



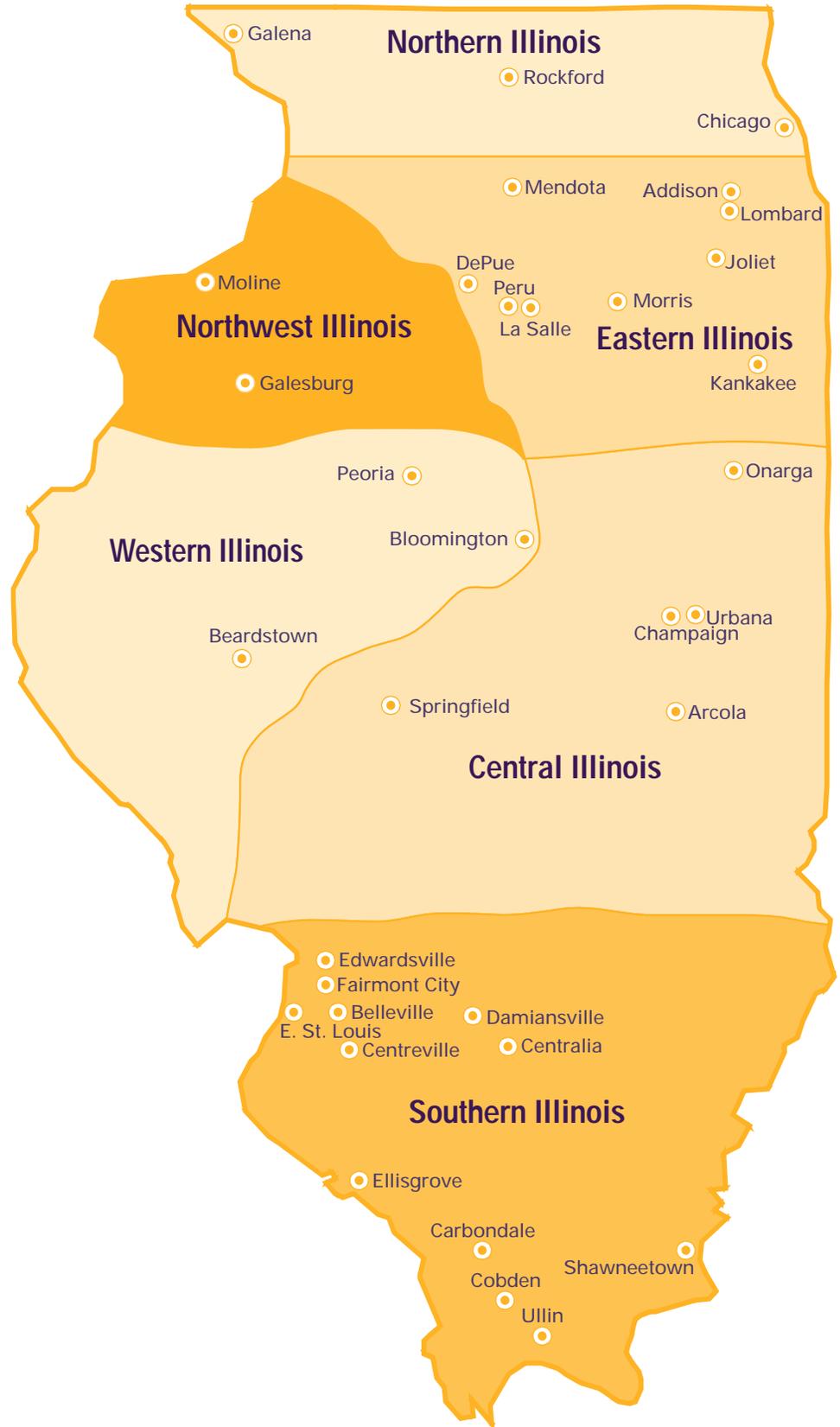
2003
2004

Illinois is Home

STATEWIDE SURVEY OF IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

Illinois is Home

Thirteen Chicago community leaders and ICIRR staff traveled to more than 30 cities across the state, conducted 34 focus groups, and met with 355 immigrants from more than 25 countries, and 40 service providers, faith-based institutions, business leaders, schools, and labor unions to learn first-hand about the triumphs and unique challenges of Illinois newcomers



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R. GUTIERREZ



T. LE



J. LEE

"The meetings really demonstrated rapid change in demographics outside Chicago, and the critical need for an infrastructure and services to support immigrants."
 –Tuyet Le

"I was delightfully surprised by the diversity of the immigrant and refugee communities in Rockford. It was great to connect with people and see that we share so many concerns and issues."
 –JeeYeun Lee

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R. LUSK



Z. KUNOSIC

"Connecting with fellow Bosnians living in the Quad Cities was a wonderful experience. Now we all feel like we're not alone and can support each other as we make America our new home."

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G. GONZALEZ



H. ROJAS

"My trip to Central Illinois has opened my eyes to our state's new reality. Immigrants are everywhere—working hard, raising families, and striving for our American Dream!"
 –Hugo Rojas

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S. DEL TORO



M. BELTANGADY



M. ANGEL

"El conocer por la primera vez la realidad migratoria fuera de la ciudad de Chicago fue impactante para mi. Conocer a lideres como Don Manuel en Morris, ha sido muy motivante para mi trabajo comunitario en Melrose Park."

"To learn about the immigrant reality outside of Chicago was a shock for me. To meet natural leaders like Don Manuel in Morris, was especially motivating for my community work in Melrose Park."

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F. TSAO



C. ACOSTA

"The trip to southern Illinois was very moving. The sense of isolation [of immigrants] is overwhelming. Just as overwhelming is the desire of the community to overcome the isolation." – Carlos Acosta

Western Illinois

ICIRR Staff: Diego Bonesatti



D. BONESATTI



House Democrats

Rep. Harry Osterman
(Co-Chair)

Rep. Edward Acevedo
Rep. William Delgado
Rep. Larry McKeon
Rep. Elaine Nekritz

House Republicans

Rep. Ruth Munson
(minority spokesperson)
Rep. Rosemary Mulligan
Rep. Elizabeth Coulson
Rep. Keith Sommer
Rep. Frank Aguilar

Senate Democrats

Sen. Martin Sandoval
(Co-Chair)
Sen. Miguel del Valle
Sen. Larry Walsh
Sen. Jacqueline Collins
Sen. Terry Link

Senate Republicans

Sen. Steven Rauschenberger
(minority spokesperson)
Sen. Dave Sullivan
Sen. Ed Petka
Sen. William Peterson
Sen. Christine Radogno

A Statement from the Co-Chairs of the Illinois Joint Legislative Task Force on Immigrants and Refugees:

The face of Illinois is changing, and as a state we have a wonderful opportunity.

Immigrants and their children now make up 20% of our state's population – people from all corners of the world, now living in every corner of Illinois. These newcomers to Illinois are making important contributions to our economic, cultural, and political life.

As a State we have a responsibility to plan proactively to create an **"Illinois Immigrant Policy."** We need a clear set of legislative and administrative goals for how our state will assist newcomers in quickly becoming full contributing participants in our society.

We salute the leadership of the **Illinois Coalition for Immigrant & Refugee Rights (ICIRR)** for their statewide outreach to immigrant leaders and communities, and for their advocacy that led to the creation of our Illinois Joint Legislative Task Force on Immigrants and Refugees.

In the fall of 2003, we will host hearings across Illinois on many issues identified in this "Illinois is Home" report, including access to healthcare; education; work and entrepreneurship; citizenship and civic engagement; human services; and community – police relations. Our Task Force will issue a report at the beginning of 2004 with recommendations on an "Illinois Immigrant Policy."

Illinois is already a recognized national leader for immigrant families, with an immigrant services line item in the state budget and a strong partnership between the Department of Human Services, ICIRR, the Jewish Federation, and the strong community based partner groups.

We look forward to building upon this strong foundation, and towards the creation of policies that assist both our newcomers and their host communities. America is a nation of immigrants and many make their home in Illinois. We are a better state because of this.

Martin Sandoval
State Senator
D-12th District, Cicero

Harry Osterman
State Representative
D-14th District, Chicago



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Illinois Coalition For Immigrant and Refugee Right's (ICIRR) Mission :

ICIRR is dedicated to promote the rights of immigrants and refugees to full and equal participation in the civic, cultural, social, and political life of our diverse society. In partnership with our member organizations, the Coalition educates and organizes immigrant and refugee communities to assert their rights; promotes citizenship and civic participation; monitors, analyzes, and advocates on immigrant-related issues; and, informs the general public about the contributions of immigrants and refugees.

