CENTER FOR HOUSTON'S FUTURE 2019

HOUSTON'S ECONOMIC FUTURE: IMMIGRATION

A REPORT ON THE REGIONAL EFFECT OF IMMIGRATION

ABOUT CENTER FOR HOUSTON'S FUTURE

CENTER FOR HOUSTON'S FUTURE FURTHERS THE REGION AS A TOP GLOBAL COMMUNITY IN WHICH TO WORK AND LIVE.

Center for Houston's Future (CHF) works to address matters of highest importance to the long-term future of the Houston region by engaging diverse leaders, providing impactful research, and defining actionable strategies. We bring business and community together to innovate for the future of the Houston region. CHF is an organization devoted exclusively to thinking about and acting strategically for the long-term future of the nine-county Houston region.

Three program areas provide a framework for accomplishing its mission:

- **Strategic Planning**
- **Business/Civic Leadership Development**
- **Community Future Awareness**

Center for Houston's Future thanks Immigration Committee Co-Chairs Amy Gasca and Carlos Lara for their leadership in creating this report. We would also like to extend our gratitude to the volunteers and committed citizens who participated in the immigration roundtables.

This report is made possible by a generous grant from JPMorgan Chase & Co.

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Report design and layout by Steve Grill. Report cover by Charles Apple.

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO

In the beginning of 2017, the Center for Houston's Future heard a convergence of voices calling for an organization to engage and inform the community about the role immigrants play here in Houston—with eventual goals of acting locally to make the region more immigrant friendly and building support for immigration reform at the grassroots level.

The genesis of the Center's work on immigration, and for this report on the importance of immigrants to Houston's future prosperity, stems from the keen insights of Rice University Professor and Center for Houston's Future Board Member Stephen Klineberg, whose perspective on Houston's changing demography shaped this report.

CHF's work has also benefited from the vision of Center Board Member Stan Marek, who has championed our immigration work, and from the generous support of report underwriter JPMorgan Chase & Co. Patrick Jankowski from the Greater Houston Partnership provided valuable feedback on the economic modeling.

We have also collaborated with a number of partners. A special thanks to New American Economy for providing underlying data for our study; the Mexico Center at Rice's Baker Institute for working with us and others to develop the conference where we reported our results; and video production company Rational Middle for providing ideas and content for this report.

In addition, we worked closely with the Anti-Defamation League, the National Immigration Forum, Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative and the Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce on a series of industry-sector focus groups.

We're grateful for the spirit of collaboration and common purpose of all our partners. We hope this report will serve as a springboard for others to join the effort.

— Brett A. Perlman

"I've spoken of the shining city all my political life, but I don't know if I ever quite communicated what I saw when I said it. But in my mind it was a tall, proud city built on rocks stronger than oceans, wind-swept, God-blessed, and teeming with people of all kinds living in harmony and peace; a city with free ports that hummed with commerce and creativity. And if there had to be city walls, the walls had doors and the doors were open to anyone with the will and the heart to get here. That's how I saw it, and see it still."

Ronald Reagan,
Farewell address to the Nation, 1989

"As the earliest settlers arrived on [our] shores, they dreamed of building a city upon a hill. And the world watched, waiting to see if this improbable idea called America would succeed...

[As] I look out at a sea of faces that are African-American and Hispanic-American and Asian-American and Arab-American. I see students that have come here from over 100 different countries, believing like those first settlers that they too could find a home in this City on a Hill—that they too could find success in this unlikeliest of places."

Barack Obama,
University of Massachusetts-Boston Commencement Address, 2006

WE NEED IMMIGRANTS TO MEET HOUSTON'S DEMAND FOR WORKERS

ANNUAL GROWTH RATE FOR WORKERS*

DOCUMENTED	UNDOCUMENTED	NATIVE
4.9%	0.4%	1.6%

* Data from 2007-2016

IN 2016

IMMIGRANTS WERE

23% OF THE REGION'S POPULATION BUT HELD 29% OF THE REGION'S JOBS

39% OF ALL FOREIGN-BORN RESIDENTS WERE NATURALIZED CITIZENS

HOUSTON RANKED **50th** OUT OF THE NATION'S 100 LARGEST CITIES FOR INTEGRATING IMMIGRANTS

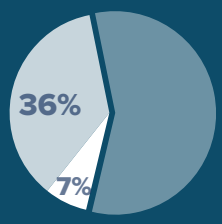
FOREIGN-BORN SHARE OF HIGH-SKILLED WORKFORCE

- **34%** STEM
- **42%** DOCTORS
- **43%** SCIENTISTS
- **42%** PETROLEUM ENGINEERS

BY 2036**

IMMIGRANTS WILL HOLD

43% OF THE REGION'S JOBS



DOCUMENTED
UNDOCUMENTED

57% OF **NEW** JOBS CREATED (SINCE 2016) WILL BE FILLED BY IMMIGRANTS*

>

2 OUT OF 5 OF THE REGION'S JOBS WILL BE HELD BY IMMIGRANTS

RISING FROM ▲ **29%** TO ▲ **43%**

** CHF Projections

IF WE WERE TO

RESTRICT ALL IMMIGRATION BY **30%** → **$51 BILLION** LOSS IN GDP

DEPORT ALL UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS → **$36 BILLION** LOSS IN GDP

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Professor Stephen Klineberg's insight about the remarkable shift that transformed Houston over the past half-century from a primarily homogeneous city into a region with striking racial and ethnic diversity is demonstrated by comparing the 1970 census with the census data from 2017.

In 1970, Harris County's 1.7 million residents were 69 percent Anglo (non-Hispanic white), 20 percent African American, 10 percent Hispanic and 1 percent Asian.

Due largely to both domestic and international migration, Harris County grew at an annual rate of 2.2 percent since 1970 to include more than 4.6 million residents by 2017. These newcomers helped transform our community into a region that is majority minority. In 2017, the county was 43 percent Hispanic, 20 percent African American and 7 percent Asian. The Anglo share of the population dropped by half to just 30 percent.

> This report seeks to create a springboard for a community-wide discussion on how we can become a region where immigration is broadly seen as an economic asset.

Looking forward, virtually no other region of the country will be affected by immigration more than Houston. Assuming that immigration to the region continues at its current pace, Houston's foreign-born population will almost double in the next 20 years. Immigration and the integration of immigrants has become and will continue to be increasingly important to our region's future.

Given these significant demographic trends, this report elaborates on how Houston's economic growth is intertwined with its demography. We discuss how immigration has historically fueled the region's economy and why it will be key to our economic future.

For decades, population growth in Houston has been significantly driven by immigrants and their children. Looking forward to Houston's 200th anniversary in 2036, we developed an economic forecasting tool to analyze how changes in immigration would affect the region's economic growth in that year. Our main conclusions are the following:

- Houston's economic future is critically dependent on continued immigration. Immigrants already comprise nearly one-third of the region's workforce. We calculate that with employment growth among native citizens below 2 percent, Houston will need foreign immigration to continue expanding economically.
- The construction and service industries are particularly dependent on immigrant labor today, but other sectors such as health care and IT will increasingly rely on immigrants to meet growing labor demands.
- Curtailing immigration would significantly depress economic growth. Cutting the historic rate of foreign migration to Houston by 30 percent would result in a $51 billion loss in regional economic output by 2036.

In addition to the forecasting model, this report contains four other main sections.

FEDERAL POLICY:

Given the public debate over immigration, we provide a simple framework for understanding our immigration system and how these policies shaped Houston. We seek to complement the work of our media partner, Rational Middle, which is producing fact-based films to educate the community on our current immigration system and possible paths toward reform. These videos are available at **rationalmiddle.com**.

HOUSTON IMMIGRATION PROFILE:

A snapshot of our region's immigrant population illustrates the evolving role that both high-skilled and lower-skilled immigrants play in our economy.

Many immigrants in our state and in our region historically came from Mexico seeking work and often started out in agricultural, construction or service-sector jobs. More recently, the composition of our immigrant population has been changing. As Houston shifts from a resource-based to a knowledge-based economy, the immigrants arriving now are increasingly high-skilled and from across the globe.

Although there are no firm numbers of undocumented immigrants, we estimate that the more than 586,000 undocumented immigrants in the region constitute around 9 percent of all employed workers. Our analysis shows that these undocumented workers have a significant positive effect on our region's economy. However, the rate of growth for undocumented workers in Houston is decreasing and we expect that trend to continue.

LOCAL POLICY/COMPARISON:

The report discusses how we as a community can create local policies to make the region more welcoming to immigrants. In order for our economy to continue to grow, Houston must remain a magnet for newcomers as we seek to compete with other cities across the U.S. such as Los Angeles, Dallas and Chicago.

We outline some policies and programs to better include immigrants in the civic, social, and economic fabric of Houston. Then, using data from our partner New American Economy, we benchmark ourselves against other communities.

INDUSTRY ROUNDTABLES:

We summarize findings from focus groups with regional leaders who identified immigration-related challenges their respective industries face, as well as opportunities to support immigrants and foster broader inclusion. This work sought to understand the workforce needs of Houston employers, the role immigrants play in various sectors of our economy, and what we can do as a community to address needs of employers and immigrant workers.

CONCLUSION:

We close our report with the personal success story of Chef Hugo Ortega, who came to Houston as an undocumented immigrant and became an international culinary superstar. Chef Ortega's story shows what immigrants with drive, luck, talent and creativity can create and why immigrants are key to our economic future.

In sum, this report seeks to create a springboard for a community-wide discussion on how we can become a region where immigration is seen broadly as an economic asset.

We hope this report will have implications beyond our city and our region. As Professor Klineberg has suggested, Houston can become a model for the country. How we handle our transformation could set an example for other cities and regions facing similar demographic shifts.

The Federal Immigration System & How It Shaped Houston

We start with a brief description of our immigration system. Understanding that framework helps us to better evaluate issues dominating the public debate over immigration and provide context around the portrait of Houston's immigrant population.

There are four broad paths to immigrating legally to the United States: family reunification, employment, humanitarian and the diversity lottery. Each has its own rules and complications, which influence who gets to come to the U.S.

To start, it's important to realize that our immigration system is designed to severely restrict those who can enter the U.S. and that there are only limited opportunities for foreigners to immigrate.

> "TO GO THROUGH THE MULTIPLE STEPS NECESSARY... TO GET TO LEGAL PERMANENT RESIDENCE IS INCREDIBLY DIFFICULT."
> -ALI NOORANI

Rational Middle has developed a number of short films focused on encouraging fact-based discussions on immigration to promote a better understanding of these complex issues. In this section, we refer to several discussions in those videos.

"To enter the country legally is one of limited opportunity," Ali Noorani, executive director of the National Immigration Forum in Washington, told the Rational Middle. "To go through the multiple steps necessary . . . to get to legal permanent residence is incredibly difficult."

Most Americans don't realize how "restrictive and complex" is it to legally immigrate here, explained Charles C. Foster, chair of Houston-based Foster LLP, one of the nation's largest immigration firms.

"The popular refrain 'They should go back and get in line and come in legally' is based upon the false assumption that one simply must apply," he said. "In fact, unless one has a very close or immediate relative to a U.S. citizen, or in some cases qualifying through employment by proving the unavailability of U.S. workers, the ability to qualify is very restrictive and limited."

The Four Paths

A brief look at paths to legal immigration follows. Each offers an avenue to permanent legal residence, a key step in becoming a naturalized citizen.

Separately, some can seek a temporary status (an H-1B visa to work) or temporary protection from deportation (DACA). We also briefly address this.

The information isn't meant to cover all scenarios or offer nuance, but to give a sense of how the system works.

FAMILY REUNIFICATION

1

Almost two-thirds of legal immigrants came to the U.S. through family reunification in 2016, according to federal government statistics. The process requires a petition from a permanent U.S. resident or legal citizen. Individuals are only allowed to petition for spouses, parents, children or siblings. Numerical caps also play a role, and spouses and children get priority.

Waits can be substantial. "While immediate relatives (spouses and minor children) generally receive their green cards soon after meeting all the criteria of the extensive visa process, the wait time for other family members may vary from years to even decades," according to National Immigration Forum, which advocates for reform.

In January 2018, the government was still processing applications for brothers and sisters of U.S. citizens who filed more than 13 years earlier, the Forum noted. A January 2019 State Department bulletin, for example, indicated some Mexican siblings of U.S. citizens waited 21 years.

We'll revisit family reunification in the history section, explaining how changes in U.S. Immigration law caused it to dominate legal immigration. That, along with our proximity to Mexico and Latin America, has helped to shape the profile of Houston's immigrant community.

EMPLOYMENT

2

"Lots and lots of things stand in the way between somebody who wants to come here to work, or an employer who needs a worker, and a legal pathway to do it," Ben Johnson, executive director of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, told the Rational Middle.

Under the permanent immigration employment-based visa system, there are five different categories. Visas are capped around 140,000 a year across all five categories. That number also includes spouses and children of workers, and overall caps on visas by country can affect how many are issued.

"The option of qualifying through employment can be very restrictive and often can take years, assuming you have a willing and supportive prospective U.S. employer," Foster said.

HUMANITARIAN: REFUGEES AND ASYLUM

3

Refugee status or asylum is granted to those who have been persecuted or have a credible fear of persecution due to race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion. Individuals seeking this status must also show that their own governments cannot or will not protect them.

Those seeking refugee status must do so from outside the U.S. and must have a referral, such as from the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. The application and interview process require health, background and security screenings and can take years. Those seeking asylum can request it from within the U.S. or upon entry to the country, such as at a border crossing or airport. They must do so within the first year of entering the U.S., with some limited exceptions.

"The burden of proof to win an asylum claim is extraordinarily high and most asylum applications are denied, largely because most asylum seekers do not have access to attorneys to help them present their cases," Andrea Guttin, legal director for Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative, said.

