	32	34	94	95	69	63	41	47
Brockton, MA	38	43	97	94	75	77	51	58
Brownsville-Harlingen-San Benito, TX	19	21	72	73	58	52	25	31
Bryan-College Station, TX	14	17	76	82	69	80	16	23
Buffalo-Niagara Falls, NY	44	40	93	97	78	80	54	47
Champaign-Urbana-Rantoul, IL	14	19	88	89	67	87	22	23
Charleston-N.Charleston, SC	27	32	80	89	80	70	29	38
Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill, SC	22	24	84	85	63	66	30	33
Charlottesville, VA	27	33	93	90	80	97	31	35
Chattanooga, TN/GA	26	33	89	80	60	77	36	42
Chicago-Gary-Lake, IL	26	28	89	88	57	58	43	45
Gary-Hammond-East Chicago, IN	29	40	88	89	64	67	52	53
Chico, CA	41	30	92	75	74	68	51	44
Cincinnati OH/KY/IN	34	32	95	93	71	72	40	41

Metropolitan Area	Assimilation Index							
	Composite		Economic		Cultural		Civic	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
Cleveland, OH	43	41	100	100	68	68	58	56
Colorado Springs, CO	45	40	94	95	85	73	43	49
Columbia, SC	20	31	86	89	76	79	26	30
Columbus, OH	31	32	90	91	71	68	41	41
Corpus Christi, TX	35	44	89	92	75	79	40	55
Dallas-Fort Worth, TX	18	19	78	77	53	55	31	32
Fort Worth-Arlington, TX	24	24	79	78	58	58	36	35
Danbury, CT	32	32	92	88	62	71	41	39
Dayton-Springfield, OH	37	32	84	89	79	70	41	45
Daytona Beach, FL	40	30	100	96	81	76	44	38
Denver-Boulder-Longmont, CO	30	26	84	85	66	67	37	34
Boulder-Longmont, CO	29	22	80	79	78	64	29	32
Des Moines, IA	17	31	84	79	50	62	36	47
Detroit, MI	33	39	95	99	59	64	50	55
Dutchess Co., NY	36	31	100	95	69	66	51	43
El Paso, TX	33	29	83	84	62	65	41	37
Eugene-Springfield, OR	35	33	84	79	81	70	35	29
Fayetteville, NC	49	68	95	99	92	92	46	66
Fayetteville-Springdale, AR	13	13	68	68	61	45	25	29
Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood-Pompano Beach, FL	41	44	100	100	72	72	52	55
Fort Myers-Cape Coral, FL	27	28	85	90	70	64	32	37
Fort Pierce, FL	40	44	93	92	78	76	45	53
Fort Wayne, IN	45	35	89	91	84	65	41	46
Fresno, CA	20	21	67	65	49	51	32	35
Gainesville, FL	39	26	95	96	82	78	47	34
Galveston-Texas City, TX	22	42	84	86	58	71	44	43
Grand Rapids, MI	35	44	89	87	76	80	39	43
Greeley, CO	19	27	66	93	56	63	27	39
Greensboro-Winston Salem-High Point, NC	18	19	77	76	58	58	26	27
Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson SC	18	24	81	89	61	66	26	35
Harrisburg-Lebanon-Carlisle, PA	36	31	100	96	73	67	44	44
Hartford-Bristol-Middleton-New Britain, CT	37	37	99	96	68	69	48	49
Hickory-Morgantown, NC	19	15	78	89	75	60	23	27
Honolulu, HI	41	44	99	100	71	75	57	58
Houston-Brazoria, TX	20	21	80	79	54	55	34	35
Brazoria, TX	23	21	87	86	61	54	40	44
Huntsville, AL	29	42	81	84	77	84	40	53
Indianapolis, IN	22	22	83	84	65	63	30	32
Jacksonville, FL	48	54	100	100	79	81	55	60
Kalamazoo-Portage, MI	36	32	96	89	78	73	32	32
Kansas City, MO-KS	27	27	84	87	69	67	33	38