Report Authors: Rhoda Gutierrez, with Deb Haas, Marissa Graciosa, Lawrence Benito, Bethany M. Haynes and Joshua Hoyt

Report Design: Atomic Kitchen Design www.atomickitchen.com

Multiple copies of this report are available for \$4.00 each.



INTRODUCTION

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Today's immigrants are coming for the very same reason that others before them came—to seek economic opportunities and a better life for their families. They contribute a great amount to our state, are having remarkable success, and show exceptional levels of initiative and self-reliance.

Since 1990, Illinois has seen an extraordinary increase in its immigrant population. These immigrants come from every corner of the world, and they can now be found in every corner of our state. For these immigrants, “Illinois is home.”

Today's immigrants are coming for the very same reason that others before them came—to seek economic opportunities and a better life for their families. They contribute a great amount to our state, are having remarkable success, and show exceptional levels of initiative and self-reliance.

Recognizing the importance of the changing demographics, workforce, and educational needs of Illinois is the first step towards developing a thoughtful state newcomer policy. Taking cost-effective actions quickly will enable this new group of workers and their families to adapt and become full participants and contributors in our state. Both newcomers and their host communities will benefit.

Although immigration policy is determined at the federal level, the complexities of integrating newcomers into their communities are left to individual states and municipalities. Many areas throughout Illinois that have not traditionally received immigrants have seen a significant rise in their immigrant population. Some are creating innovative ways to ease newcomers into community life. Other areas are finding that they are ill equipped to handle the integration of newcomers and unable to adequately ease concerns from long-time residents—something that state lawmakers and policymakers have just begun to recognize.

Much good work has been done to analyze new census information and develop potential state policies that would address these “integration” issues.¹ Until now, however, no institution in the state has been in the position to do the grassroots outreach to hear directly from immigrants and their communities about their most pressing issues.

In early of 2003, the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights combed the state to dialogue with immigrants and their host communities. Thirteen Chicago community leaders and ICIRR staff traveled to more than 30 cities across the state, conducted 34 focus groups, and met with 355 immigrants from more than 25 countries and 40 service providers, faith-based institutions, business leaders, schools, and labor unions to learn first-hand about the triumphs and unique challenges of Illinois newcomers.²



This grassroots outreach, together with research and policy work, create the “three-legged stool” that will support the success of Illinois’ immigrant integration policies and programs. In the spring of 2003, the Illinois State Legislature recognized the need to create a proactive “immigrant policy” for Illinois. Under the leadership of State Senator Martin Sandoval and State Representative Harry Osterman, the legislature passed SJR0021 creating a joint House-Senate Legislative Task Force. The Task Force will hold hearings during the fall of 2003, and will work with ICIRR to issue a report with recommendations for an “Illinois Newcomer Policy.” Thus, Illinois has an extraordinary opportunity to be a leader in immigrant policy in our nation.

This paper will outline some of the major demographic changes in Illinois, give voice to the immigrant communities across the state, and propose how legislators and state officials can best address the rapid growth of Illinois’ immigrant population through policies and initiatives that will facilitate their integration into their new communities.



Juan Salgado
President
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant
and Refugee Rights

Joshua W. Hoyt
Executive Director
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant
and Refugee Rights

¹Key pieces of research have provided a new understanding of Illinois’ changing immigrant demographics:

- Rob Paral and Michael Norkewicz of the Institute for Metropolitan Affairs at Roosevelt University recently published “The Metro Chicago Immigration Fact Book,” (<http://www.roosevelt.edu/ima/default.htm>) which provides new details about the growth, dispersion, and socio-economic profile of Chicago-area immigrants;
- ICIRR’s “Changing Face of Illinois,” (<http://www.icirr.org>) authored by Louise Cainkar, Great Cities Institute, University of Illinois at Chicago and Moushumi Beltangady, demonstrates the growing political significance of immigrants in the suburbs and the rapid immigrant growth throughout the state.
- In addition, the Illinois Immigrant Policy Project (IIPP) of the Illinois Department of Human Services has played a significant role in developing state policy options regarding immigrant and refugee integration programs through research and analysis in the areas of health and human services; immigrant workers and entrepreneurship; and education. (Call 312/793-7120 or e-mail dhs9561@dhs.state.il.us for copies of any IIPP reports.)

² Survey instruments are available at <http://www.icirr.org>.

A Snapshot of Immigrant Life in Illinois—America in all its pain and glory

Economic opportunity and a desire for an improved quality of life – better jobs, a better future for your children, freedom from prosecution – have always driven immigration. Illinois has prospered as a state welcoming of immigrants from around the world. The change over the last ten years is that immigrants have moved from a few traditional ports-of-entry to settle in a variety of communities across the state.

Across Illinois immigrants have experienced the best and also the worst sides of American life. On the one hand, many immigrant families are experiencing solid success, and thriving with the support of extended families, congregations, and ethnic associations. Some host communities actively and creatively work to understand, welcome, teach, and include newcomers. However in other areas immigrants are facing hostility and discrimination, predatory employers, and significant challenges in their pursuit of the American dream.

The Changing Face of Illinois:

- The number of immigrants in Illinois increased 61% from 1990 to 2000. At 1.6 million, immigrants are 12.3% of the state's population.
- Illinois immigrants are diverse, with approximately one quarter from Europe, one quarter from Asia, and half from Latin America.
- In the 1990's immigrants accounted for nearly 94% of the labor force growth in metropolitan Chicago.
- Immigrants are spreading across Illinois – During the 1990's, 54 of Illinois' 102 counties experienced a greater than 50% growth in their immigrant population.
- Immigrants fall into an "hourglass" pattern, occupying both highly skilled professional jobs and the lowest skilled service jobs.



Immigrant leaders gather in front of Illinois Capitol building. (May 2002)

Illinois Immigrant Needs Assessment Findings:

The rapid increase in the number of immigrants, their dispersion across the state, and the need to assist host communities and their newcomers are the reasons that Illinois needs to craft an “immigrant policy”. A well-designed policy would assist newcomers to rapidly integrate socially, economically, and politically into their new host communities. Below is a summary of the issues raised by immigrants themselves from across Illinois during ICIRR’s statewide needs assessment.

Work

- Educated immigrants find that they are limited professionally by an unofficial “glass ceiling” in many workplaces.
- Language barriers prohibit advancement.
- Low wages, “predatory employers”, and interference in the right to organize
- The churning of the workplace due to federal Social Security “No-Match Letters”.

Healthcare and Human Services

- High levels of uninsured.
- Poor linguistic and cultural competency at healthcare institutions.
- Severe shortages of bilingual staff in rural areas and smaller cities.
- Barriers to accessing public benefits.
- Difficult for foreign trained medical professionals to transfer their credentials
- Overwhelmed community clinics

Education

- The unique challenges for schools absorbing rapid increases and large numbers of diverse newcomers.
- High dropout rates, especially among undocumented students.
- Adult English and vocational literacy classes in short supply.

Legal Status and Law Enforcement

- Need for increased availability of citizenship classes.
- Poor police – community relations resulting from racial profiling and “cowboy cops”.
- Scams target undocumented immigrants.
- Drivers’ licenses for the undocumented.



Summary of Policy Recommendations:

A large part of immigrant success in Illinois is due not to government action or traditional social service providers, but rather to the extensive “circles of support” provided by extended family networks, faith institutions, self-help initiatives, ethnic associations, community based organizations, and immigrant businesses.

Our statewide survey illuminates an important framework from which to view immigrant integration. A large part of immigrant success in Illinois is due not to government action or traditional social service providers, but rather to the extensive “circles of support” provided by extended family networks, faith institutions, self-help initiatives, ethnic associations, community based organizations, and immigrant businesses. These circles of support are the “mediating institutions” that provide job referrals, housing, advice, spiritual and material support, and even credit for beginning new businesses or assistance in mortgage down payments.

As advocates, charitable foundations, and Illinois state government plan to address immigrant integration issues, they first need to consider how to expand and strengthen these circles of support for immigrants in a community. An example would be offering English or vocational literacy classes through immigrant congregations and community based organizations.