DIVERSITY LOTTERY

4

The diversity visa lottery was instituted in 1995 to provide diversity in U.S. immigration. Up to 50,000 visas are available each year to those from countries with low rates of immigration here. Visas are distributed among six regions, and no country can get more than 7 percent of the available diversity visas in a year. Applicants must meet strict eligibility requirements to qualify.

Non-Pathway Statuses

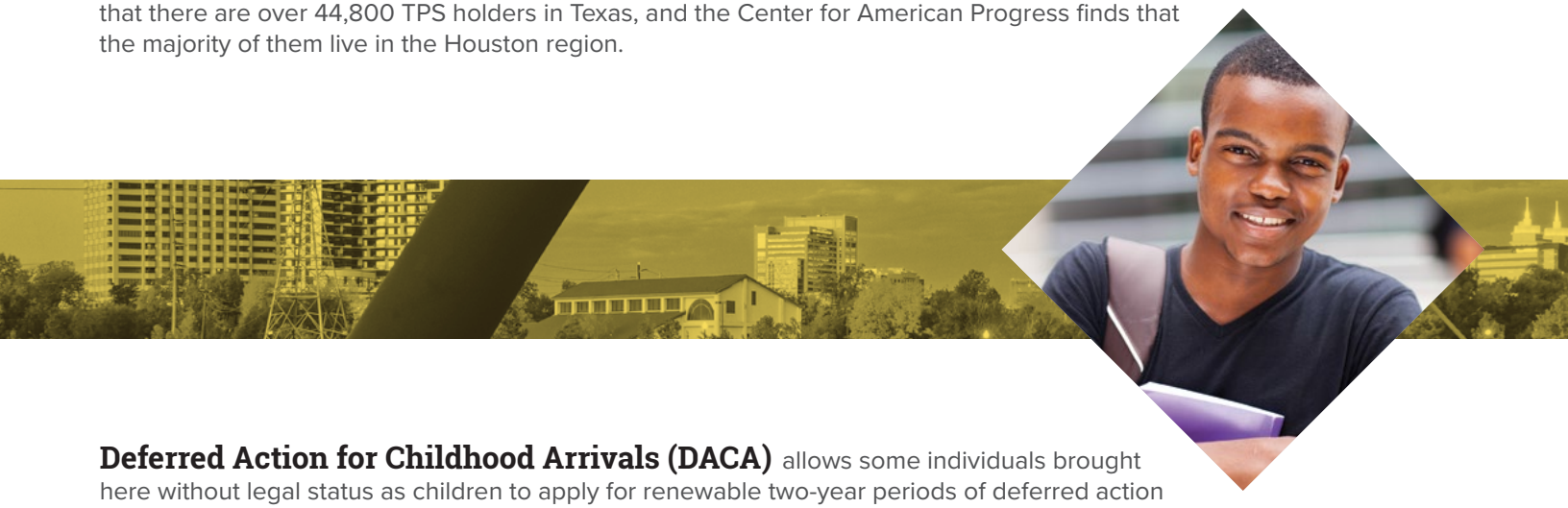
The four pathways described on the previous page offer individuals the ability to obtain legal permanent residence. Other programs allow individuals to live in the United States temporarily without offering permanent resident status or a path to citizenship. Examples follow:

Nonimmigrant (Temporary) Visas

There are many different types of nonimmigrant visas. For example, tourist visas allow brief visits and nonimmigrant visas, such as an H-1B, allow for work. Each are good for certain periods of time. If an individual overstays the limit, they become undocumented. Most visa categories have numerical caps as well as strict eligibility requirements.

Deferred Action: TPS and DACA

Temporary Protected Status (TPS) was created by Congress in 1990 to provide temporary immigration status and work permits for nationals of designated countries confronting ongoing armed conflicts, environmental disasters, or extraordinary and temporary conditions. As of January 2018, more than 300,000 people in the United States were covered under TPS with more than 90 percent hailing from El Salvador, Honduras and Haiti, according to a 2018 report by the Migration Policy Institute. The Center for Migration Studies estimates that there are over 44,800 TPS holders in Texas, and the Center for American Progress finds that the majority of them live in the Houston region.



Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) allows some individuals brought here without legal status as children to apply for renewable two-year periods of deferred action from deportation and to become eligible for work permits. DACA was established in 2012 by President Obama. MPI estimates that 1.3 million individuals are eligible for DACA nationwide, with 700,000 currently holding DACA status. We estimate that the DACA-eligible population in the Houston metro is roughly 97,000, or 6 percent of the region's foreign-born population.

These snapshots, while not comprehensive, illustrate the immigration system's complexity.

History of Immigration in the Houston Region

Immigrants have always played a critical role in the story of our region, since Houston's economic growth has been a magnet for those seeking work.

Going back to the mid-nineteenth century, Germans settled in Texas and Mexican laborers arrived to build Houston's railroads. Galveston served as a prominent port of entry to the U.S. and a kind of Texas Ellis Island. Many of the estimated 200,000 immigrants who arrived in America via the port of Galveston between 1865 and 1924 dispersed across the state and the country, but a sizable number also settled nearby.

Over the past half century, Houston transformed from a largely homogeneous city into a highly diverse metropolitan area attracting residents from around the world. Houston's Anglo population plateaued in the 1980s, with the absolute number of non-Hispanic whites in Harris County and the City of Houston shrinking ever since. Yet, the region experienced robust growth over the same time period due to domestic and international migration as well as the births of immigrants' children.

The surge in the number of Houston's foreign-born residents is the direct result of changes in federal immigration law.

Federal policy dictated by the Immigration Act of 1924 severely curtailed immigration to the United States, effectively allowing only Northern Europeans to migrate to America. In 1965, the government reversed course with the 1965 Hart-Celler Act, which eliminated quotas based on national origin or ethnicity.

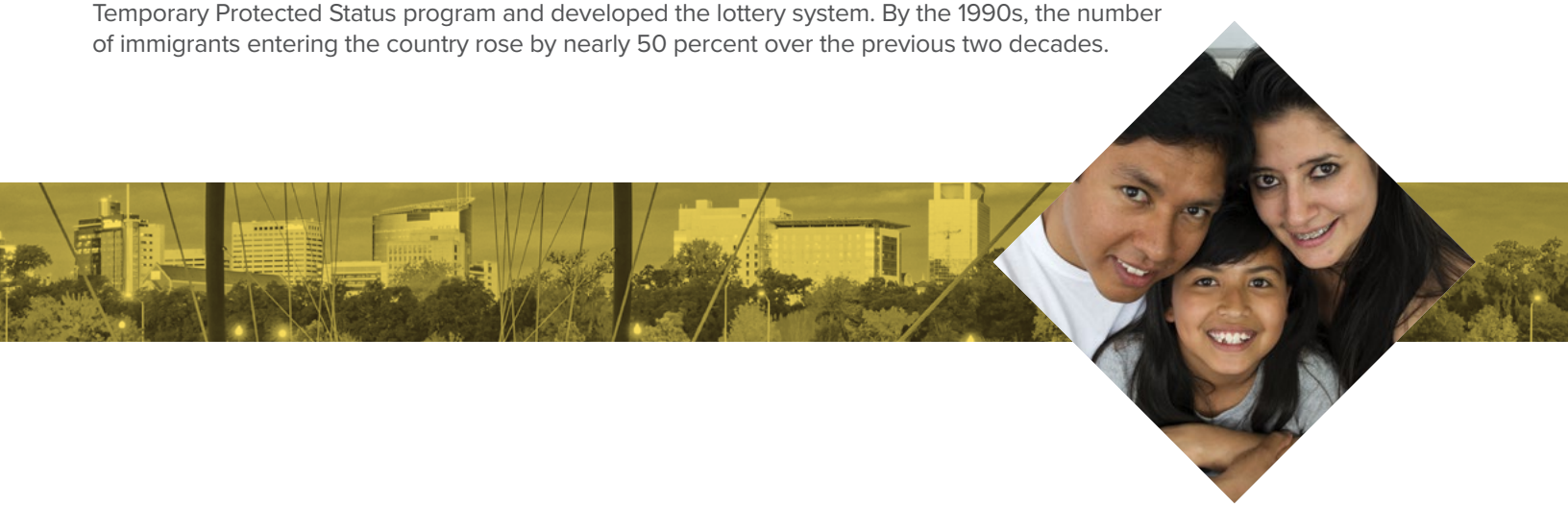
The new system gave preference to family reunification over skills. The preference for family reunification was chosen as a political compromise intended to avoid an abrupt shift to a merit-based system, which some feared would change the demographics of the country by allowing more non-Europeans to emigrate.

In fact, the opposite happened: the 1965 law opened the door to large-scale immigration from outside Europe.

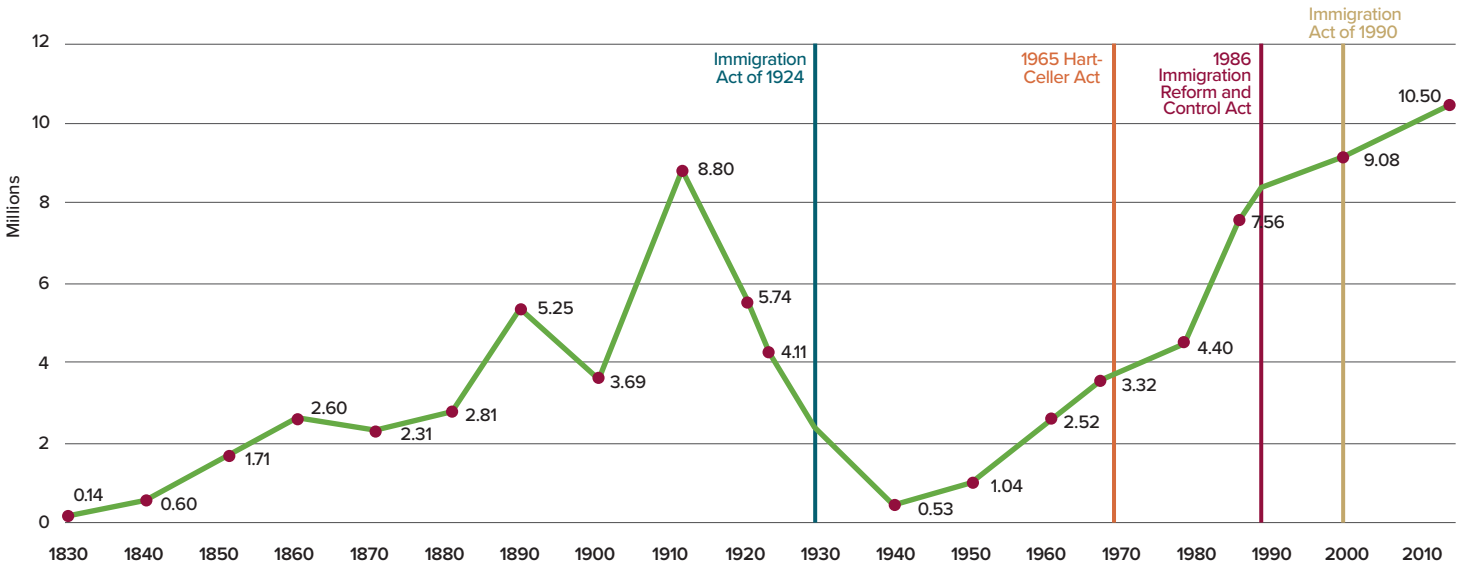
"New and well-educated immigrants from diverse countries in Asia and Latin America established themselves in the United States and became the foothold for subsequent immigration by their family networks," according to a 2015 MPI report.

Professor Klineberg notes that of the twelve million immigrants that came to America during the 1990s, only one in ten came from Europe, with the bulk of new immigrants hailing from Latin America, Africa, Asia and the Caribbean.

This pattern was reinforced by the passage of the Immigration Act of 1990, which created the Temporary Protected Status program and developed the lottery system. By the 1990s, the number of immigrants entering the country rose by nearly 50 percent over the previous two decades.



Inflow of Documented U.S. Immigrants by Decade, 1820-2010



Adaptation of a chart designed by Stephen Klineberg. Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics

Role of Immigration in Houston's Economic Future

Key Findings

It is widely accepted that economic growth results from population growth and capital investments that improve worker productivity. Historically, Texas' and Houston's economies have grown in tandem with increases in population, which have come from births as well as domestic and international migration. In recent years, international migration has been a key driver in expanding Houston's workforce, which in turn has led to economic growth.

Demographers predict that, with immigration, the region will add 4 million residents in the next 20 years. As such, newcomers will play a critical role in ensuring our region's economic growth. We assess the extent of immigrant workers' economic contributions by projecting how a change in their numbers would affect growth in the region's gross domestic product (GDP).

Since our city's 200th anniversary is in 2036, we selected this milestone as a date for analyzing the effect of different immigration scenarios.