Metropolitan Area	Assimilation Index							
	Composite		Economic		Cultural		Civic	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
Killeen-Temple, TX	37	39	97	88	79	86	43	48
Knoxville, TN	39	32	87	93	84	73	37	40
Lafayette-W. Lafayette, IN	14	11	78	82	74	59	22	25
Lakeland-Winterhaven, FL	23	26	81	86	61	65	37	33
Lansing-E. Lansing, MI	24	30	81	90	63	84	34	35
Laredo, TX	15	18	75	77	63	61	25	23
Las Cruces, NM	31	18	77	65	74	69	39	25
Las Vegas, NV	31	30	86	86	68	70	42	40
Lexington-Fayette, KY	13	21	81	81	62	76	19	24
Little Rock-North Little Rock, AR	22	52	83	96	61	90	33	48
Longview-Marshall, TX	9	20	65	60	57	60	15	19
Los Angeles-Long Beach, CA	27	27	78	79	60	61	45	45
Orange County, CA	30	30	84	86	57	57	50	49
Louisville, KY/IN	25	27	90	89	68	67	38	32
Lubbock, TX	27	29	84	80	67	81	41	33
Madison, WI	24	29	84	91	68	77	33	41
McAllen-Edinburg-Pharr-Mission, TX	17	18	74	72	54	50	25	25
Melbourne-Titusville-Cocoa-Palm Bay, FL	47	58	100	100	83	85	53	69
Memphis, TN/AR/MS	26	25	83	84	57	67	38	35
Merced, CA	20	20	69	54	48	47	33	36
Miami-Hialeah, FL	34	33	96	96	63	63	46	47
Milwaukee, WI	29	36	88	86	72	73	36	40
Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN	31	33	92	89	68	68	41	44
Mobile, AL	23	45	77	92	78	92	24	47
Modesto, CA	25	27	75	76	52	56	43	42
Monmouth-Ocean, NJ	45	39	96	94	73	71	53	52
Naples, FL	20	18	83	85	70	58	28	31
Nashville, TN	22	27	85	86	62	67	34	36
New Bedford, MA	44	48	90	84	66	71	66	67
New Haven-Meriden, CT	34	30	87	86	75	68	39	37
New Orleans, LA	28	33	85	92	69	75	40	44
New York-Northeastern NJ	32	33	86	86	65	67	49	50
Nassau Co, NY	35	39	96	100	64	65	53	55
Bergen-Passaic, NJ	33	34	98	95	59	58	53	55
Jersey City, NJ	26	29	88	88	63	65	41	43
Middlesex-Somerset-Hunterdon, NJ	29	29	98	99	51	50	52	53
Newark, NJ	34	31	93	91	63	63	49	47
Newburgh-Middletown, NY	33	36	87	88	61	70	45	49
Norfolk-VA Beach-Newport News, VA	47	49	100	100	78	86	56	58
Ocala, FL	43	44	97	96	70	76	47	50
Odessa, TX	27	24	67	70	62	67	38	36

Metropolitan Area	Assimilation Index							
	Composite		Economic		Cultural		Civic	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
Oklahoma City, OK	25	24	81	73	67	61	34	35
Omaha, NE/IA	28	25	82	78	68	64	38	38
Orlando, FL	37	39	100	97	70	75	49	48
Pensacola, FL	49	55	100	100	87	93	50	55
Philadelphia, PA/NJ	36	37	94	97	67	67	50	53
Phoenix, AZ	25	26	83	82	63	64	33	35
Pittsburgh-Beaver Valley, PA	36	40	98	97	75	77	43	47
Portland-Vancouver, OR	32	30	88	88	66	63	42	41
Providence-Fall River-Pawtucket, MA/RI	37	38	84	87	71	75	51	52
Provo-Orem, UT	19	34	82	90	71	70	25	37
Raleigh-Durham, NC	22	22	85	84	62	60	31	34
Reading, PA	33	33	82	84	66	66	39	45
Reno, NV	32	29	81	80	68	66	42	41
Richland-Kennewick-Pasco, WA	19	19	60	73	59	54	22	26
Richmond-Petersburg, VA	28	30	84	87	68	69	36	38
Riverside-San Bernardino, CA	27	28	83	83	60	59	41	44
Rochester, NY	43	42	97	100	72	77	58	54
Rockford, IL	36	21	92	85	76	51	46	37
Sacramento, CA	37	33	92	92	61	60	54	53
St. Louis, MO-IL	35	29	98	96	71	66	44	40
Salem, OR	18	17	67	69	51	61	28	20
Salinas-Sea Side-Monterey, CA	17	15	65	57	56	49	25	23
Salt Lake City-Ogden, UT	28	27	86	88	69	64	34	34
San Antonio, TX	32	32	83	84	70	75	38	38
San Diego, CA	33	32	85	84	66	66	46	46
San Francisco-Oakland-Vallejo, CA	37	38	91	91	67	70	54	55
Oakland, CA	30	31	91	91	58	60	51	50
Vallejo-Fairfield-Napa, CA	33	30	87	84	64	64	45	48
San Jose, CA	30	30	93	92	55	56	52	52
San Luis Obispo-Atascad-Paso Robles, CA	26	37	73	80	69	80	36	43
Santa Barbara-Santa Maria-Lompoc, CA	20	22	65	67	58	55	30	31
Santa Cruz, CA	22	28	65	68	60	61	29	36
Santa Fe, NM	28	20	75	74	71	61	27	25
Santa Rosa-Petaluma, CA	28	27	74	80	67	63	37	39
Sarasota, FL	35	35	94	93	71	77	42	41
Savannah, GA	25	28	82	87	78	65	28	33
Scranton-Wilkes-Barre, PA	32	30	91	85	60	74	40	47
Seattle-Everett, WA	34	32	96	94	65	67	49	47
Spokane, WA	55	48	100	100	93	84	55	54
Springfield-Holyoke-Chicopee, MA	37	38	94	98	71	72	45	48
Stamford, CT	34	31	89	89	73	72	41	45