As immigrants move outward from the most immediate circles of support they must engage the broader world, including the workplace, educational institutions for both their children and themselves, the banking and financial services world, and any number of government bureaucracies. Again, strong mediating institutions facilitate this process for immigrants in an efficient and

cost effective way by explaining complex programs, translating, and advising.

These workplaces, schools, banks, and government offices are themselves wrestling to respond to the arrival of large numbers of immigrants. Some do it well and some do it very badly. It would be wise public policy to assist these institutions and bureaucracies learn quickly what the “best practices” in dealing with immigrants are, as well as setting some enforceable standards for the treatment of newcomers.

Finally, there will always be those who prey on immigrants and those immigrants who will need traditional safety net systems. Here government and social service providers should exercise their traditional roles of vigilant and forceful oversight and provider of safety net supports.

Effective “immigrant integration” policy will invest first in those “circles of support” that are the places created by the immigrant communities themselves. These are the places to which immigrants turn first, easily and naturally, for support and to solve their own problems. In addition, the Governor’s office should create a cabinet level position for Newcomer Policies and Programs to evaluate the issue raised by this report and by the Illinois Joint Legislative Task Force on Immigrants and Refugees.

ICIRR leaders Jeff Bartow and Raul Raymundo speak with Governor Rod Blagojevich.

THE CHANGING FACE OF ILLINOIS



Profile: Illinois Immigrants

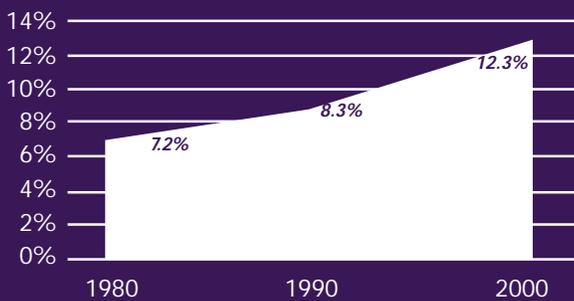
The foreign-born population in Illinois has changed dramatically since 1990. More immigrants from diverse regions and backgrounds are coming to Illinois to settle. Instead of moving to traditional immigrant-receiving areas like Chicago, many are choosing to settle in places like Moline in northwest Illinois to work in the meat-processing industry, or Peoria in the central part of the state to work in hospitals.

Recent immigrants to Illinois fall into an “hourglass” pattern. Large numbers of highly educated professionals are arriving to work in the health care, pharmaceutical, and high tech fields. Another larger group of very uneducated immigrants

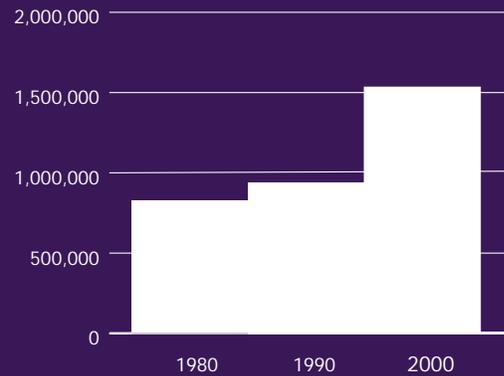
are arriving to work in agriculture, manufacturing, and the hotel and restaurant industries. Both groups are having remarkable successes. In metro Chicago, for example, 66 percent of Indian immigrants have a college degree or better—twice the rate of native-born Americans. And while only 3.4 percent of Mexican immigrants have a college degree, better than half of them already own homes.

With such a significant shift in Illinois’ population and workforce, state legislators and public institutions are faced with new challenges in “integrating” their new residents. This section will provide a profile of Illinois’ immigrant population.

Percent Foreign-Born of Total Illinois Population, 1980 - 2000



Foreign-Born Population in Illinois 1980 - 2000



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 [charts developed by ICIRR, Changing Face of Illinois, October 2002]



The foreign-born population in Illinois has grown dramatically over the last decade.¹ For footnotes see page 29.

- Since 1990, the state's immigrant population has increased from 950,000 to over 1.5 million Illinoisans—an increase of nearly 61 percent.
- Some 20 percent of the state's population (the so-called "immigrant stock" of Illinois) is either foreign-born or children of immigrants.
- Illinois has the sixth largest foreign born population in the U.S. Only California, Texas, New York, Florida and New Jersey have more immigrant residents.

The immigrant population in Illinois is extremely diverse.

- Illinois immigrants come from all over the world: approximately half from Latin American countries and the rest largely from Asia and Europe.²

Immigrants are making enormous economic contributions to Illinois' economy.

- In the year 2000, one in five workers in the Chicago metropolitan area were immigrants.³
- In the 1990s, immigrants accounted for nearly 94 percent of the labor force growth in metropolitan Chicago. This growth accounted for 32 percent of new managers and professionals and 73 percent of new service workers⁴.
- Nearly 60% of all immigrants in the Chicago metropolitan area own their own home.⁵ Immigrants pay more in taxes than they receive in benefits.
- Illinois immigrants (including undocumented immigrants) pay \$7.2 billion in taxes annually or 10.6 percent of all major taxes collected.⁶
- Immigrants pay an average of \$6.11 in taxes for every \$1.00 of major social services used in Illinois. Natives pay \$3.85 for every \$1.00 of major social services used.⁷ Public assis-

Illinois Foreign-Born Population by Region of Origin, Census 2000



Asia	359,812	(23.5%)
Africa	26,158	(1.7%)
Europe	389,928	(25.5%)
Oceania	2,553	(0.2%)
Latin America (including Mexico)	731,397	(47.8%)
Northern America (mostly from Canada)	19,210	(1.3%)
TOTAL	1,529,058	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

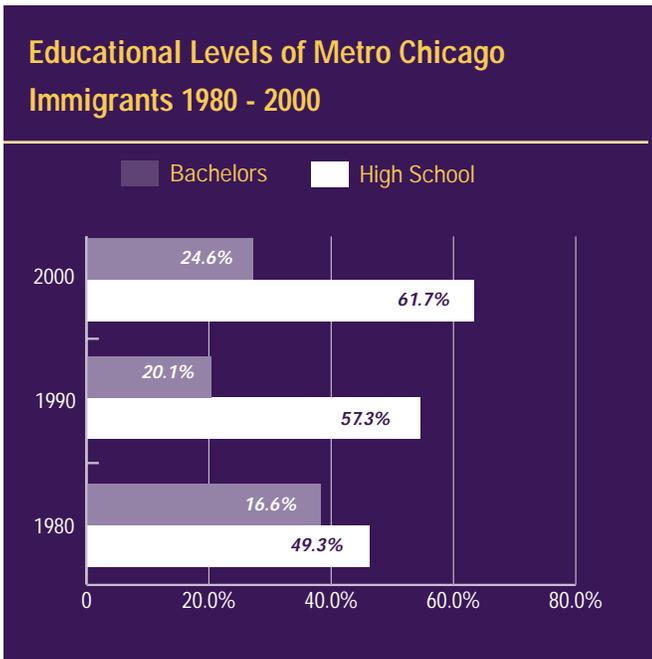
tance usage by immigrants is falling, and is less than the rate of usage by the native born. In the Chicago area only 1.5% of immigrants received welfare in 2000, down from 2.9% in 1990. By comparison, in 2000 2.1% of the native born received welfare, down from 4.6% in 1990.⁸

Immigrants span the range of educational backgrounds.

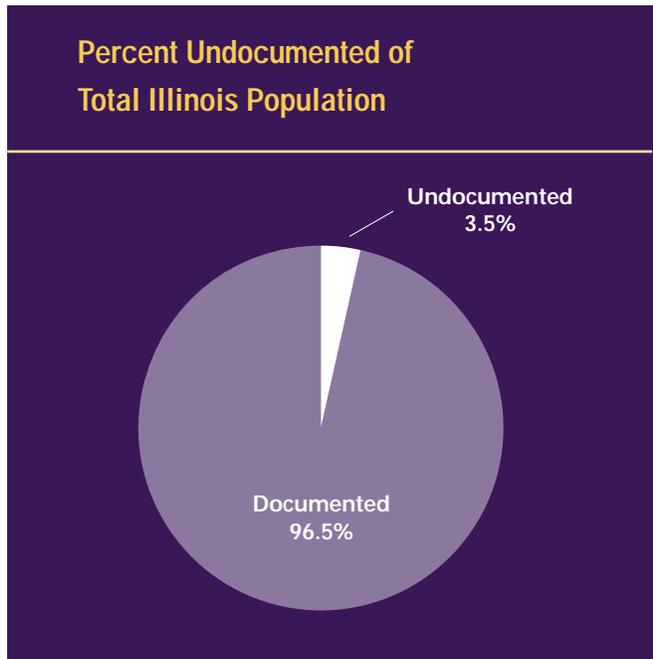
- In the Chicago metropolitan area, 65.8 percent of immigrants from India have a college degree while only 3.4 percent of Mexican immigrants do.⁹
- Educational levels of immigrants in the Chicago metro area are progressing: the number of immigrants with high school degrees has risen by more than ten percent since 1980, while the number with college degree holders has increased by eight percent.¹⁰
- Although immigrants are increasingly more educated, their educational levels are still less than the native-born population: 61.7 percent of immigrants have high school degrees compared to 86.0 percent the native-born population; 24.6 percent of immigrants completed college compared to 31.7 percent of the native-born.¹¹

The undocumented population constitutes a small minority of all Illinois residents.