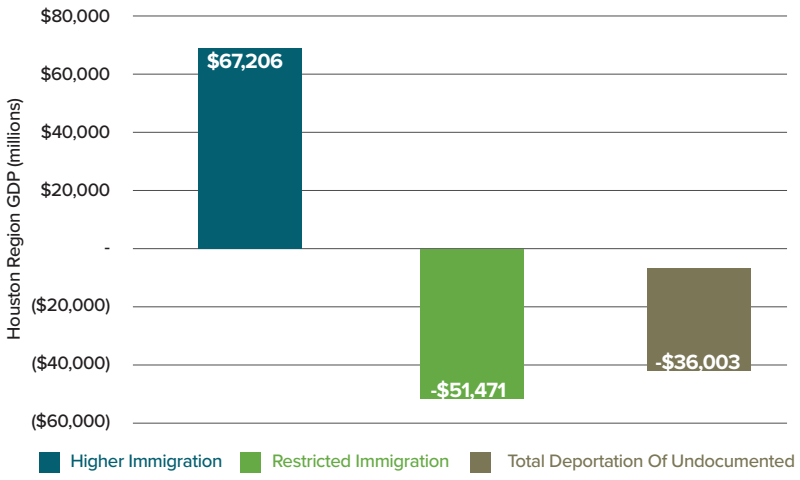
Our main conclusions are the following:

- Houston's economic future is critically dependent on continued immigration. Immigrants already comprise nearly one-third of the region's workforce. We calculate that with employment growth among native citizens below 2 percent, Houston will need foreign immigration to continue expanding economically.
- The construction and service industries are particularly dependent on immigrant labor today, but other sectors such as health care and IT will increasingly rely on immigrants to meet growing labor demands.
- Curtailing immigration would significantly depress economic growth. Cutting the historic rate of foreign migration to Houston by 30 percent would result in a $51 billion loss in regional economic output by 2036.

Effect of Immigration on Economic Growth

GDP—and measurements of its growth—is one of the most accepted indicators of economic activity. We project the change in GDP by 2036 under three cases—higher immigration (an across-the-board 30 percent rise in immigration to the region), restricted immigration (an overall 30 percent decrease in immigration), and deportation of all undocumented workers. While the probability of each of these scenarios occurring is relatively remote, we selected them to illustrate the extent to which changes in immigration can affect the economy. For more information on our model approach and the assumptions used, please see the appendix.

2036 Incremental GDP (Historical as Baseline)*



Source: CHF Analysis of IPUMS-U.S.A. 1-year extracts
Undocumented estimates from NAE analysis of IPUMS microdata

The outcomes are dramatic and clear: Immigration fuels economic growth. The chart above depicts the change in regional GDP of three immigration scenarios indexed to a baseline immigration case predicated on historical immigration rates. This baseline case stems from a linear projection of historical trends that predicts a regional GDP of $652.6 billion in 2036, compared to $411.1 billion in 2016.*

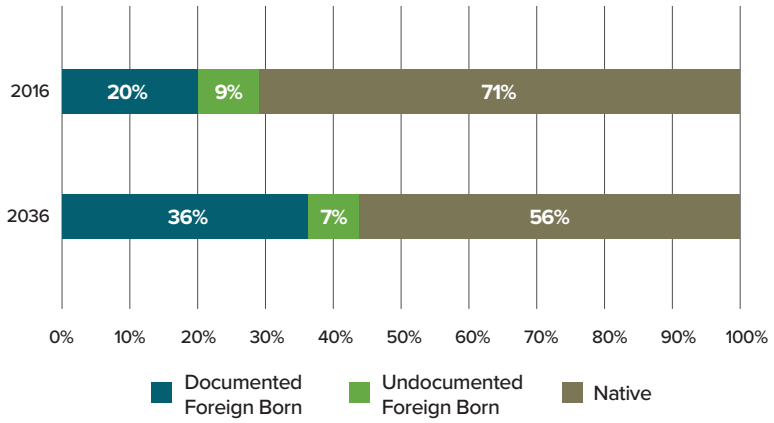
The "higher immigration" scenario adds $67 billion in GDP over the "businesses as usual," or the base case, roughly one-sixth of Houston's current economic output. The restricted immigration scenario would decrease GDP by $51 billion from the base case. Lastly, we project that deporting all undocumented residents would drop GDP by $36 billion compared to the base case. The greater magnitude of the restricted immigration scenario versus the total deportation scenario is primarily due to two reasons. First, decreasing all future immigration to Houston by 30 percent would spur a greater population decrease than deporting all undocumented immigrants, who constitute only about a third of the overall foreign-born population and whose numbers have essentially stopped growing. Second, a loss of documented immigrants has a greater effect on GDP than the same level decrease in undocumented individuals because, on average, the former tend to hold higher-paying jobs than the latter.

Immigrants' Critical Role in Houston's Workforce

An analysis of employment data from 2007 to 2016 demonstrates how Houston's economic growth is predicated upon immigrant labor. During this time period, employment among foreign-born individuals legally allowed to be here grew at an annual rate of 4.9 percent compared to 1.6 percent for native workers and 0.4 percent among undocumented laborers. This suggests that, in addition to capital investment, continued legal immigration will be an engine of Houston's economic growth going forward, with the importance of undocumented immigrant laborers declining over time.

In 2016, the legal and undocumented population accounted for 23 percent of the total population but held 29 percent of all employment in the Houston metro. Assuming historical trends, we project that 57 percent of the region's jobs created from 2016 to 2036 will be filled by foreign-born workers. We estimate that more than two-fifths of all the region's jobs will be held by immigrants by 2036, rising from 29 percent in 2016 to 43 percent just twenty years later.

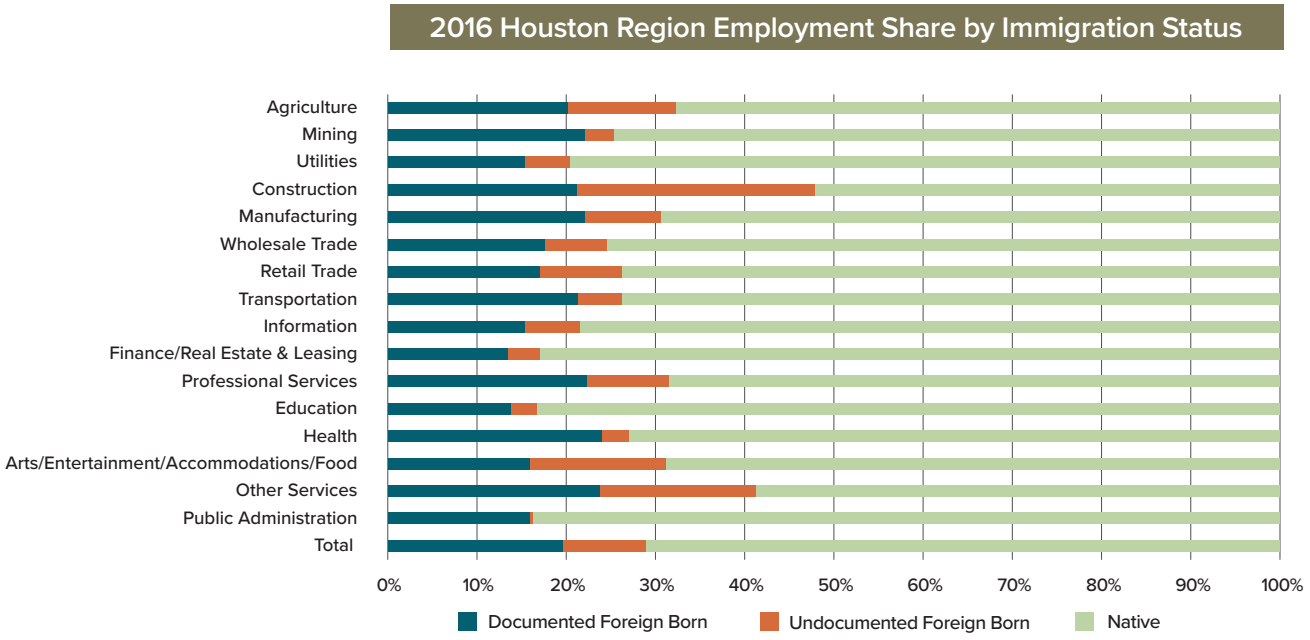
Houston Region Employment Share by Immigration Status



Source: CHF Analysis of IPUMS-U.S.A. 1-year extracts
Undocumented estimates from NAE analysis of IPUMS microdata

*Due to data availability, the wholesale trade and transportation sectors were omitted from our analysis. All total GDP and employment figures cited do not include those industries

Immigrant Labor Needs Vary by Industry

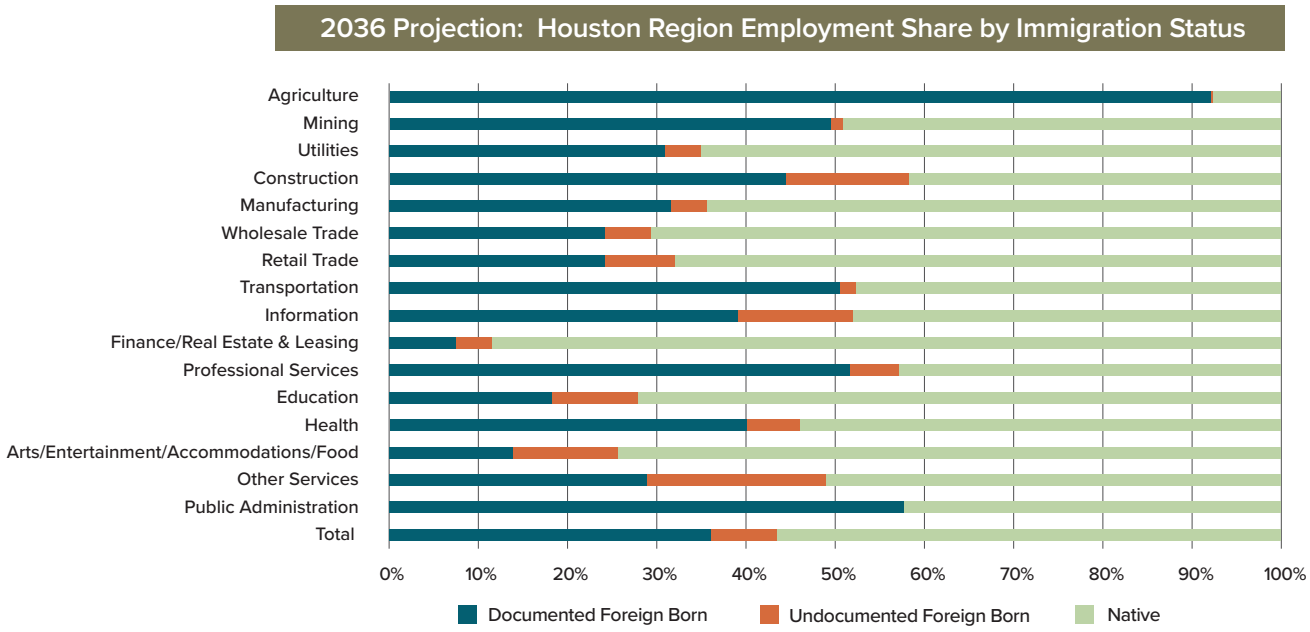


Source: CHF Analysis of IPUMS-U.S.A. 1-year extracts
Undocumented estimates from NAE analysis of IPUMS microdata

2016

Houston's foreign-born population is highly diverse and is represented within all of the region's industries. However, certain industries are more reliant on immigrant labor than others—chief among them being the construction and hospitality/services sectors. Other industries currently feature a relatively average proportion of foreign-born workers but will increasingly depend on immigrants to meet their growing workforce needs over the next two decades. For example, we anticipate that almost 60 percent or 455,000 of the 763,000 additional jobs that the health care sector will add by 2036 will be held by foreign-born workers including highly-skilled occupations such as doctors and nurses. Overall, our analysis of historic employment trends suggests that the share of jobs held by immigrants within the health care and IT sectors will respectively rise from 27 percent and 22 percent in 2016 to 46 percent and 52 percent by 2036.

2036



Source: CHF Analysis of IPUMS-U.S.A. 1-year extracts
Undocumented estimates from NAE analysis of IPUMS

Overview of Immigration in the Houston Region

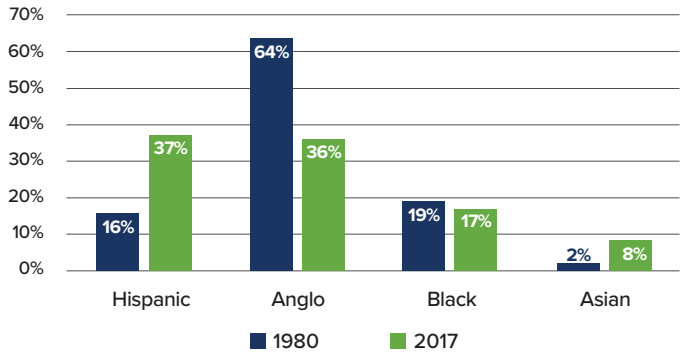
Our Region's Immigration Profile

Over the course of just a few decades, immigration rapidly transformed Houston into one of the nation's most diverse and growing regions.

A 2017 report published by MPI finds that as of 2016, the 1.6 million immigrants living in the Greater Houston region account for nearly a quarter of the overall population. The level of growth among the Houston region's foreign-born population surpasses that of areas such as New York City, Los Angeles, Miami and Chicago.

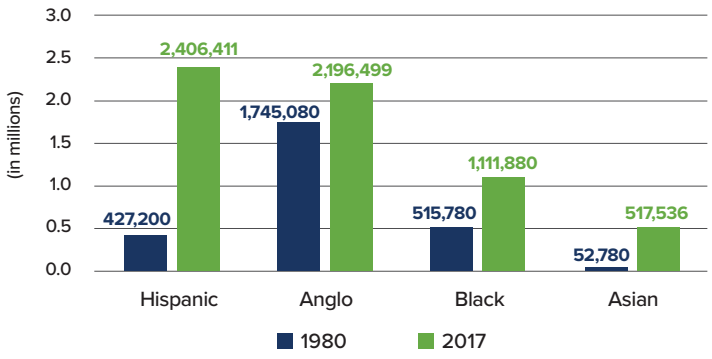
Anglos once formed a substantial majority of the region's population, but the metro is now majority minority, with no single group representing a substantial plurality of the population. Even though the number of Anglos rose from 1980 to 2017, their share of the region's total population has steadily declined during this period.