Metropolitan Area	Assimilation Index							
	Composite		Economic		Cultural		Civic	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
Stockton, CA	25	27	79	78	53	52	44	46
Syracuse, NY	42	40	100	92	72	81	49	48
Tacoma, WA	46	48	97	95	80	82	52	57
Tallahassee, FL	41	45	90	99	82	89	44	46
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL	38	40	96	98	74	77	46	46
Toledo, OH/MI	50	49	93	99	82	89	58	53
Trenton, NJ	28	26	92	91	64	56	42	44
Tucson, AZ	41	40	89	92	86	79	43	47
Tulsa, OK	23	27	85	84	64	71	31	34
Tyler, TX	18	14	76	61	52	54	24	24
Utica-Rome, NY	37	33	89	92	70	57	46	52
Ventura-Oxnard-Simi Valley, CA	28	27	77	78	57	52	42	44
Vineland-Milville-Bridgetown, NJ	16	19	77	73	54	63	24	27
Visalia-Tulare-Porterville, CA	17	15	60	61	48	46	27	26
Waco, TX	17	14	73	67	54	54	25	27
Washington, DC/MD/VA	30	31	92	92	65	67	44	45
West Palm Beach-Boca Raton-Delray Beach, FL	34	37	94	92	71	74	42	45
Wichita, KS	30	29	82	82	63	67	41	45
Wilmington, DE/NJ/MD	27	31	88	93	54	69	42	43
Worcester, MA	31	38	98	96	64	70	49	57
Yakima, WA	11	14	60	57	49	48	24	26
Yolo, CA	29	33	80	85	61	65	40	46
Yuba City, CA	22	19	73	79	54	54	42	34
Yuma, AZ	27	19	84	76	56	53	38	34

Table 2. Assimilation by Country of Origin, 2010–II

Country of Origin	Assimilation Index							
	Composite		Economic		Cultural		Civic	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
Canada	54	53	100	100	100	100	43	43
Cape Verde	48	29	90	81	76	75	66	53
Mexico	14	15	64	65	55	55	24	25
Belize/British Honduras	46	54	100	100	81	87	54	58
Costa Rica	45	41	95	97	91	89	49	43
El Salvador	16	17	67	68	58	59	28	30
Guatemala	14	14	58	58	60	62	22	22
Honduras	17	18	66	64	65	66	22	23
Nicaragua	38	37	91	93	70	70	49	51
Panama	76	80	100	100	100	100	70	70
Cuba	39	40	99	99	64	66	49	50
Dominican Republic	36	37	84	85	71	71	50	51
Haiti	36	38	97	97	69	71	54	54
Jamaica	50	52	100	100	82	83	62	62
Antigua-Barbuda	66	63	100	98	92	100	70	64
Bahamas	49	41	100	100	100	97	45	40
Barbados	61	64	100	100	90	90	68	72
Dominica	42	48	95	96	71	82	60	58
Grenada	55	39	100	100	81	79	67	56
St. Lucia	40	47	99	98	81	93	51	49
St. Vincent	38	44	96	100	78	84	52	58
Trinidad and Tobago	49	51	100	100	81	87	56	58
Argentina	39	46	100	100	78	81	44	49
Bolivia	42	37	100	100	75	70	46	48
Brazil	26	28	94	94	77	77	28	34
Chile	44	43	100	100	82	80	50	47
Colombia	40	42	100	100	75	76	49	50
Ecuador	28	28	83	84	64	66	39	41
Guyana/British Guiana	52	51	100	100	70	70	74	73
Peru	39	43	100	100	76	80	46	48
Uruguay	26	35	90	95	68	69	30	42
Venezuela	35	38	100	100	78	80	36	40
Denmark	41	35	100	100	100	100	31	27
Finland	41	55	100	100	100	100	32	49
Norway	46	34	100	100	100	100	37	31
Sweden	46	49	100	100	100	100	37	39
England	65	64	100	100	100	100	51	53
Scotland	73	71	100	100	100	100	56	52
Other United Kingdom	40	41	100	100	98	100	35	39
Ireland	58	55	100	100	100	98	53	57