- Of the 12.4 million Illinois residents, only 3.5% are undocumented immigrants.
- Appropriately a quarter of immigrants in Illinois are undocumented (approximately 432,000).¹² Federal legislation for a new legalization program is essential to fully integrate the undocumented into U.S. society. In the meantime, states are left to deal with the issues of this significant population—people who are integral to the economy and yet forced to live in the shadows.

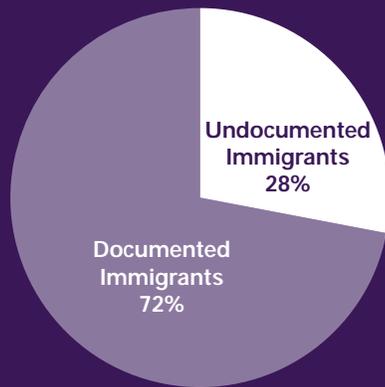


Source: Institute for Metropolitan Affairs, Roosevelt University (2003) The Metro Chicago Immigration Fact Book



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000 and U.S. Bureau of Immigrant and Refugee Services; "Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: 1990 to 2000;" January 2003

Percent Undocumented of Total Foreign-Born Population in Illinois



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000 and U.S. Bureau of Immigrant and Refugee Services; Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: 1990 to 2000, January 2003

Illinois immigrants are dispersed throughout the entire state. Many immigrants have completely bypassed the City of Chicago, a traditional port-of-entry for the state's newcomers, and are settling directly in the suburbs and rural areas throughout the state.

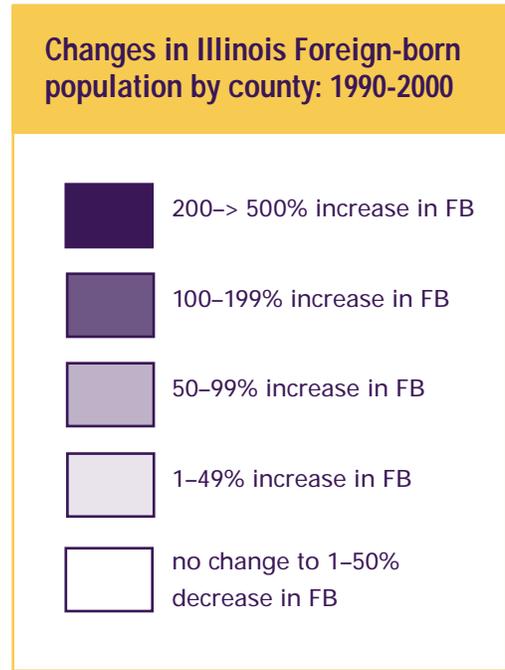
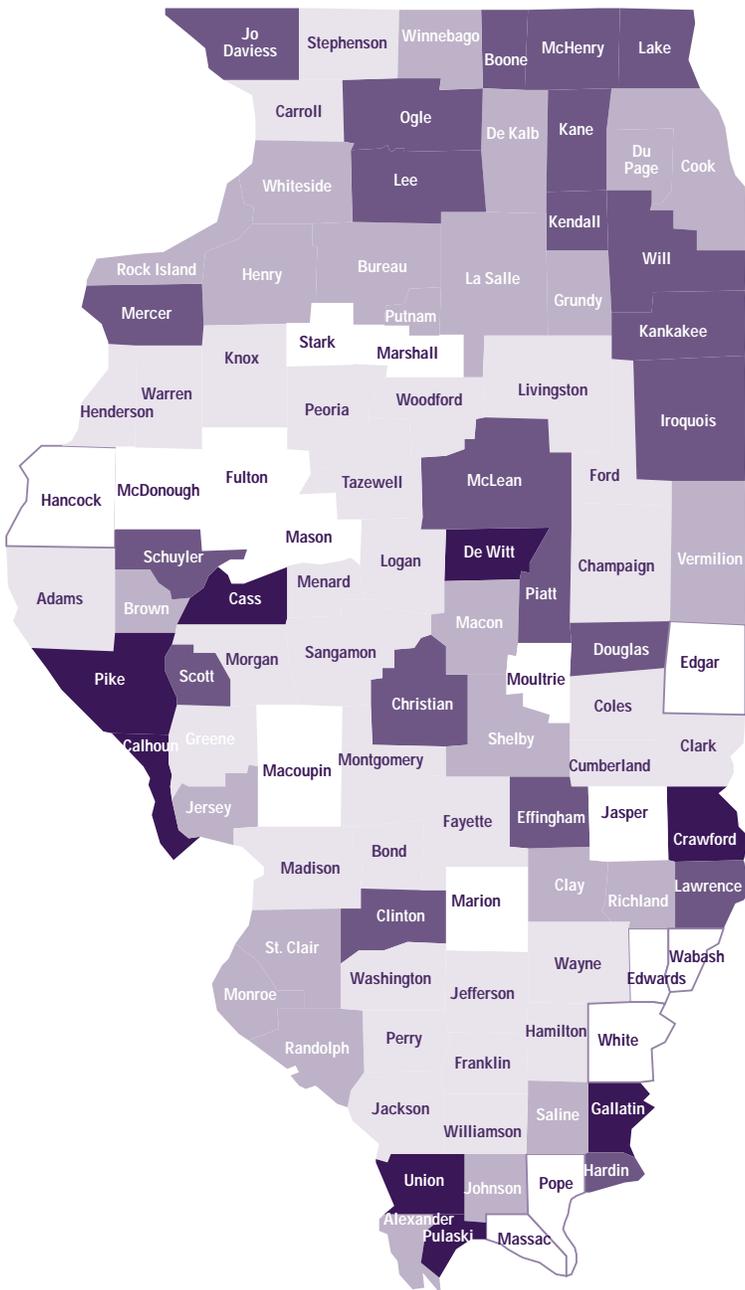
- Of the 102 counties in Illinois, 54 experienced more than a 50 percent growth in their foreign-born population in the 1990s, while 30 experienced more than a 100 percent increase.¹³ (For a county by county breakdown see our website www.icirr.org.)
- While the immigrant population of Chicago increased by 34 percent from 1990 to 2000, the rest of the state (excluding the city of Chicago) experienced an 86.5 percent increase in its immigrant population.¹⁴

Immigrants are a growing political force in Illinois.

- Approximately half of Illinois' legislative districts are home to more than 10,000 immigrants. (For a district-by-district breakdown see our website www.icirr.org.)¹⁵
- Both Democrats & Republicans represent significant numbers of immigrants: 36.9 percent of Illinois immigrants reside in Republican house districts compared to 63.1 percent in Democratic districts.¹⁶
- Immigrants are a critical "swing voting" population in key battleground districts that determine which political party controls the Illinois House and Senate.¹⁷

Illinois Increase in Foreign-Born 1990 - 2000





Data Source: US Census Bureau; Map: Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (2002) The Changing Face of Illinois.

ICIRR leaders Marilu Gonzalez and Juan Pablo Chavez address a rally.



IMMIGRANT NEEDS ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

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Fatigue after long hours of work; caring for the children; time of day or night; traveling issues; sense of confusion because often the teacher speaks only English; low self esteem; embarrassment at their lack of education and the feeling that they will never really learn; all exacerbated by the inability to read or write in Spanish—and yet they keep working to learn English.

– Diocesan official, Belleville

Work

“The common factor that we have here is work. In Mexico, no one has income.”—Immigrant Worker, Galena.