% of Houston Region Population by Race/Ethnicity, 1980 & 2017



Source: 1980 U.S. Census and 2017 American Community Survey 1-year Extract

Houston Region Population by Race/Ethnicity, 1980 & 2017



Source: 1980 U.S. Census and 2017 American Community Survey 1-year Extract

1980

In 1980, the region was majority Anglo (64 percent), with Hispanic and Asian minorities comprising 2 and 16 percent of the population, respectively. Today, Asians' representation in Greater Houston has tripled to more than 8 percent, and the region has become 37 percent Hispanic.

2017

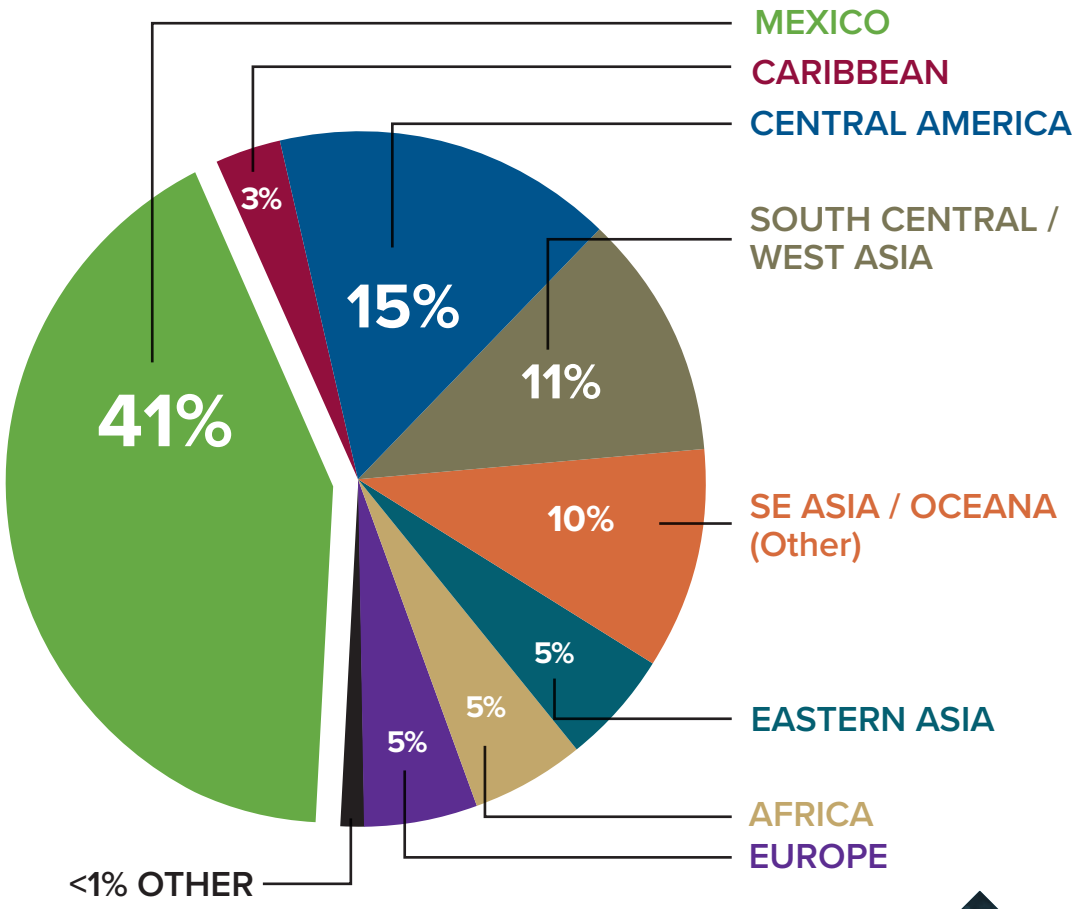
National Origin

Houston's foreign-born population grew by 22 percent from 2010 to 2017, two times as fast as the national rate of 11 percent.

Immigration from Vietnam and Mexico dominated migration patterns to Houston during the 1980s and 1990s, but the countries of origin for immigrants have recently become significantly more diverse.

The majority of Houston's immigrants (59 percent) hail from Latin America, with Mexico still the top origin country for immigrants entering Houston at 41 percent of the region's foreign-born population.

Houston Region Foreign Born Population by Place of Birth, 2017

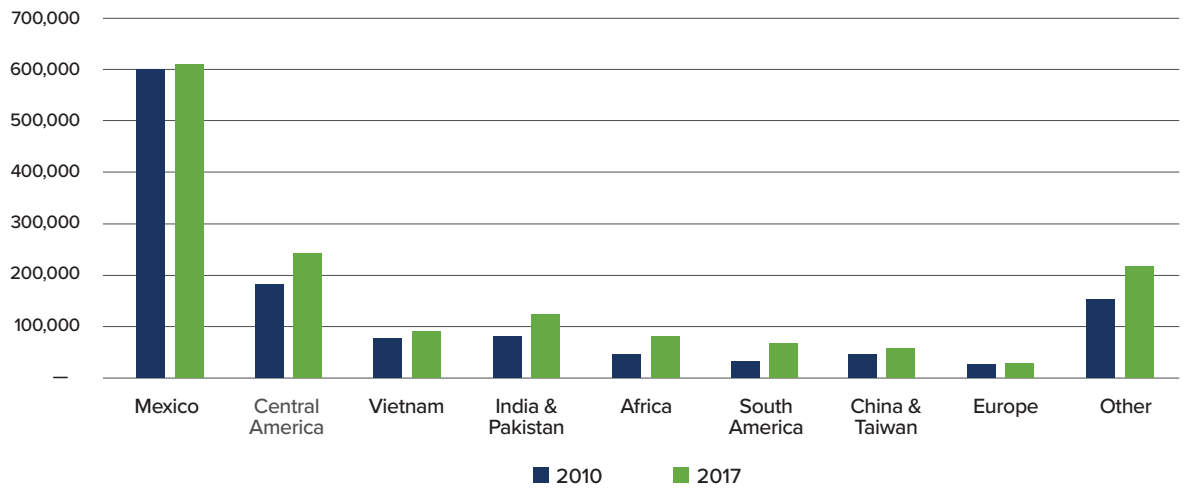


TOTAL: 1.538 MILLION

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2017 American Community Survey. 1-year extracts

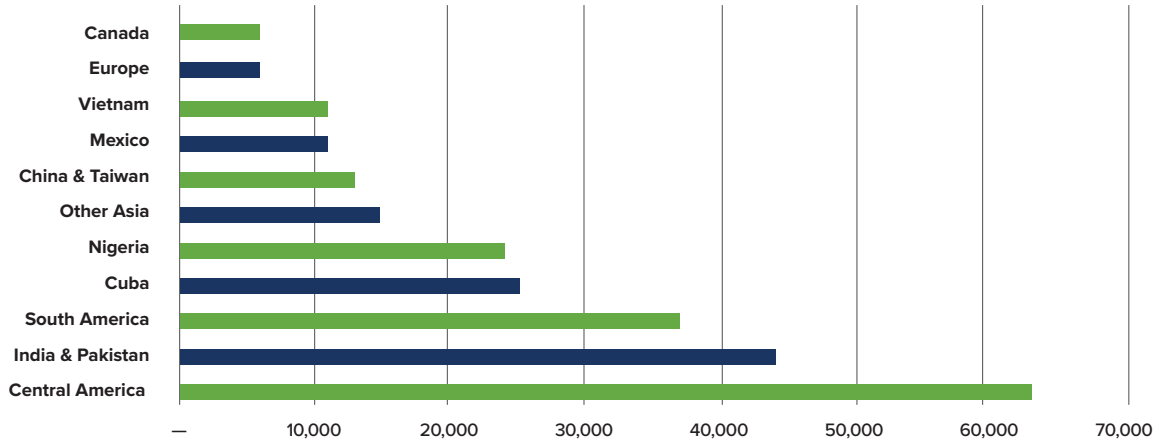
FROM 2010 TO 2017 THE NUMBER OF MEXICAN IMMIGRANTS INCREASED BY JUST TWO PERCENT.

Houston Region Foreign Born by Place of Birth, 2010 & 2017



Source: 2010 U.S. Census and 2017 American Community Survey 1-year extract

Net Change in Houston Region Foreign Born Population by Place of Birth, 2010-2017



Source: 2010 U.S. Census and 2017 American Community Survey 1-year extract

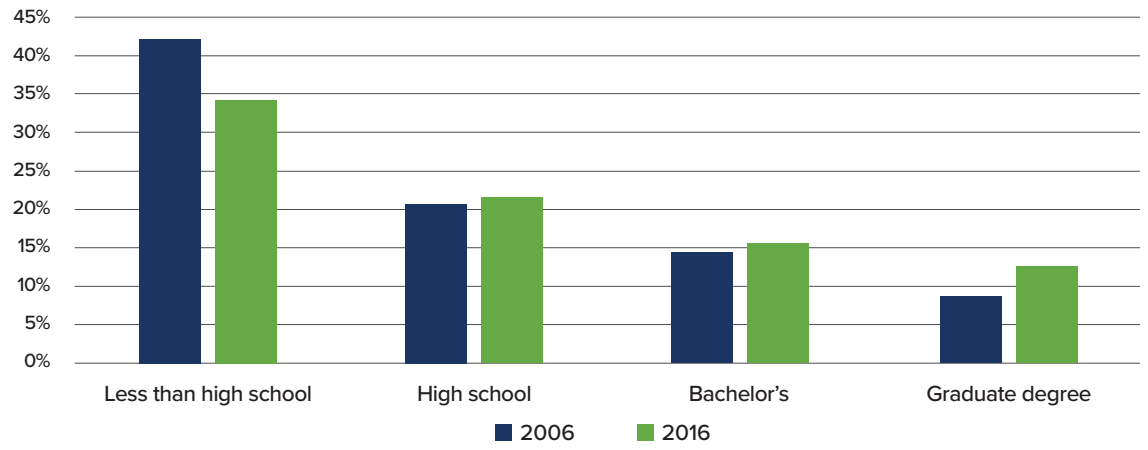
TODAY, 15 PERCENT OF ALL HOUSTON-REGION IMMIGRANTS COME FROM FROM CENTRAL AMERICA, 25 PERCENT HAIL FROM ASIA, AND 5 PERCENT ARE FROM AFRICA.

Educational Attainment

One defining aspect of Houston's immigrant community is its diversity, a characteristic that extends to education. Foreign-born residents' level of education is strongly tied to their immigration status. Immigrants with legal status and undocumented immigrants tend to have educational attainment levels that on average are lower than the native-born population.

According to MPI, those holding visas allowing them to temporarily work or study in the United States (legal non-immigrants) are largely made up of graduate students and other high-skill workers with more than 80 percent holding at least a four-year college degree.

Educational Attainment for Houston Region Foreign-Born Population, 2006 & 2016



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, 2006 and 2016 American Community Survey 1-year extracts

Overall, the level of education among Houston's immigrants has been improving, reflecting the past decade's changing immigration patterns. With the number of new undocumented immigrants dropping substantially and the region attracting more legal nonimmigrants, educational attainment has subsequently risen.

Compared to 2006, Houston region immigrants in 2016 were more likely to have graduated from high school, gone to college, and earned a high-level degree. The share of immigrants with less than a high school education declined from 42 percent to 34 percent, while the percentage of foreign-born individuals with a four-year degree or greater rose from 23 percent to 28 percent.

Of particular note is the rise in more high-skilled immigrants over the same time period. The portion of the foreign-born population with a graduate degree grew from 8.7 percent to 12.5 percent from 2006 to 2016. The percentage of foreign-born residents with a graduate degree now surpasses the 11 percent of Houston's native-born population with a graduate degree.

THE LEVEL OF EDUCATION AMONG HOUSTON'S IMMIGRANTS HAS BEEN IMPROVING, REFLECTING THE PAST DECADE'S CHANGING IMMIGRATION PATTERNS.

Naturalization

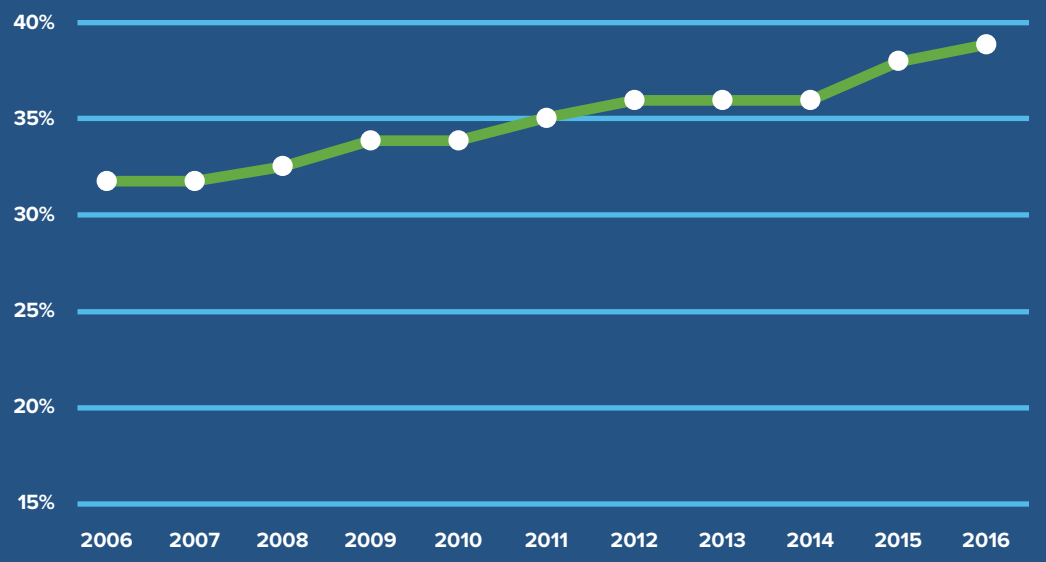
Naturalization is perhaps the most important milestone in the integration of immigrants, as research identifies tangible economic benefits associated with citizenship.