Country of Birth	Assimilation Index							
	Composite		Economic		Cultural		Civic	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
Belgium	60	65	100	100	100	100	49	53
France	56	59	100	100	100	100	46	49
Netherlands	61	62	100	100	100	100	46	48
Switzerland	63	63	100	100	100	100	55	53
Albania	32	39	98	100	52	51	59	68
Greece	61	68	97	99	84	88	74	78
Macedonia	33	32	100	100	53	58	55	62
Italy	68	72	100	100	97	99	67	68
Portugal	44	48	88	92	68	71	64	68
Azores	67	51	86	88	89	64	74	71
Spain	51	49	100	100	100	96	48	45
Austria	78	70	100	100	100	100	58	57
Bulgaria	31	38	100	100	63	70	46	57
Slovakia	29	50	100	100	76	74	44	61
Czech Republic	42	50	100	100	89	90	44	47
Germany	85	84	100	100	100	100	63	62
Hungary	66	67	100	100	97	94	67	63
Poland	38	42	100	100	62	62	56	63
Romania	47	44	100	100	67	63	67	67
Yugoslavia	43	45	99	100	65	63	61	68
Croatia	50	49	100	100	72	69	68	71
Bosnia	33	32	100	100	45	49	65	64
Lithuania	34	38	100	100	73	64	42	61
Russia	45	44	100	100	68	71	64	64
Byelorussia	36	41	100	100	52	59	66	65
Moldavia	25	40	100	100	52	61	51	57
Ukraine	36	40	100	100	54	61	63	64
Armenia	33	36	100	100	51	57	64	66
Azerbaijan	30	28	100	100	62	49	50	57
Kazakhstan	45	34	100	100	66	51	63	56
Uzbekistan	27	34	98	97	57	59	43	48
China	23	23	90	90	47	48	47	48
Hong Kong	58	57	100	100	68	66	81	83
Taiwan	48	46	100	100	64	63	75	73
Japan	38	40	100	100	94	95	32	33
Korea	45	43	100	100	67	66	58	57
Cambodia (Kampuchea)	40	38	89	87	56	62	72	67
Indonesia	36	32	100	100	76	76	41	43
Laos	39	36	92	87	57	56	70	71
Malaysia	33	32	100	100	77	73	42	46
Philippines	52	51	100	100	74	75	67	66
Singapore	32	25	100	100	87	85	34	29

Country of Birth	Assimilation Index							
	Composite		Economic		Cultural		Civic	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
Thailand	48	51	98	99	89	90	55	55
Vietnam	42	44	96	95	53	54	77	78
Afghanistan	35	46	98	100	47	53	69	77
India	18	19	99	97	38	40	45	46
Bangladesh	23	24	92	92	41	39	56	59
Burma (Myanmar)	24	23	81	73	53	45	43	41
Pakistan	28	28	97	98	43	46	62	62
Sri Lanka (Ceylon)	26	19	100	100	52	50	43	46
Iran	51	49	100	100	64	66	76	71
Nepal	8	9	92	92	54	50	16	20
Iraq	28	33	87	88	55	55	51	52
Israel/Palestine	55	60	100	100	81	83	65	66
Jordan	42	46	100	100	62	64	67	71
Kuwait	43	40	100	100	73	64	58	60
Lebanon	51	54	100	100	64	65	76	79
Saudi Arabia	22	24	100	100	80	82	22	24
Syria	33	39	97	96	53	55	65	74
Turkey	40	39	98	97	75	71	47	48
Yemen Arab Republic (North)	19	32	66	73	39	53	56	56
Algeria	42	27	99	96	71	55	56	48
Egypt	39	40	100	100	56	62	64	64
Morocco	44	44	96	97	82	82	54	58
Sudan	28	36	91	85	57	66	49	57
Ghana	34	29	98	97	71	70	53	46
Liberia	30	36	99	98	78	80	40	45
Nigeria	37	36	100	100	66	67	60	57
Senegal	29	23	94	86	76	69	34	41
Sierra Leone	43	41	100	98	73	71	58	53
Ethiopia	37	40	97	97	71	70	55	55
Kenya	23	31	100	100	78	83	32	39
Somalia	25	29	80	77	60	60	41	52
Tanzania	27	30	99	100	75	67	39	45
Uganda	26	32	99	100	68	79	42	42
Zimbabwe	39	43	100	100	86	88	44	44
Eritrea	37	28	93	86	64	72	56	49
Cameroon	16	14	99	89	72	68	25	25
South Africa	52	49	100	100	96	89	54	55
Australia	35	46	100	100	100	100	29	38
New Zealand	44	29	100	100	100	100	36	25
Fiji	39	40	100	100	60	56	69	65
Tonga	20	19	100	92	62	55	31	34
Micronesia	6	12	90	88	55	81	5	12
Other, nec	56	31	100	96	99	75	53	30



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