This sentiment held true across immigrant populations participating in the Needs Assessment. There are now Mexicans making “Amish” brooms in Arcola, Laotians working on floating casinos in Elgin, and Bosnians working in the slaughterhouses near the Quad Cities. Major sectors of the Illinois economy, including agriculture, hotels and tourism, manufacturing, health-care, and higher education depend on immigrant workers. Immigrants often find opportunities to work in retail stores or restaurants for several months and then move on to a better job, to start a business, or to establish a professional reputation and advance. In depopulating rural areas of the state, immigrants have filled jobs that many native-born Americans are not choosing to do, and have helped revitalize towns in desperate need of workers and new residents. Key findings about immigrant workers from the Needs Assessment follow.

- **Glass Ceiling:** Better-educated European and Asian immigrants face the challenges of entrepreneurship, transferring foreign credentials, and succession in management and higher-skilled technical jobs. For example, a group of Filipina nurses in Peoria, both lawful permanent residents and naturalized citizens, reported that their native-born colleagues who are less qualified were promoted over them.
- **New Immigrants Funneled into Low-Wage Work:** Other newcomer groups—predominantly Mexican, though also including Bosnians, Middle Easterners, and others—face the worst employment prospects and constitute a high proportion of the low-

wage workforce. Immigrants are clearly the dominant work-force in many low-wage industries including agriculture, meat processing, restaurants, and assembly work, to name a few.

- **Language a Barrier to Advancement:** Areas that have not traditionally received immigrants lack the resources or infrastructure to provide English as a Second Language classes (ESL). Lack of educational opportunities for immigrants adversely affects their job opportunities. In addition, the absence of English classes linked to vocational training poses an obstacle to immigrant advancement.

“Businesses want to hire undocumented Mexican workers because they cannot make worker compensation claims and do not require insurance. Many workers fear workplace raids or accidents. They also experience humiliation and tension with their US employers and co-workers. Immigrants nevertheless stay because the US has work while Mexico does not.”
– Church Member, Carbondale

- **Predatory Employers, Vulnerable Employees:**

Unscrupulous employers seeking to cut costs to increase profits, seek out immigrant workers (specifically undocumented immigrants) who are willing to work for low wages and who do not want to “rock-the-boat” because they are grateful to have work.

These immigrant workers in turn refuse to file complaints or seek improved wages and working conditions, and stay clear of unions. Many immigrants neither know their rights nor recognize what unions may offer. One union cited an example where an organizing effort resulted in back pay, hiring of Latino managers, the option to work overtime, and overtime pay. Despite the big victory, the workers at this company are not currently unionized.

- **Social Security No-Match Letters:** Since September 11, tens of thousands of “no-match” letters have been sent to employers whose workers possess incorrect Social Security numbers. These employers often fire immigrant workers who cannot provide a valid number or explanation, even though the law does not require such a drastic action. This initiative has seriously hurt immigrant workers and disrupted many businesses that rely on immigrant labor. In one example from the Needs Assessment, local religious officials and service providers from Beardstown in Central Illinois regarded their community as “semi-transient” due to “no-match” firings at the main employer (a pork slaughterhouse). The turnover at the main employer was estimated at 25-40 employees per week. The key informants estimated only about 50 percent of all immigrants who come to this town stay.

Immigrant workers don’t understand labor laws or freedom. Employers are able to convince them they don’t need unions.

– Union Representative, Joliet

Implications

- **Lost productivity:** The inability to communicate with immigrant workers due to language barriers leads to greater inefficiencies and mistakes at the workplace. With the wave of Social Security “no-match” letters, immigrant workers lose their jobs and businesses that rely on immigrant labor have to struggle with staffing and lowered productivity.
- **Workforce Development:** The large number of hard-working yet uneducated and often undocumented immigrants (especially from Mexico) is both a boon to the Illinois economy and a fundamental challenge for workforce development. Either Illinois develops a strategy to assist these immigrants to legalize, to learn English, and climb the job ladder, or they and their children could become a new permanent underclass in Illinois.
- **Undermining the rights of all workers:** Employers, who exploit immigrant workers and use immigration status as a means to keep immigrants from organizing, weaken the rights of all workers.
- **Wasted expertise:** Many educated immigrants face challenges when seeking work in line with their skills, particularly those in the sciences and medical fields. Also, immigrant professionals who are qualified for advancement are unable to climb the job ladder. Therefore, they are unable to contribute to U.S. society to their fullest capacity.



Healthcare and Human Services

I'm pregnant now. I go every month to the doctor. He doesn't speak Spanish, but I go with a friend or cousin to help translate.

– Argentine Immigrant, Rockford

Two factors drive the current status of immigrant health—the lack of health insurance coverage and the lack of access to interpretation and translation services. Current efforts to increase translation and interpretation services are important contributions to improving the health of immigrants reached. Unfortunately, only a small proportion of those who could benefit have access to adequate translation and interpretation services.

Lack of access to health insurance is a problem for many Illinoisans, but immigrants fare far worse. According to a study by the Gilead Outreach and Referral Center in 2002, more than 48 percent of non-citizen Latinos in Illinois are uninsured (more than four times the rate of Whites). One in three Latinos is without health insurance, and the rate of uninsured among immigrants is two and a half times greater than among native-born. The irony is that as a largely young, working population, the immigrant community is one of the least expensive groups to insure and treat. The following are the major healthcare issues that immigrants reported in the Needs Assessment.

In one recent case reported in the Needs Assessment, a Carbondale woman died in childbirth in part because she was not able to communicate effectively with hospital staff.

- **Immigrants Lack Health Insurance:** The healthcare situation for low-wage workers and the undocumented is bleak. Most do not have any health insurance at all. While full family coverage might be offered to workers, most could not afford the worker contribution. Undocumented workers reported that they could not receive coverage for even their U.S.-citizen children due to difficulty proving their identity.
- **High Insurance Costs:** Like many working Americans, legal Muslims, Koreans, Laotians, and Filipinos reported that their main issues regarding healthcare were the growing cost of insurance and that health insurance sometimes does not cover hospital bills. Immigrant entrepreneurs who own their own businesses often go without insurance altogether. In instances where employer insurance is available, the cost of premiums, co-pays or deductibles is often prohibitive, especially for family coverage.
- **Poor Linguistic and Cultural Competency:** Although the issue of linguistic and cultural competency came up in many contexts in the Needs Assessment, from driver's license bureaus to work to schools, it was most pronounced in discussions about healthcare. An immigrant's inability to communicate with health service providers leads to ineffective service, limited access to information and, sometimes, medical disasters. In one recent case reported in the Needs Assessment, a Carbondale woman died in childbirth in part because she was not able to communicate effectively with hospital staff.
- **Ineffective Interpretation:** Medical personnel often demand translation from family members who may not have the requisite medical vocabulary to describe the problem. Non-fluent Spanish-speaking medical personnel do not know if their patients understand them. Some immigrants bring an interpreter with them (often a friend or relative) or try to visit Spanish-speaking doctors.



- **Severe Shortages of Bilingual Staff in Rural Areas and Smaller Cities:** Professional interpreters report being recruited away from community settings to take higher-paying jobs in larger cities. At one sexual assault counseling center services are for the most part free and immigration status is not an issue if a woman needs services. In spite of the great need, the center is unable to serve the Latina community because of the lack of bilingual staff.
- **Barriers to Accessing Public Benefits:** Although the low cost state KidCare and the new FamilyCare health insurance programs cover legal immigrants, often eligible immigrants do not learn about them or enroll because of fears about drawing attention to undocumented family members or compromising future citizenship prospects. Some undocumented immigrants have not been able to



get Medicaid in emergency situations because hospitals seem unaware that immigrants can receive Medicaid in emergency cases.

- **Community and Clinics are Overwhelmed:** The healthcare safety net of community health clinics are often swamped with long waiting lists for appointments. If possible, families will use these health clinics to get periodic vaccinations and basic check-ups. But this is not the norm at present. Participants in the Needs Assessment identified some clinics that use a sliding scale based on income, therefore low-income families can receive free or low-cost health exams. However, people with major health problems often cannot receive full care at a clinic and are forced to go to a hospital and receive financially crippling bills.
- **Financially Devastating Medical Bills:** With such a large portion of the immigrant community uninsured, every medical problem has the potential of becoming a financial disaster. Immigrants report being forced into bankruptcy and even losing homes as a result of medical bills.