A 2016 Urban Institute study showed that naturalization increases an individual's earnings by 9 percent, likeliness of employment by 2 percent and probability of homeownership by 6 percent. Local economies can substantially benefit from encouraging citizenship among immigrants eligible to naturalize.

From 2006 to 2016 the percentage of naturalized citizens rose from 32 to 37 percent. However, the percentage of immigrants in Greater Houston eligible to become citizens is significantly lower than the nationwide percentage at 39 vs. 48 percent, respectively.

Several factors contribute. Compared to the nation at large, undocumented immigrants make up a larger share of Houston's total foreign-born population. In addition, many foreign-born residents here have temporary status and are ineligible for citizenship. Lastly, those from Mexico and Central America—representing more than half of the region's foreign-born population—are the least likely to naturalize. For example, a 2015 MPI analysis of data from 2008 to 2012 calculated the naturalization rate among Houston-area residents from Honduras and Mexico to be 14 percent and 22 percent, respectively.

Share of Naturalized Citizens, Houston Region Foreign-Born Population, 2006 -2016



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, 2006 - 2016 American Community Survey 1-year extracts

LOCAL ECONOMIES CAN SUBSTANTIALLY BENEFIT FROM ENCOURAGING CITIZENSHIP AMONG IMMIGRANTS ELIGIBLE TO NATURALIZE.

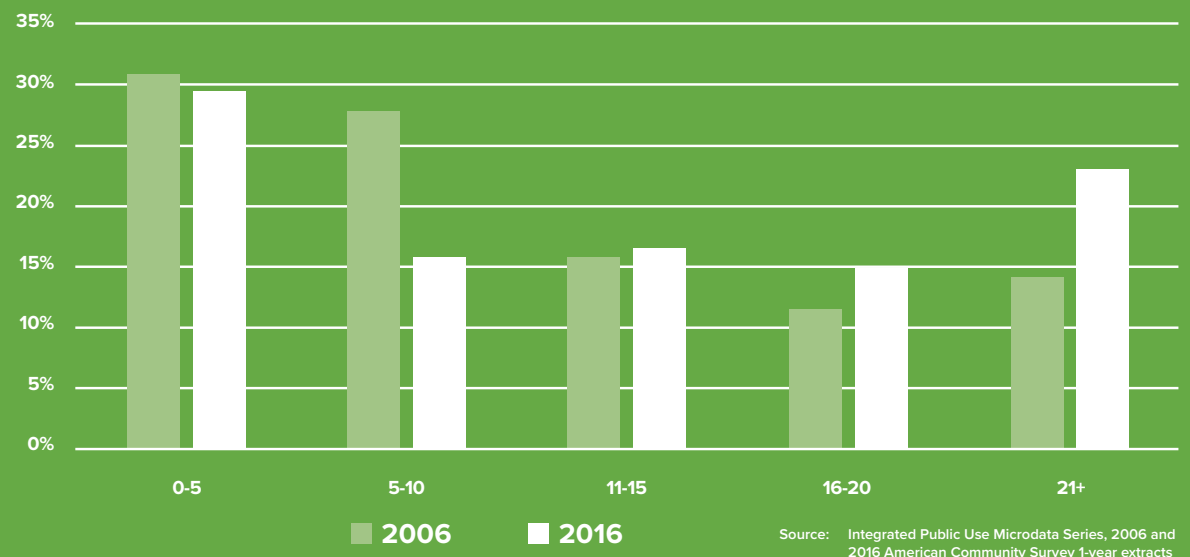
Longevity of Residency

The majority of foreign-born residents have become permanent members of the community. This longevity suggests that immigrants play a critical role in the Greater Houston community.

More than half of Houston's non-citizen foreign-born population has resided within the U.S. for more than ten years, with just under a quarter having lived in America for over twenty-one years.

Moreover, Houston's foreign-born population is increasingly comprised of long-term residents. For instance, the percentage of the region's foreign-born individuals who have lived within the U.S. for over ten years grew 13 percentage points from 2006 to 2016, rising from 42 percent to 55 percent.

Years Residing in the U.S.: Houston Region Foreign-Born Population, 2006 & 2016



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, 2006 and 2016 American Community Survey 1-year extracts

Undocumented Population

Undocumented individuals are those who entered the U.S. outside the legal process or overstayed their visas, with the latter much more common than the former. For example, the Center for Migration Studies found that 62 percent of all undocumented arrivals in 2016 were overstays.

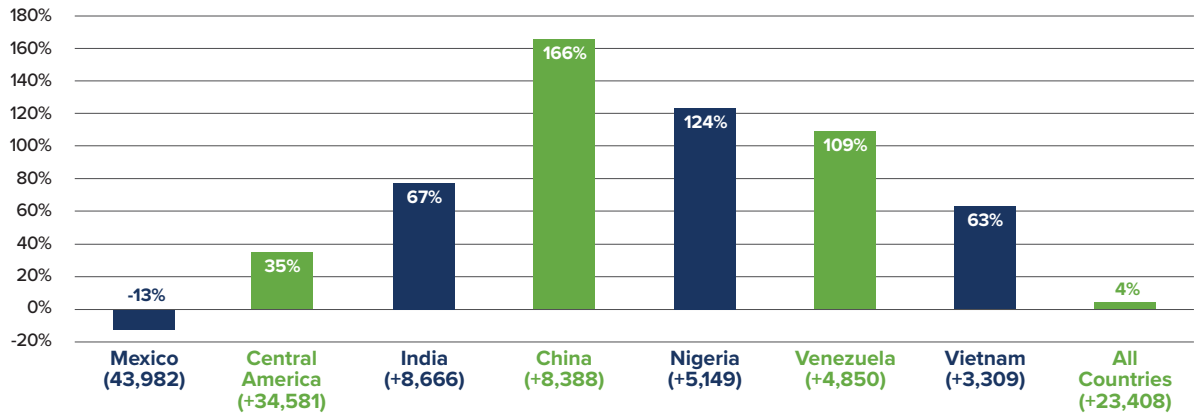
While a verified count of the number of local undocumented immigrants does not exist, studies published by the Perryman Group and Migration Policy Institute estimate that roughly a third of the region's foreign-born population is undocumented.

2016 data evaluated by NAE estimate that about 586,000 undocumented immigrants—37 percent of the total foreign-born population—reside in the Houston metro area. These individuals primarily work in the construction (26 percent), accommodation (15 percent) and professional services (12 percent) sectors.

NAE's analysis indicates that Houston's undocumented population generated $11 billion in household income and amassed $9.8 billion in spending power in 2016. Moreover, undocumented individuals here contribute annually $448 million and $742 million in state and federal taxes, respectively.

ROUGHLY A THIRD OF THE REGION'S FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION IS UNDOCUMENTED.

Change in Houston Region Undocumented Population by Country of Origin, 2008-2016



*Figures in parenthesis represent the net change in undocumented individuals

Source: New American Economy Analysis of 2008 and 2016 American Community Survey

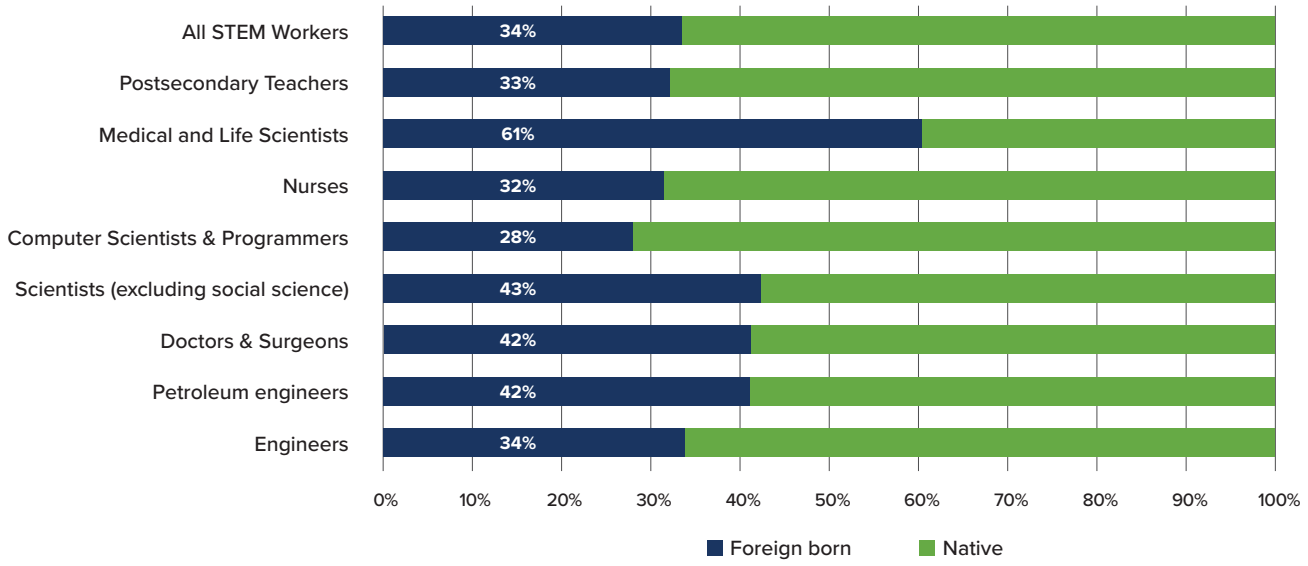
The region's undocumented population has changed in recent years. First, the total number of undocumented individuals has plateaued, increasing by only 23,000 individuals or 4 percent from 2008 to 2016. For comparison, the region added over 324,000 foreign-born individuals legally allowed to be here—a 48 percent increase—during the same time period. Accordingly, the share of the region's total foreign-born population held by undocumented immigrants dropped from 46 percent in 2008 to 37 percent in 2016.

NAE reports that the origins of Houston's undocumented immigrants have significantly shifted since 2008. More than half of all the undocumented individuals currently in the region originate from Mexico, which remains the number one country of origin among Houston's undocumented. However, there was a net decrease of 44,000 Mexican undocumented immigrants over the eight-year period ending with 2016. New undocumented immigrants since 2008 have primarily arrived from Central America as well as countries including India, China and Nigeria.

High-Skilled Foreign-Born Workers

A substantial portion of the region's foreign-born population is highly skilled. As noted previously, more than a quarter of Greater Houston's immigrant population has a bachelor's degree or higher. These individuals, who often come to Houston on employment visas, provide a sizable portion of the region's high-skilled workforce.

Houston Region Occupations by Nativity, 2013-2017



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-year extract

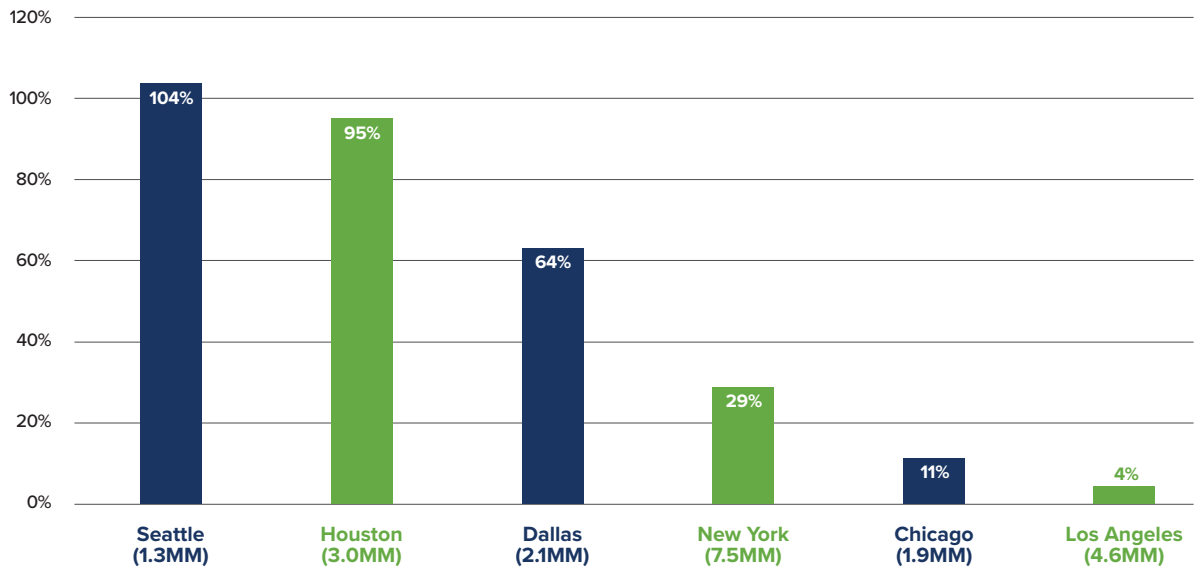
Foreign-born individuals comprise 29 percent of the Houston-area workforce but are overrepresented in many of the region's white-collar occupations. More than 78,000 immigrants here work in science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) occupations, representing 34 percent of all Houston-area workers in this category. They are prevalent in some of the region's highest-paying occupations such as medical scientists (61 percent) and petroleum engineers (42 percent).

Immigration Growth in Houston v. Other Regions

Virtually no other region of the country will be affected by immigration more than Houston. Assuming that immigration to the region continues at its current pace, Houston's foreign-born population will almost double in the next 20 years. Immigration and the integration of immigrants will become increasingly important to our region's future.

A simple analysis of census data illustrates how Houston is among the nation's leaders in attracting immigrants. We chose five metropolitan regions to compare with Houston. Using American Community Survey data from 2005-2009 and 2013-2017, we calculated the compound annual growth rate for each region's foreign-born population across these periods. These growth rates were then used to project the change in foreign-born residents for each region by 2036.

Projected Growth of Foreign-Born Population for Selected Regions, 2015-2036*



*Figures in parenthesis represent projected foreign-born population in 2036

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-year extract

Among the comparison set, Houston ranks second in growth among the foreign-born population on a percentage basis. Assuming historical trends remain constant, the number of immigrants in the Houston region will rise 95 percent to 3 million individuals by 2036. While Seattle's immigrant population is projected to rise 104 percent over the same period, this figure reflects the lower base from which it starts.

VIRTUALLY NO OTHER REGION OF THE COUNTRY WILL BE AFFECTED BY IMMIGRATION MORE THAN HOUSTON.

*The selected regions include Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL-IN-WI; Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX; Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, TX; Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA; New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA; and Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA. The regions are referred to by the primary city that anchors them.

How We Can Better Integrate Immigrants into the Community

Given these trends, improving efforts to integrate immigrants into our community is essential.

Foreign-born residents often encounter challenges impeding their participation in the greater community. Those may include a lack of professional/social networks, limited understanding of our economic and political systems as well as language and cultural barriers.

By working together, businesses, nonprofit organizations and local governments can address these challenges to facilitate economic integration and promote inclusion. Such efforts to integrate existing immigrants and attract new, high-skilled immigrants will be key to Houston's economic future.

In this section, we discuss efforts to address the needs of immigrants and assess our progress compared to other communities.

Efforts to Date

The City of Houston engages with Houston's diverse population of immigrants, expatriates and refugees through its Office of New Americans and Immigrant Communities (ONA), working to facilitate their successful civic, economic and cultural integration. The ONA has developed initiatives to assist the immigrant community, including:

- iSpeak Houston, the city's first language access program, which aims to help city employees communicate with non-English speakers seeking city services.
- Monthly citizenship forums organized in collaboration with community partners to assist eligible legal permanent residents with citizenship application forms. Thousands of legal permanent residents have become citizens through this collaborative effort.
- Assisting in post-Hurricane Harvey recovery efforts by putting together a coalition of community advocacy organizations to assist affected immigrants. The ONA also worked with the Texas Workforce Commission to hire temporary employees to assist in recovery efforts in heavily impacted neighborhoods.
- The creation of welcoming signs in more than 30 languages displayed at 150 City of Houston facilities, including Houston Intercontinental Airport, Hobby Airport and all public libraries.

Welcoming Houston

In 2017, the Welcoming Houston task force released recommendations to promote the integration of immigrants into the city's social, economic and civic life. The report states,

> *"Welcoming Houston initiative's goal is to ensure that immigrants are meaningfully and intentionally integrated into the social and economic fabric of Houston. The recommendations in this plan will ensure that Houston is not merely diverse, but inclusive and committed to equity."*

The *Welcoming Houston* report is a product of extensive stakeholder outreach and community input. A 39-member task force comprised of government officials, community members, nonprofit leaders and business executives across the region oversaw the report's development.

Immigration Enforcement

Over the last several years, there have been conflicting policies at the state and local level regarding immigration enforcement.

Some cities have designated themselves "sanctuary cities," meaning that they decline to assist federal immigration authorities. (Houston has not done so, but Mayor Sylvester Turner stresses that Houston is a welcoming city.)

The Texas Legislature enacted Senate Bill 4 in 2017. SB 4 bans local governments in Texas from acting as sanctuary cities. It also allows law enforcement officers to ask about the immigration status of someone pulled over or arrested and requires local enforcement authorities to cooperate with ICE-issued detainers for deportations. Critics refer to the law as "show-me-your-papers" legislation.

Benchmarking Our Progress on Welcoming Immigrants

To gauge how Houston compares to other metro areas with similarly large immigrant populations, we reviewed data provided by New American Economy's Cities Index.

FOREIGN-BORN RESIDENTS OFTEN ENCOUNTER CHALLENGES IMPEDING THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE GREATER COMMUNITY. THOSE MAY INCLUDE A LACK OF PROFESSIONAL/SOCIAL NETWORKS, LIMITED UNDERSTANDING OF OUR ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SYSTEMS AS WELL AS LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL BARRIERS.

Released in 2018, the Cities Index aims to "track where each city stands in its integration efforts in order to provide insight on how local communities can maximize the potential of their immigrant populations for the well-being of all residents." A five-point spectrum assesses cities on overall, policy and socioeconomic scores—the higher the score, the more integrated the city is.

NAE Cities Index for Houston, TX

Overall score: 2.95/5 **Rank: 50/100**

POLICY SCORE	3.40	SOCIOECONOMIC SCORE	2.50
• Government leadership	5	• Job opportunities	3
• Economic empowerment	3	• Economic prosperity	3
• Inclusivity	2	• Livability	2
• Community	4	• Civic participation	2
• Legal support	3		

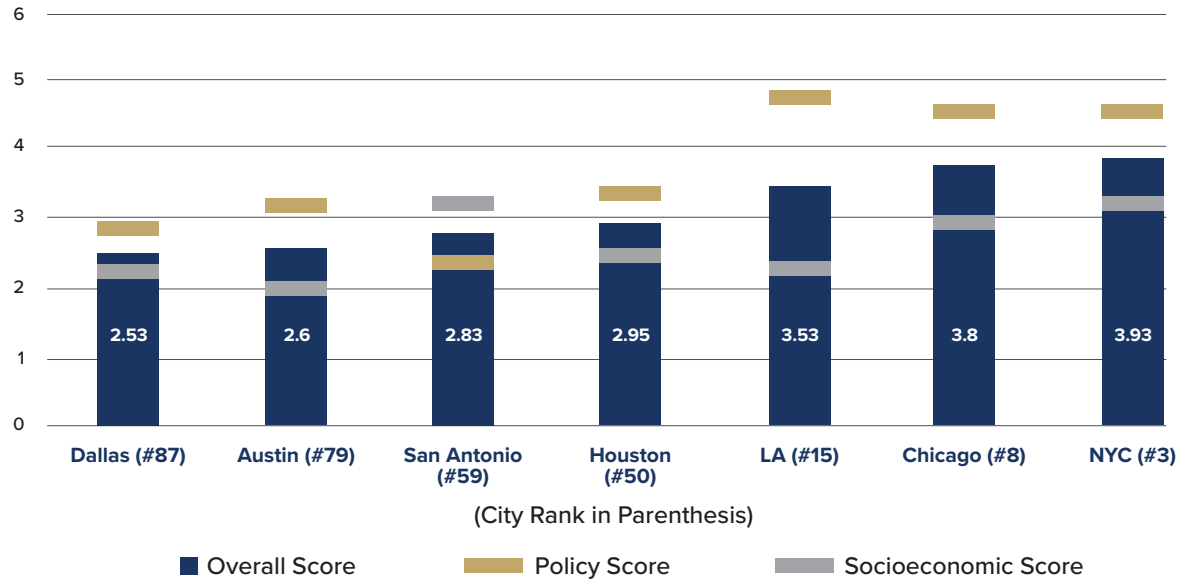
Source: New American Economy Cities Index

Houston earns strong marks in terms of government leadership and community support for immigrants. In particular, NAE lauded Houston's progress in creating a legal services support network for immigrants (the Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative). NAE identified inclusivity (such as providing access to social services regardless of immigration status) and civic participation (such as the rate of naturalization or the representation of immigrants among social-sector workers) as areas where Houston has the most opportunity to improve.

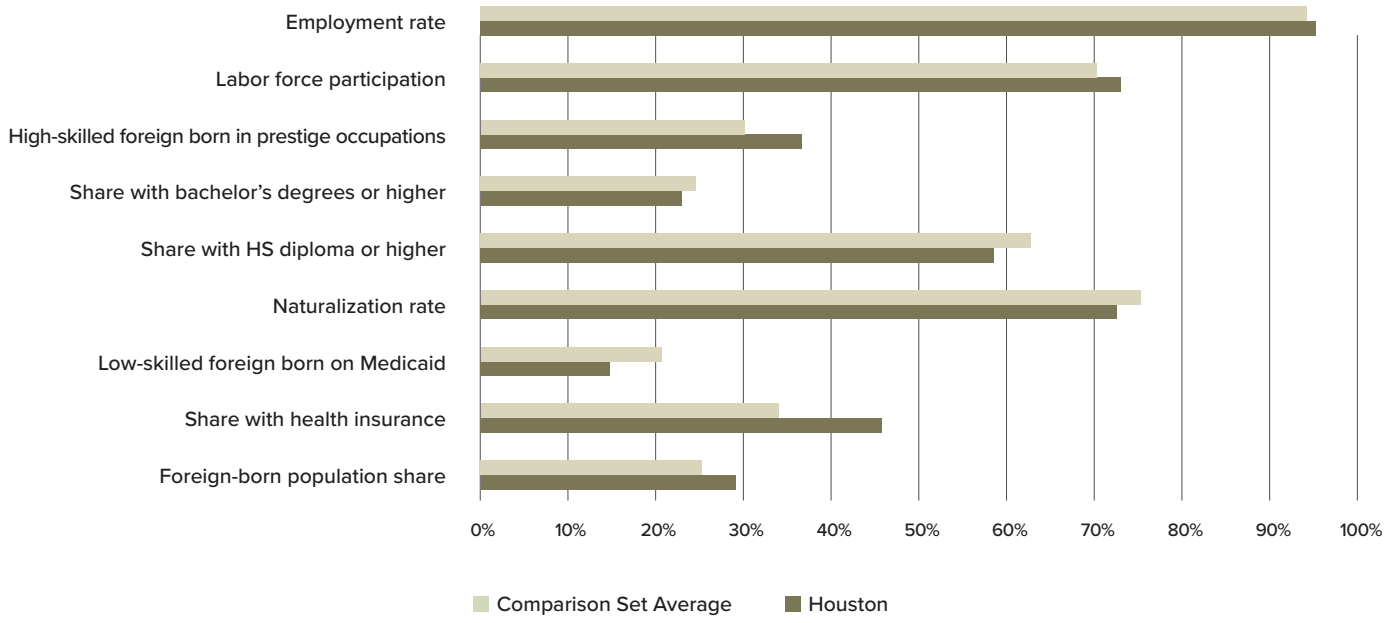
Of the one hundred largest U.S. cities NAE includes in its report, Houston ranks squarely in the middle at number 50. We selected several comparable metropolitan regions with similarly large immigrant populations: Austin, TX; Dallas, TX; Chicago, IL; Los Angeles, CA; New York, NY; and San Antonio, TX.

NAE Cities Index Scores for Selected Cities

Source: New American Economy Cities Index



Selected Data from NAE Cities Index*



Source: New American Economy Cities Index

The area where Houston most noticeably lags its peers involves access to social services. In terms of health care, an average of 20 percent of the low-skilled immigrants in the comparison set cities are enrolled in Medicaid.

Yet in Houston, the number is below 15 percent. Houston and Dallas rank at the bottom in terms of the percentage of immigrants who have any kind of health insurance (54 percent vs. an average of 64 percent among the comparison cities). This dynamic, however, is most likely not specific to immigrants in Houston and rather due to poor access to health care for Texas' population in general: 16 percent of native-born individuals in Houston lack health insurance, compared to an average of 12 percent among the comparison cities (not pictured).

The story related to immigrants' educational attainment and civic engagement follows a similar pattern. An average of 62.2 percent of immigrants in the comparison cities possess a high school education or greater versus just 58.5 percent for immigrants living in the Houston region. There also exists a 2.5 percentage point difference in the naturalization rates in Houston and the comparison set—72.5 percent and 75.0 percent, respectively.

Houston stands out in the data as a city where immigrants are more likely to both seek work and hold a job. Labor force participation rates are close to 73 percent of the foreign-born population in Houston, compared to 70.6 percent in the comparison set. The percentage of immigrants in the workforce who are employed stands at 95.1 percent, compared to the average among the selected cities of 94.4 percent

*Note: NAE breaks out its metrics into low-skilled and high-skilled immigrants. Unless otherwise noted, these figures have been averaged for the purpose of comparison.

Integrating Immigrants into the Houston Community: A Summary of Industry Roundtable Discussions

In the previous sections, we showed how our economic future is tied to our increasingly diverse demography and identified those sectors of the Houston labor force that are most affected by immigrant workers. We also have shown that integrating immigrants into our community will be key to achieving this economic growth.

In order to better understand these issues, we conducted a series of roundtable discussions with community, government, education and business leaders as a fact-gathering exercise to identify and explore these integration challenges.

We did not intend for these discussions to be comprehensive. A recent study conducted by the National Academies, "The Integration of Immigrants into American Society," provides an excellent survey of integration issues. Rather, we sought to bring together community leaders to identify the problems most important to them, to look for common themes and to start exploring practical solutions.

We conducted this work based on the premise that if Houston's leaders in business, government and community organizations begin to discuss and identify these issues, we can build a consensus on the steps needed to create a region that is more inclusive.

We focused on sectors that heavily rely on immigrant workers or that serve large populations of immigrants, such as the education, construction, health care and hospitality industries.

1 THERE IS A GROWING UNDERSTANDING AMONG ALL INDUSTRY SECTORS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF IMMIGRANTS TO MEET OUR CURRENT AND FUTURE LABOR FORCE NEEDS

Many industry leaders stated that demand for workers in Houston has outstripped supply. They assert that immigrants currently play an important role in meeting workforce needs and will play an even more important future role. The belief that immigrants are key to address labor force needs was universal. From the medical profession, where most biomedical researchers are foreign born, to the construction industry, which relies heavily on immigrant laborers, participants all stated that immigrants are key to Houston's economic future.