Implications

- **Lost productivity at the workplace:** Dangerous or repetitive workplace conditions result in accidents for which there is no health insurance coverage. Sick, uninsured children result in parent absenteeism from work.
- **Lack of insurance and preventative care causes manageable conditions to become life threatening:** Due to the lack of health coverage, immigrants obtain very little preventative care. Therefore, health conditions that can be treated, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and tuberculosis, become life threatening in many immigrant communities. In addition, many immigrants will wait until a minor health issue becomes an emergency—at greater cost to the state, hospital, and immigrant. The lack of bilingual providers, particularly in areas outside of the Chicago metropolitan area, means that alcohol and substance abuse are generally left untreated and domestic violence is not addressed. Mental health services are non-existent.
- **Public health risks:** Although many across the country are in dire need of good and affordable healthcare, it is particularly important that healthcare services are available to Illinois' immigrant population. Because of the growth and dispersion of Illinois immigrants, not providing good health services may risk exposing vulnerable populations, such as school-aged children, to preventable diseases.
- **A healthcare time bomb:** If large numbers of immigrant workers continue to age in difficult jobs without health insurance, the Illinois healthcare infrastructure could face an eventual explosion in healthcare needs from uninsured, non-paying patients.

“Throughout Illinois, immigrants reported a strong desire to learn English. Without English language skills, immigrants find themselves isolated and unable to fully participate in their new communities.”

Education

Many immigrants reported that educational opportunities for their children were a primary reason for coming to the US and for staying once they arrive. Although immigrant workers pay taxes that provide additional resources for the public, school officials in many Illinois communities report that it is difficult to develop programs that appropriately meet the educational needs of immigrant children. In addition, adult English as a Second Language (ESL) classes are over capacity given the dramatic rise in the state's immigrant population. These are some of the key issues immigrants and school officials reported.

Local teachers have been concerned and encouraging to immigrant students, and try to involve the children in Mexican cultural issues. Still, the teachers and students feel trapped because the undocumented students cannot continue onto college.

– Church member, Carbondale



Those who have the intelligence can't go on. They stop going to school and start working.

– High School Immigrant Student from Mexico, Rockford

Governor Blagojevich signs HB60 on May 18th 2003 with Rep. Edward Acevedo and undocumented student leaders.

- **Unique Challenges for Schools with New Immigrant Populations:** School district personnel pointed to the challenges of meeting the needs of many different immigrant groups. They are often challenged in serving the newest arrivals. For instance, a school in Rockford reported the ability to finally meet most of the needs of Latino students, but due to lack of language proficiency and availability of ESL teachers, they leave out Laotians, Bosnians, and Vietnamese who are also underserved.

- **Undocumented High School Students Drop Out:** Immigrants and school personnel cited that undocumented high school students are dropping out to work. These students are unable to pursue a college education because they lack a valid Social Security number—a requirement for many college applications, financial aid, and scholarships. Although an Illinois law was recently passed (HB 60) allowing undocumented students who meet certain residency requirements to qualify for in-state tuition at state universities, this only helps a small number of undocumented students, as they remain ineligible for loans or grants.
- **Adult English As A Second Language (ESL) classes are in short supply:** With immigrant populations growing across the state, the need for adult ESL classes has also grown.



“ESL providers have demonstrated creative ways to ensure that ESL classes are more accessible to immigrants. For example, Lincoln Land Community College in Beardstown has a satellite ESL office just across the street from the town’s primary employer of its new immigrant population, a meat processing plant.”

Throughout Illinois, immigrants reported a strong desire to learn English. Without English language skills, immigrants find themselves isolated and unable to fully participate in their new communities.

Because adult learners have to juggle many demands in their schedules including work, childcare, and household tasks, ESL providers have demonstrated creative ways to ensure that ESL classes are more accessible to immigrants. For example, Lincoln Land Community College in Beardstown has a satellite ESL office just across the street from the town’s primary employer of its new immigrant population, a meat processing plant. Lincoln Land now offers a series of ESL and citizenship classes and reports that this has been a positive development.

Implications

- **School districts serving immigrant children need assistance:** The rapid influx of large numbers of English limited children from diverse countries poses significant challenges to local school systems, and children pay the price. Our future depends on the education of all of our children.
- **Young talent is wasted, communities lose future professionals:** Many talented undocumented high school students drop out of school early and find jobs that may not realize their fullest potential—when this happens, entire communities lose. Until federal legislation is able to address the legalization of undocumented immigrants, the growing problem of high school dropouts falls on local communities.
- **Isolation of immigrant communities:** English acquisition is fundamental to immigrant integration. Without more opportunities to learn English, immigrants will remain isolated from their communities and will continue to be vulnerable populations.
- **English as a Second Language classes are not easily accessible:** Adult English learners have full and varied schedules. In order to ensure that they can access ESL classes, more workplace-based and church-based ESL programs are needed, and vocational ESL should be expanded.



Azam Nizamuddin, Esq. of the Council of Islamic Organizations addresses a press conference in Federal Plaza.

Local Law Enforcement and Legal Status

Although the legalization of undocumented immigrants must be addressed at the federal level, the reality of living side-by-side with undocumented immigrants is clearly a complex issue that local communities must deal with on a daily basis. Until the federal government finally addresses the issue of legalization, alleviating the obstacles for undocumented immigrants to integrate and fully contribute will benefit many communities throughout the state.

- **Immigrant Integration is Key to Public Safety and Law Enforcement:** The Needs Assessment process uncovered examples of how some Illinois communities have excelled at developing positive immigrant relationships. For instance, the Kankakee police department developed a Hispanic Citizens' Police Academy, where community members can learn how to contact the police and access services, and about important aspects of the criminal and civil code. The classes are available in addition to ESL classes already offered to immigrants and many take advantage of them

Based on the immigration patterns they observed, city officials also developed a sister-city relationship with the two Mexican towns from which most local immigrants came. Officials believe that learning more about immigrants' birthplaces has facilitated integration.

- **Scams Target Undocumented Immigrants:** Undocumented immigrants reported that most banks will not allow them to open accounts without a social security number, leaving them out of the financial mainstream and prey to criminals and businesses that charge exorbitant fees for wiring money to family members still residing in their home country. At the same time, city officials express many concerns including the challenge of ensuring that unscrupulous landlords, employers, and companies offering illegal "international" drivers' licenses do not take advantage of the immigrant community.

- **Drivers' Licenses for the Undocumented:** Police officers point out that: "drivers' licenses are the number one priority right now. There have been too many hit-and-run situations due to the fact that so many people do not have drivers' licenses." Obtaining a driver's license would compel immigrants to learn highway rules and

How do we go about being able to knock on doors and get cooperation and trust from the [immigrant] community.... We want law-abiding people to have confidence in us.

— *Michael Kinkade ,
Kankakee Chief of Police*

I think that the police are very racist. Whenever they stop somebody they say it's routine.
— **Latina Immigrant, Rockford**

We fear that the police will stop us every time we go to work. The police stop the majority of Mexicans...

– Latino Immigrant, Galena

safety, officials argue, and it would allow them to obtain insurance and “make roads safer.” In addition, undocumented immigrants strongly desire opportunities to obtain valid identification especially since September 11. The Mexican consulate cannot keep up with the high demand across Illinois for the consular identification cards (called ‘matriculas consulares’) that the Mexican government has been issuing to Mexican nationals living in the U.S.

Across all communities studied, immigrants pointed to drivers’ licenses as a pressing issue. To live and work in communities with economic opportunity requires driving—to work, to seek medical care, to attend religious services, to get to ESL classes. This need is particularly important in areas like the Chicago suburbs where there has been extraordinary immigrant growth and poor or no public transportation.

- **“Cowboy Cops,” Racial Profiling and Abuses:** While in some locales public officials are strong advocates of allowing immigrants to obtain drivers’ licenses, in others immigrants report they are repeatedly stopped and fined or jailed for driving without licenses. In the Quad Cities, Latino immigrants reported that the police harass them, especially because they know they have no licenses. If they don’t have a

driver’s license, they are fined and after three times they are sent to jail. Police announced on a radio station for the town’s New Year’s party that they were going to check documents for security issues. Immigrants throughout the state reported problems with racial profiling including DesPlaines, Waukegan, Joliet, Galena, and Southern Illinois just to name a few.