2 CURRENT IMMIGRATION LAWS AND ENFORCEMENT PRACTICES CREATE PERVERSE INCENTIVES AND AN UNEQUAL PLAYING FIELD

Employers, primarily those in service-related industries, noted that federal laws restricting employment of undocumented workers have created a "gray market" where third-party brokers allow some employers to hire undocumented workers without being responsible for citizenship verification. They cited an unequal playing field where employers who comply with the law have higher labor costs.

3 INTEGRATING IMMIGRANT WORKERS INTO THE WORKFORCE REMAINS A CHALLENGE

Many employers across industries saw the need for additional occupational training ("middle skills"), particularly among immigrants. In addition, some employers noted that immigrants needed additional help with understanding the complex challenges of the immigration process.

Employers in each roundtable said they were struggling to cope with modifications in immigration policies and the enforcement of particular laws. They stated that these changes have sparked distress in some of their employees. Employers believe this introduces uncertainty into their businesses' operations, as they must consider the possibility that their workers' fear will lead them to leave their jobs. Second, employers must navigate an already complex immigration system to protect and retain their foreign-born employees and their families. There was general agreement with one participant's belief that "We must go back to an immigration and naturalization *service* rather than an *enforcement* mentality."

4 EDUCATION CHALLENGES

Integration of immigrants into the education system presents numerous challenges. Our report has shown education attainment among Houston's immigrants has been improving. However, educators say challenges remain at the K-12 level. The education panel highlighted many reasons ranging from the lack of bilingual teachers to cultural issues among refugees and the need for more counseling support.

5 HEALTH CARE CHALLENGES

Health professionals noted many unique issues involving immigration related to Houston's large medical sector. Changes in immigration laws have resulted in significant declines in international patient traffic and to difficulties filling biomedical research positions. A major cost driver in health care is the lack of insurance coverage for undocumented individuals, who may use emergency facilities to seek primary care treatment or may be discouraged from seeking treatment by the fear of deportation. As a result, hospitals have begun to see an uptick in sicker patients as these individuals wait until they need critical care.

In the following section, we summarize the conclusions from our stakeholder roundtables.

Education

Roundtable Findings

In December 2017, the Center discussed immigration with leaders from K-12, higher education and charter school districts. All face similar challenges regarding student success, dropout rates and completion rates. Immigrant students are not homogeneous—they might be documented, or not; poor, or well-to-do; on grade level, or far behind. These students do, however, face risk factors such as language barriers, cultural issues, family education and stability, trauma and fear.

Workforce Issues

The education sector shares some of the workforce challenges as other industries. Many bilingual teaching and counseling positions are traditionally filled by immigrants, and school districts have traditionally recruited teachers from other countries. The higher education sector shares many of the same challenges as health care, with many students and researchers receiving training in the U.S. and then taking their skills back to their home countries.

Education Issues

The larger challenge for educators, however, is how to provide effective services to the immigrant community. Our K-12 education systems are federally required to educate all children through grade 12 regardless of immigration status. Immigrant and first-generation students bring additional challenges to educators.

IN HISD, 92% OF ESL STUDENTS' FIRST LANGUAGE IS SPANISH, WITH MORE THAN 84 LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN THE DISTRICT.

For example, in Education Service Center Region 4, which includes the majority of Greater Houston's K-12 institutions, there are approximately 1.2 million students. About 270,000 of them are classified as ELL, or English Language Learners. School districts bear the costs of additional support services such as English as a Second Language classes and bilingual instruction. In Houston ISD, 92 percent of ESL students' first language is Spanish, but more than 84 languages are spoken in the district.

Instructional and counseling staff require additional training to address the particular needs of immigrant and first-generation students, many of whom may not have the academic background for what would be age-appropriate grade levels.

Area higher education institutions have designed programs to serve immigrant and first-generation students. For example, University of Houston has a student service office that can refer immigrant students to legal and support services, and also provides diversity and inclusion training to faculty and staff. Lee College in Baytown has a mentoring program, which has lowered dropout rates among students while San Jacinto College offers various English language programs and trains faculty in cultural competency.

Impact of Federal and State Laws on Immigrants

In 2001, Texas lawmakers approved in-state tuition to any public college or university for unauthorized immigrant students. Students must have graduated from a high school or received a GED diploma in Texas, have lived in the state for at least three years and have signed an affidavit affirming they are seeking legal residency.

For more than a decade, state legislators have consistently submitted bills to try to overturn the legislation with none succeeding.

A challenge for higher education students, especially undocumented and first generation, is accessing financial aid. Texas allows noncitizen students seeking in-state tuition or to apply for college grants and loans to complete the Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA). However, participants stated that more outreach is required.

WE MET WITH STUDENTS WITH DACA STATUS, WHO SOMETIMES CALL THEMSELVES DREAMERS, AT UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON IN NOVEMBER 2017. THEY ASKED THAT WE NOT USE THEIR NAMES OR IDENTIFY THEM.

These students feel that the U.S. is their home, even though in some cases the transition was difficult.

A young man reports, *"I came here at age 9. It was very hard leaving everything behind. I left my friends, my school, my cat. I love cats." "They bullied me. I had no English. I communicated with my hands, and they made fun of me. The tall girl in my ESL class used to push me around. One day, I accidentally threw a rock at her."* After that they became friends.

According to one young woman, *"Mexico is definitely not home. I have no clue about what it is like there. Home is not a place on a map. Where you feel like your heart is warm, where you feel comfortable. That's where home is."*

Gaby Pacheco, a nationally recognized immigrant-rights leader who spearheaded the efforts that led to the creation of DACA, also shared her experience. "*I was not born here, but I grew up here as an American." "This was home from the beginning. I loved my school, I loved my neighbors, I loved playing outside. Everything just seemed brighter here."*

In high school, they began to feel responsible to others.

"This began to feel like home when I got into high school." "I am the first in my family to finish high school, go to community college, and enter university. I am very close to my 10 -year-old brother. I am his inspiration and he motivates me," we were told by the young man.

"In high school, I was part of choir, band, academic decathlon. ROTC was a really big part of my high school career. The humanitarian society, where we gave back to the community. I held leadership positions. Those helped me become the leader I am," according to the young woman.

The students we spoke with are hard-working, ambitious and connected to the community. They major in math, in political science and biology. They aspire to medical school and advanced degrees.

The young woman *"want[s] to save lives. I plan to set up my own surgical clinics for low income people. Some way I will make it happen." "I started looking at politics because I wanted to do change,"* said the young man. *"My dream is to join the United Nations and become an advocate for us as humans and fight for civil rights. That's my ultimate goal."*

Hospitality

Roundtable Findings

In October 2018, the Center spoke with executives representing the region's hospitality industry, including arts, entertainment, hotel and food-services organizations. As with other sectors, hospitality organizations have struggled to meet their demand for labor over the last several years. This has been exacerbated by increasingly restrictive federal immigration policies, which have produced an environment where many hospitality workers live in the shadows, afraid of being identified without documents.

Workforce Issues

There is a labor shortage in restaurants and in hotels, particularly for hourly positions. Restaurant openings have been delayed and there was talk of some shops even going out of business due to limited labor supply. Hospitality employers must compete for workers with other industries. They said demand for construction workers following hurricanes in Florida and the Carolinas affected their ability to hire.

Roundtable participants claimed that thousands of restaurant jobs remain open. The current spate of hotel construction will result in additional demand for workers. Participants contend that their hiring difficulties stem from a lack of workers and are not related to industry pay.

Impact of Federal and State Laws on Immigrants

Industry leaders at the roundtable favored creating a guest- or permanent-worker program and finding some way to be able to legitimately hire from the approximately half-million undocumented residents in the region.

Uncertainty about the future of DACA and TPS adds to the workforce challenge. An unspecified percentage of the workforce are probably undocumented, as currently Texas uses E-Verify less than other states, and it is not required or broadly used in the hospitality industry. Tightening federal policies around status verification may limit the ability to hire undocumented workers.

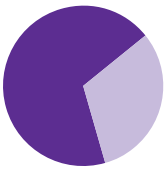
Opportunities for visas have become more limited. SB 4 has made undocumented individuals afraid to work. Some companies have lost employees who take jobs closer to home so that they're out less.

HOUSTON REGION HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT

(INCLUDING ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, ACCOMMODATIONS & FOOD SERVICE

CURRENT JOBS **358,551**

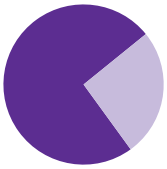
2016



FOREIGN LABOR SHARE **32%**

NEW JOBS EXPECTED TO BE CREATED **282,424**

2036



PROJECTED FOREIGN LABOR SHARE **26%**

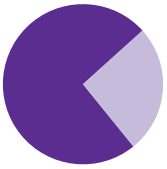
Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, 2006 and 2016 American Community Survey 1-year extracts

Health Care

HOUSTON REGION HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT

CURRENT JOBS **531,634**

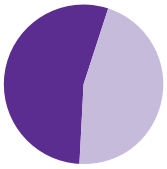
2016



FOREIGN LABOR SHARE
27%

NEW JOBS EXPECTED TO BE CREATED **637,102**

2036



PROJECTED FOREIGN LABOR SHARE
43%

IMMIGRANT SHARE OF OCCUPATIONS

69% Medical & Life Scientists

48% Physicians and Surgeons

Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, 2006 and 2016 American Community Survey 1-year extracts

Roundtable Findings

In July 2018, the Center spoke with business leaders from institutions in the Texas Medical Center (TMC). For most health care organizations, immigration is a dual issue affecting their ability to meet workforce needs and to effectively serve patients.

Workforce Issues

Talent acquisition is a major concern at all levels of most organizations, with the medical research segment particularly relying on immigrant workers. Roundtable participants noted that the number of native-born biomedical researchers declined significantly from 1990-2014, requiring institutions at TMC to hire more foreign-born biochemical researchers annually. One prominent TMC institution noted that 92 percent of its biomedical researchers are foreign born.

Retention of foreign-born workers is another challenge. Participants expressed frustration that America is not producing enough of the highest-skilled workers. Current immigration policies contribute to a system where medical researchers and doctors come here for training but return home after they are not allowed or welcomed to stay. This leaves the sector in a position where it is essentially training its global competition.

Service Provision

Hospital systems are obligated to treat patients who require their services regardless of immigration status. Many executives relayed anecdotes involving undocumented patients delaying care due to fear that they could be deported after seeking treatment. When they finally do seek care, they may be sicker and require more expensive treatment.

International patient visits have traditionally been profitable for the industry. The perception that America is hostile to foreigners is causing many to seek care elsewhere. One institution reported a one-year 50 percent reduction in patients from the Middle East.

Impact of Federal and State Laws on Immigrants

Many participants indicated that immigration enforcement should not be the federal government's focus. Instead, the focus should be on facilitating the entry of immigrants.

The tightening of certain visas is undercutting research institutions. One participant noted that historically most international medical students and faculty at his facility come from China and India. He lamented that the number of Indian applicants for doctoral and post-doctoral research programs at his institution had fallen to almost zero.

Changes in the Public Charge law have caused a marked decline in Medicaid and CHIP enrollment. Some institutions have seen as much as a 20 percent decrease in CHIP prenatal program participation, driven by immigrant mothers dropping out of the program. The result is an increase in ER deliveries with no prenatal care.

Construction

Roundtable Findings

In October 2018, the Center spoke with leaders in the residential and commercial construction sectors. The roundtable attendees uniformly framed immigration as a workforce and economic development issue.

Workforce Issues

Participants estimated that a significant majority of the construction workforce is foreign born. The roundtable identified labor shortages as a substantial impediment to their businesses. The limited number of domestic individuals applying to work in the industry, along with restrictions on hiring immigrants, is causing costs to increase by a factor of five for some trades.

A consequence of the limited options dictated by federal policy spurs some businesses to rely on labor brokers, who might exploit immigrants. Labor shortages result in higher wages, even though Texas is traditionally a low-wage state.

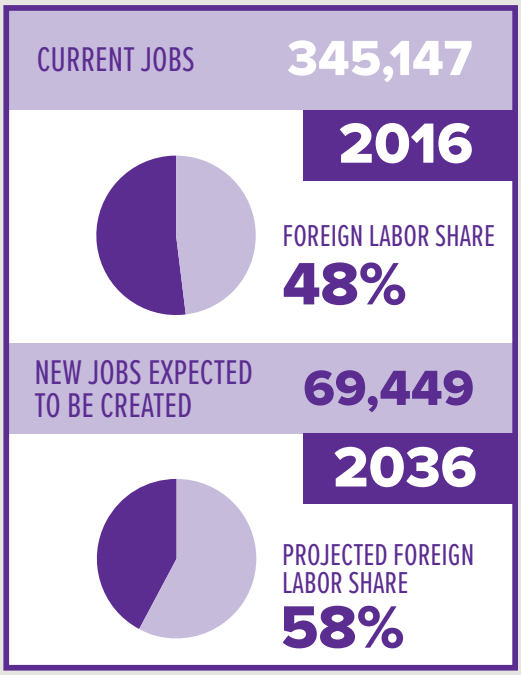
Impact of Federal and State Laws on Immigrants

A lack of change in federal immigration policy over the past thirty years has led to our current immigration system becoming disconnected from the labor needs of the American economy. In particular, there are insufficient work visas for construction jobs.

Roundtable members also criticized how current federal policy effectively discourages some businesses and workers from paying payroll taxes. Workers fear that paying payroll taxes might cause them to be identified and deported. They said that federal policy encourages employers to subcontract out their labor needs to avoid verifying their workers' immigration status.

Industry groups such as Construction Career Collaborative are addressing labor supply chain issues, and many industry leaders support policies that allow for more legal workers. One suggestion is "ID and tax," a guest-worker program under which workers would be able to legally work and pay taxes after registering and submitting to background checks.