Implications

- **Crimes go unaddressed:** Without trusting relationships between burgeoning immigrant communities and police, many crimes go unreported and will not be investigated. Undocumented immigrants who fall prey to crimes refuse to report them to the proper authorities for fear of being reported to immigration services. Because of this, the criminal can continue to victimize others and undermines the police-community relationship, which is critical to fighting crime.
- **Unsafe highways and higher auto insurance rates:** No drivers licenses for undocumented workers means untrained drivers, hit and run accidents, and higher insurance rates for all Illinoisans.

So many Arab and Muslim immigrants came here for freedom and democracy—now they fear the government and can't speak out. Is this what America is really about? –Muslim Immigrant, Chicago



There have been some deportations and some people harassed by the INS but mostly people don't talk about it. They feel very isolated and scared, afraid to even talk to each other for fear someone might overhear them and misunderstand.
- Muslim Immigrant, Springfield

For many Arabs and Muslims, the United States has become a terrifying place since the attack of September 11, 2001. Muslims from Chicago, Rockford, Bloomington, Springfield, Carbondale, and Peoria as well as Arabs throughout Illinois reported being dramatically affected by on the post-September 11 security measures. Regardless of where they were from (Jordan, Bangladesh and Somalia to name a few) or whether they were students, professionals, citizens, or refugees, many were uncertain of their own and their communities' future. Most recently the 'special registration' required of mostly Middle Eastern or Muslim males has resulted in fear and confusion amongst these immigrant groups.

Every day is getting worse and worse...
I am an American citizen, but every day I fear, I am going to be told I don't belong here, that I have to find another place. And that's me. I'm a citizen...how about people with green cards, people who don't even have green cards? I think we should cover the statue of liberty right now until the dreams of immigrants can happen.
-Muslim Immigrant, Rockford

Cardinal Francis George
addresses first Illinois
Immigrant and Refugee Policy
Summit, Feb., 2003.



MOVING FOWARD—POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

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“Circles of Support” – a framework for “Immigrant Integration”

Our statewide survey illuminates an important framework from which to view immigrant integration. **A large part of immigrant success in Illinois is due not to government action or traditional social service providers, but rather to the extensive “circles of support” provided by extended family networks, faith institutions, self-help initiatives, ethnic associations, community based organizations, and immigrant businesses.** These circles of support are the “mediating institutions” that provide job referrals, housing, advice, spiritual and material support, and even credit for beginning new businesses or assistance in mortgage downpayments.

As advocates, charitable foundations, and Illinois state government plan to address immigrant integration issues, they first need to consider how to expand and strengthen these circles of support for immigrants in a community. Depending on the specific community in which an immigrant lives and the ethnic group to which an immigrant belongs, these circles of support will vary in both their strength and their capacity to provide this support.

New refugee groups, for example, arrive with minimal family and faith networks, and require deeper support from charitable and government safety net providers. Communities experiencing new and rapid immigrant growth should move quickly to assist immigrants to create this infrastructure. For example English or vocational literacy classes offered through immigrant congregations and community based organizations will strengthen those institutions, as well as be much more effective in reaching the targeted communities than classes offered in traditional community college settings.

Advocates should develop ways in which immigrants can perpetuate and strengthen this immediate circle of support. The goal is to assist immigrants who have adjusted to the U.S. help the more recently arrived immigrants. Advocates and immigrant leaders can organize networking meetings, mentorship programs, community service activities, and community meetings, all to develop forums for immigrants to help each other and become vital sources of for their own companies.

As immigrants move outward from the most immediate circles of support they must engage the broader worlds of the workplace, educational institutions for both their children and themselves, the banking and financial services world, and any number of government bureaucracies. Again, strong mediating institutions facilitate this process for immigrants in an efficient and cost effective way, explaining complex programs, translating, advising. A number of very successful examples of this model have already been created by the Illinois Department of Human Services with the Jewish Federation, the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant & Refugee Rights, and numerous community and ethnically based service providers.

The institutions of these broader worlds – schools, workplaces, police departments, municipalities, community colleges, government programs – are wrestling to respond to the arrival of diverse groups of immigrants in large numbers. Some do it well and some do it very badly. It would be wise public policy to assist these institutions and bureaucracies learn quickly what the “best practices” in dealing with immigrants are, as well as setting some enforceable standards for the treatment of newcomers.

Finally, there will always be those who prey on immigrants and those immigrants who will need traditional safety net systems. There needs to be vigilant and forceful oversight of abusive employers, fraudulent providers of legal advice, exorbitantly priced financial services, and other predators. For those immigrants who fall into poverty there is a need for traditional social services and safety net supports. Unfortunately, the reluctance of many employers to pay a living wage or provide family health care benefits to all of the “working poor”, including immigrants, often shifts these costs to others. This is especially true with the provision of healthcare services.

Effective “immigrant integration” policy will invest first in those “circles of support” that are the places created by the immigrant communities themselves. These are the places to which immigrants turn first, easily and naturally, for support and to solve their own problems.



Illinois has always been a state that is good to immigrants, and immigrants have been good for Illinois. An Illinois Immigrant Newcomer Policy will mean that the assets immigrants bring to Illinois will be maximized... We owe this to each other, and to all for whom "Illinois is Home".

An "Illinois Immigrant Policy"

The dramatic increase of immigrant workers in Illinois; their ethnic, educational, and economic diversity; and their dispersion across our state means that Illinois policy makers and legislators must address the challenges of "immigrant integration" with vigor. Immigrants are an important contributing asset to Illinois and it is wise to invest in an asset. Illinois needs a well thought out "Newcomer Policy". This is not a matter of charity, but rather essential to the economic and social progress of Illinois.

The Governor's office should create a cabinet level position for Newcomer Policy and Programs. This person should be empowered to create an Inter-departmental Task Force on Immigrants and Refugees to evaluate the issues and recommendations in this statewide needs assessment and work collaboratively with the newly formed Illinois Joint Legislative Task Force on Immigrants and Refugees. There are several areas where a broad bi-partisan consensus among multiple stakeholders can easily be built around specific policy initiatives. These would include:

Advancing the American Dream

- **English language acquisition:** There is no better way for immigrants to improve their income in the U.S. than to learn English, and there is no better way to ease social integration in host communities. English leads to improved workplace safety, healthcare provision, and job advancement. The State should work with the community college system, employers, and church and community based organizations to create an extensive network of community and workplace-based English as a Second Language (ESL) opportunities.
- **Citizenship:** There are approximately 400,000 legal immigrants eligible for citizenship in Illinois. They do not take this step for a range of reasons, ranging from nostalgia to lack of English to fear of going back to school and tests. Only good can come – for them and for Illinois – if they were to take the affirmative step to commit themselves to becoming full citizens of the United States. Illinois should support a statewide "Become a Citizen" campaign. The campaign should work with and support the network of ethnic, social service, and community based organizations, as well as community colleges and libraries, that could make this campaign a success at the community level.



- **Education:** Illinois is federally mandated to educate immigrant children through high school. The new “No Child Left Behind” Act creates national accountability standards based on testing in English. Many school systems in Illinois are not prepared for the challenge of educating these new English learners. It would be rational state education policy to provide support and expertise to local school districts and teachers on how to deal with the challenge of a large group of immigrant children in their classrooms. Illinois’ future depends on the successful education of all of our state’s children.

Creating a Strong and Vibrant Illinois Economy

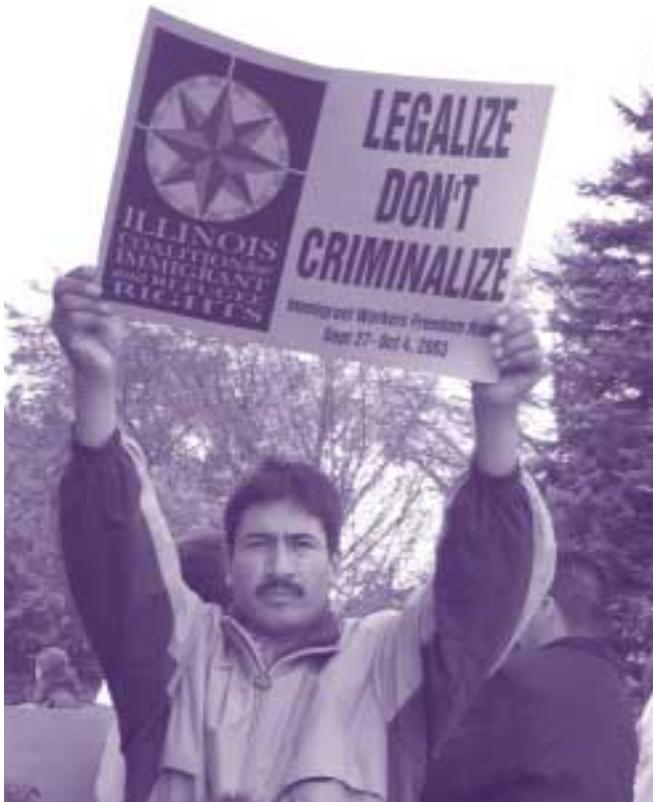
- **Home ownership:** Home ownership is the gateway to the great American middle class. It is how most working people earn equity. It causes people to develop roots and to invest in their communities and schools. In addition, the housing market is one of the most important sub-economies of the state, and a basic indicator of consumer confidence. Home ownership is tremendously important to immigrants. This is an immigrant success story. Even the relatively poor Mexican immigrant community is purchasing homes at the rate of over 50%, by pooling contributions from the multiple paychecks of family members. State programs that facilitate first time home buying in the immigrant community make good economic sense for the state, and can be combined with successful programs from unions, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.
- **Entrepreneurship:** Many of Chicago’s struggling neighborhoods, and now the failing retail strips of aging industrial suburbs, have been revitalized by immigrant small business owners. Skilled immigrants have created technology, financial, service, and bio-medical firms. The Ill. Department of Commerce should partner with ethnic business associations and university business departments to launch helpful technical assistance or financing programs to support this phenomenon.

- **Job training and credentials transfer:** Immigrants come to Illinois to work. Some come functionally illiterate in their own native language, and others bring advanced medical and technical degrees with them. A rational state economic development policy would include vocational literacy training programs for the former group, and an effective professional credentials transfer program for the latter. This would help both the immigrants and enhance our workforce.

Supporting Healthy and Safe Communities

- **Health care:** There are three basic issues for immigrants in the field of healthcare. One is that the foreign born are two and a half times less likely than the native born to have health insurance. (This is a problem shared by all low-wage workers and small businesspersons.) The second problem is lack of adequate translation and interpretation in healthcare facilities, occasionally leading to tragic medical misdiagnosis. Finally, many well-trained foreign doctors, nurses, and dentists are prevented from working in their fields by unreasonable licensing requirements in Illinois.

A rational state medical policy would facilitate adequate language access and utilize the talents of foreign trained doctors, nurses and dentists for the provision of culturally and linguistically appropriate medical attention, and to reach underserved communities and populations. Addressing the large number of uninsured in Illinois will require a broad effort going far beyond the immigrant community. Small business insurance pools and mandatory family health coverage would be major steps forward. However, the number of uninsured immigrants could be reduced significantly by the inclusion of legal immigrants in state health benefits (they are currently excluded in many instances), and inclusion of undocumented children in the state’s KidCare Program of health insurance for low-income children.



- **Law enforcement:** The police in communities of rapid growth of new immigrant populations react in a variety of ways. In some, such as Kankakee, there has been aggressive outreach and mutual education. The police have learned about the newcomers, while the immigrants have been taught their responsibilities as good citizens. In many other communities, the response has been one of profiling and harassment, and building distrust and barriers. Specific “best practices” programs should be set up for local police departments to learn from, and legal protections against harassment need to be legislated and enforced.

Leading the Country in Innovative and Rational Immigrant Policy

- **Legalization:** Finally, the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights advocates that Illinois recognize the reality of the contributions made to our economy (and tax base) by undocumented immigrants. Illinois should lead the nation in advocating for a broad legalization that would allow these workers and their families to come out of the shadows. In addition, the state should take purposeful steps that address the very real problems and contradictions caused by having large numbers of vulnerable people living and working in our mix. Our state should lead the nation in declaring that Illinois residents who work hard, pay taxes, and obey our laws should all be treated equally, regardless of immigration status.
- **Drivers' licenses:** Illinois should allow immigrants, regardless of immigration status, to drive legally (and get auto insurance), as a way to make our highways safer.
- **Workers rights:** Our state should strive to find and punish predatory employers who abuse undocumented immigrants by violating health and safety and wage and hour laws, and who block the legal right to organize. These sorts of steps are rational policies, based on our own economic self-interest.

Illinois has always been a state that is good to immigrants, and immigrants have been good for Illinois. An Illinois Immigrant Newcomer Policy will mean that the assets immigrants bring to Illinois will be maximized, and that local communities, school systems, and police departments will receive assistance and expertise dealing with the unfamiliar challenges caused by rapid demographic change. We owe this to each other, and to all for whom “Illinois is Home”.

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 Mertz-Gilmore Foundation
 Needmore Fund
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 Western Union Settlement Fund

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ENDNOTES (pp 10-12)

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Member Organizations 2003

Access Community Health Network
Access Living
Adult Learning Resource Center
AFL-CIO Community Services Program
African Incorporated
African Village Association
Aids Legal Council of Chicago
Albany Park Community Center
Albany Park Neighborhood Council
American Association of Russian Speaking Immigrants
American Friends Service Committee - DesMoines
American Friends Service Committee - Great Lakes Region
Apna Ghar
Arab American Action Network
Asian American Institute
Asian Health Coalition of Illinois
Assyrian National Council of Illinois
Bosnian Herzegovinian American Community Center
Cambodian Association of Illinois
Catholic Charities/ALAC
Catholic Conference of Illinois
Center for Economic Progress
Centro Cristo Rey
Centro de Información
Centro Romero
Centro Sin Fronteras
Chicago Irish Immigrant Support
Chicago Legal Clinic, Inc.
ChildServ SIGA Center
Chinese Mutual Aid Association
City of Evanston/Department of Human Services - Latino Services
Community Economic Development Association
Community Health Partnership
Counseling Center of Lake View
Diocese of Belleville - Office of Hispanic Ministry
Diocese of Joliet - Office of Hispanic Ministry
Dominican Literacy Center
DuPage County Human Services
East Central Illinois Refugee Mutual Assistance Center
Erie Neighborhood House
Exodus World Service
Family Focus, Inc.
Farmworker Advocacy Project
Franciscan Vocation Center
Genesis Center of Health and Empowerment
Great Lakes Social Concerns Committee
Hamdard Center for Health and Human Services
Heartland Alliance for Human Needs and Human Rights
Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society Chicago.
HOPE Fair Housing
Horizon Immigration, Inc., NFP
Hotel Employees & Restaurant Employees Union Local 1
Howard Area Community Center
Hull House Association - Uptown Head Start
Iglesia del Nazareno Libertad
Illinois Veterans Equity Center
Immigration Project
Indo-American Center
Instituto del Progreso Latino
InterChurch Refugee & Immigration Ministries
Interfaith Leadership Project
International Institute of Wisconsin
International Newcomer Center
Italian-Polish-American Unity Organization
Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago
Jewish Social Services
Joliet Junior College
Korean American Community Services
Korean American Resource and Cultural Center
Korean American Senior Center
La Casa of Goshen, Inc.
Latino Organization of the Southwest
Latinos Progresando
Law Office of Susan Fortino-Brown
League of United Latin American Citizens of DuPage
Life Span
Lincoln Land Community College TEAL ESL Program
Lithuanian Human Services Council of the USA, Inc.
Logan Square Neighborhood Association
Maine Township General Assistance Project
Mano a Mano Family Resource Center
McHenry County Latino Coalition
Metropolitan Asian Family Services, Inc.
Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund
Mexican-American Political Organization
Midwest Asian American Center
Minsky, McCormick & Hallagan
Muslim Civil Rights Center
National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice
Northwest Neighborhood Federation
Nuevos Horizontes - Triton College
Pakistan Federation of America
Peregrinos Por la Dignidad
Polish American Association
Polish American Leadership Initiative
Pro Care Center - Centro de Salud Familiar
Programa CIELO
Project IRENE
Pueblo Unido
Rainbow Community Center
Sarah's Inn
Scalabrini House of Theology
Scalabrinian Lay Movement
SEIU Local 1
Southeast Asia Center
Southwest Youth Collaborative
Spanish Center, Inc.
Suburban Cook County Tuberculosis Sanitarium District
Sunlight African Community Center
Township High School District 113
Township High School District 214 - Community Education
UFCW Local 881
U.S. Baha'i Refugee Office
United Electrical Workers District 11
Urhai Community Service Center
USWA Sub District #1 Council
Vietnamese Association of Illinois
Western Avenue Community Center
World Relief - Chicago
World Relief - DuPage
Zam's Hope Community Resource Center