HOUSTON REGION CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, 2006 and 2016 American Community Survey 1-year extracts

ONE SUGGESTION IS "ID AND TAX," A GUEST-WORKER PROGRAM UNDER WHICH WORKERS WOULD BE ABLE TO LEGALLY WORK AND PAY TAXES AFTER REGISTERING AND SUBMITTING TO BACKGROUND CHECKS.

CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

The evidence is clear and compelling: Immigration has driven the Houston area's economic growth and will continue to do so going forward. Employers, big and small, across industries have a stake in ensuring that the region continues to attract and retain immigrants and in ensuring newcomers succeed once they are here.

We recommend continuing to follow the economic indicators highlighted in this report and modifying benchmarks as needed. It's also important to closely watch how advances in automation and artificial intelligence might affect workforce needs and immigration trends.

It's certainly obvious that the nation's immigration system must be fixed by Congress and the President. Texas also passes policies that help or hinder immigration.

But locally and regionally, we must act now to make sure immigrants get support and continue to contribute to Houston's economy as entrepreneurs, employers and employees. We call on leaders of local governments, business groups and community and activist groups to work together to ensure that Greater Houston welcomes immigrants.

Employers and industry leaders should come together around common goals for workforce training and education of the region's diverse population. That goes for both documented (first- and second-generation) and undocumented immigrants as well as their families who contribute to our economy day in and day out.

Health care industry players should collaborate to create and fund a robust network of medical services for both documented and undocumented workers. Schools should collaborate to identify and share best practices.

We also recommend that employers and other interested parties either form or become part of a coalition that not only advocates for sound federal and state immigration policies, but also acts locally to guarantee Houston keeps drawing immigrants who enhance the region's diversity, economy and growth.

EPILOGUE

HUGO ORTEGA: AN IMMIGRANT SUCCESS STORY

Editor's note: Hugo Ortega ranks among the nation's top chefs. He won the 2017 Best Chef: Southwest Award from the James Beard Foundation and has received accolades for his culinary brilliance from a variety of publications, including Bon Appétit, Forbes Travel Guide and Smithsonian Magazine. He and his wife Tracy Vaught own and operate several restaurants including: Backstreet Café, a neighborhood bistro she opened in 1983; Hugo's, which features the traditional cuisine of Mexico's various regions; Caracol, a showcase for Mexican coastal dishes; and Xochi, celebrating the flavors of Oaxaca. But before all the kudos, Hugo arrived in Texas a hungry immigrant teenager. Here, he tells the story of his American journey.

I was born in Mexico City. At the age of nine, I went to live with my grandmother, at the border of Oaxaca and Puebla in the mountains, a town called Progreso. I can say now, more than 40 years later, that was where I received my culinary education.

When I got there, by my surprise, there was not electricity, running water or all the necessities we have in today's life. I found that intriguing, very primitive. But full of love on my grandmother's side, and knowledge of my ancestors, and her ancestors. Our ancestors researched every day just to figure out what to cook. So, literally, they just lived to eat. That was pretty much the daily living for my grandmother and me. You had your little house, surrounded by animals ... like pigs, and chickens for eggs, and goats, cattle for milk and so on, and bulls to work the land.

She and I were a tremendous team. I was young, full of energy and the ability to do many things, and with her knowledge I always accommodated myself to be her prep cook. And her dishwasher, her get-to-go boy. We used to come to a little town once a week, on a Sunday, to the market. From time to time the local butcher would butcher a pig or a cow, and with a little bit of fresh meat, we'd go back to living again.

I went through 8th grade, didn't finish 9th grade. That's all I could afford at that moment. I stayed in Progreso until I was 14 or 15. Then my Dad decided to move the family back to Mexico City. I worked for an American company called Procter & Gamble. I was part of the maintenance team, changing light bulbs and cleaning. It was a factory where they made Crest toothpaste, soap, and many cleaning products and chemicals. I learned a little bit about the company and realized there was some opportunity over here in the United States.

> THE IMMIGRATION POLICE CAUGHT US FIVE TIMES, AND THEY TOOK ME BACK. BUT THERE WAS NO GOING BACK.

At the time, some friends had come already. Some were in California. I had a cousin in Houston. From time to time he would send some letters, and I would read those letters he sent to his mom. One of the things that opened my eyes was that from time to time he would send $20 or $50 ... I don't remember what was the exchange rate, but it was like thousands of pesos to the dollar. That was eye opening for a 16-year-old man, teenager, or whatever.

At the age of 19, I finally made it to the States. One day, my dad just basically told me, "This is all I can do for you, so from this point on, if you want to be homeless, or you want to be a punk, whatever you want to be is up to you." That may sound heartless, coming from someone who means so much in your life, but I also respected him. I respect what he told me.

One beautiful spring day, we organized ourselves—a friend and a couple of other people—and bought bus tickets north from Mexico City. We found a coyote who could pass us across the border.

We tried five times. The first, we were over 120 people trying to cross at once. Adults, senior citizens, young kids. The immigration police caught us five times, and they took me back. But there was no going back.

The fourth or fifth time they figured out crossing so many was not going to be possible. So, they divided us. They put the young people in one group. In my group, we were 14 young people and young men. On the sixth try is when we crossed. We came across the river. It was deep. I struggled, because I don't know how to swim. I managed, and made it, and that was wonderful.

We were young and agile and jumped many fences. At some point, they put us in a train car. They told us, "People will be inspecting the cars. You make any noise and they capture us, whoever makes that noise is going to be dead." They were not fooling around. I can laugh now, but it was terrifying.

CHEF HUGO ORTEGA

Chef Hugo Ortega at his award-winning Xochi restaurant, which celebrates the flavors of Oaxaca, Mexico. (Photo by/Julie Soefer)

Eventually around 2 in the morning or so we started moving, faster and faster. Then they told us, “Hey we made it!” We started celebrating in the car, which was pitch black. As we were about to reach San Antonio, someone made a hole in the side of the car. We started jumping one by one, like that. Out the hole. They told us, “As soon as you are on the ground, hide where people can’t see you.” It was around 6 or 7 in the morning. That’s what we did.

We arrived in Houston in the Wayside area, between 10 and midnight. That’s when the transaction happened. My cousin, he paid for us, $500 apiece.

Around 7 at night that day, they picked us up and kept 14 of us in a house for about a day and a half. On the second day, they put us in a Chevrolet Impala. They put some pieces of wood on the shocks so the car wouldn’t sink under all the weight. They said stay low and put 14 people in that car. Many in the backseat. I was in the trunk with another two people. The first pothole we passed, the trunk opened. I was closest to it so I reached up and closed it, so I was a hero for a moment!

We arrived in Houston in the Wayside area, between 10 and midnight. That’s when the transaction happened. My cousin, he paid for us, $500 apiece.

This was in the early ’80s. My cousin did not recognize us at first. I had lost a lot of weight after 20 days on the streets of Laredo. From the time that we got there to the time that we crossed it was something like that. The coyotes were feeding us potatoes and eggs, and we didn’t have much clothing, we were very dirty and skinny. We really broke down crying. It was a beautiful time.

My cousin lived down there on Wayside, so he took me over there. Then we moved right near West Gray and Taft. That’s where we lived for probably a year or so.

Then we would find a job and went on our own and rented an apartment. I was a janitor at a restaurant in Montrose called Motherlode, then I became a busboy. My cousin gave me the opportunity to cook there. Things were going great until that restaurant closed. It was a gay restaurant, so I saw for the first time in my life two men kiss each other. That was eye opening, too. All those wonderful memories, they’re there. It was my new culture, my new city. It was all new to me.

After Motherlode closed, I worked in the Esperson Building. I was a janitor during the evenings and in the mornings, I was a busboy in a restaurant called Bull & Bear. When the restaurant closed, I worked part-time jobs. Those were very depressing times. My cousin, the one who lived with me, moved to California, and I had to be by myself in the city. I was very depressed. I was in trouble.

Tracy Vaught and Hugo Ortega, founders and owners of H Town Restaurant Group, at Caracol restaurant. (Photo by/Eric Kayne)

I ended up living on the streets, over by Richmond and Dunlavy. There was a grocery store nearby. Sometimes people gave me food and helped me out. One day I saw a man approaching the store, and he had equipment to cut grass. I explained what happened, and he said, "For heaven's sake!" His name was Luis, and he asked me if I wanted to work with him. And I said, "Sure!" He taught me how to work in landscaping.

Luis was the manager of a soccer team. That's something I was really good at when I was a young person. Luis introduced me to the players, and said, "This is Hugo. He's by himself and he's looking for a house." One was from El Salvador, and said, "He can live with us." Three brothers. I went to live with them.

Then I was getting on the streets every day looking for work. I used to walk back and forth along Westheimer. The funny thing is that I remember crossing the street many times by the building where Hugo's is today. At some point I pointed and thought, I wonder what it would take, how much it would cost to own a building. I would say to myself, "One day I want to own a building like this!"

I WAS GETTING ON THE STREETS EVERY DAY LOOKING FOR WORK . . . I REMEMBER CROSSING THE STREET MANY TIMES BY THE BUILDING WHERE HUGO'S IS TODAY.

Finally, my break came through in 1987. We used to play soccer at Wilson Elementary School (just a few blocks from where Hugo's is now). One time a couple people appeared. They were dressed like cooks, with white jackets. One had the name "Backstreet" on the shirt. A friend went to them, Julio and Francisco, and said, "Hey listen, this Mexican guy is looking for work and he says he can wash dishes. Do you have anything over there where you work?

They gave me the address, and I wrote it down. They said, "Tomorrow you come around 9 o'clock." The next morning I was there sharp, at 8:30 or 8 o'clock in the morning. I was sitting outside in the parking lot. I had anxiety, saying, "I hope I can work here, I hope I can get a job."

Inside, the owner of the restaurant asked Julio, "Dónde está tu amigo?" Where is your friend who wants to wash dishes? And Julio responded, "He's outside!" And she told him, "Well, tell him to come in!" And Julio said, "He's kind of shy."

Then she came to the step. She saw me. She said, "Hello, my name is Tracy," and she shook my hand, kind of a hard shake. And I said, "I'm Hugo." She said, "Well, come in!"

To be honest, when I saw my future wife for the first time, I thought she looked like a Spanish lady, from Spain. Her beauty intrigued me. I fell in love with her that moment! I absolutely loved her. I was very happy. You don't have to speak the language to fall in love with somebody. I didn't speak any English at first.

That day, they found me an apron and I started washing dishes.

One of the things I tell young people who come here and don't speak English is, "Say, 'Yes,'" to everything." I didn't know what Tracy was telling me, but I always said, "Yes, yes, yes!"

One day she said, "Would you like to cook?" I said, "Yes!" I remember my first duty as a cook was to slice a 10-pound tube of provolone on the slicer.

Eventually, I believe around '89, she asked me if I would be interested in enrolling in cooking school. Of course I said, "Yes!" My English had improved a little. I was sure I could understand, so I enrolled myself in the culinary program at Houston Community College. The problem came when I had my first test. I told the teacher "I cannot write English. I can write Spanish." The director of the department allowed me to take the test orally. From time to time, I still talk to him, and sometimes ask him, "Chef, do you have somebody who can help us?"

Around the time I went to school, Tracy bought Prego, an Italian restaurant in the Rice Village. I did a year of apprenticeship while going to school. After I graduated and spent a year at Prego, Tracy invited me back to Backstreet to be the chef.

Sometime in the summer of 1990, Tracy had a party for employees in Galveston, and my responsibility was to cook chicken and hamburgers. It was that day I declared my intentions. We married on May 19, 1994. In 1997, our daughter Sophia Elizabeth was born.

A few years later, we had the opportunity to open Hugo's. Tracy's uncle called to tell her a friend had a piece of property on Westheimer she might be interested in. We were very busy at Backstreet, but eventually we went to have a look.

Standing in the parking lot behind the building that years earlier had been the object of my fantasies, Tracy asked me: "What do you think about opening a restaurant cooking the food of your grandmother, your homeland?"

I thought about getting up at 5 every morning, loading jars on the donkey and going to the bottom of the hill to get water for the kitchen; cutting wood to make a fire every day; taking care of 300 goats; everything made a mano ...

My answer may be hard to believe, but I said from the heart, "Tracy, my god, that's a lot of work!"

OF COURSE, I HAD LEARNED TO SAY "YES" TO EVERYTHING.

APPENDICES

REPORT METHODOLOGY

Geography: When discussing metropolitan areas, this report refers to the 2013 Office of Management and Budget definitions of metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs). Unless specifically noted, those MSAs are referred to by the city that anchors them (e.g., "Los Angeles" for Los-Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, CA).

IPUMS: The bulk of the data used in this report refers to 2016 American Community Survey microdata sourced from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS), the world's largest individual-level population database that is housed at the University of Minnesota. In general, we have used the standard person weights provided by IPUMS. Exceptions to the use of IPUMS weights are in the cases of estimates for undocumented and DACA-eligible individuals. For these estimates, we rely on custom weights for the microdata derived by New American Economy.

Citizenship/Nativity Classification: Unless specifically noted, we catalog all individuals counted by the census and born abroad to non-citizen parents as foreign born or immigrants. This includes both undocumented immigrants as well as foreign-born individuals with legal status. Note that individuals born abroad of parents who are U.S. citizens are considered to be native-born citizens. Several terms are used in this report to refer to subsets of the foreign-born population:

- **Legal Permanent Resident:** refers to individuals who are issued green cards and are accorded all the rights, benefits and privileges associated with residing in the United States permanently.
- **Legal Nonimmigrant:** includes temporary-visa holders such as international students, H-1B high-skilled workers, and H-2A low-skilled agricultural workers; short-term visitors such as tourists are not included.
- **Undocumented Immigrant:** includes those who entered the country illegally as well as those who overstayed their visas. Also included in this group are DACA recipients, TPS holders, and some asylum applicants. Although their status is similar to nonimmigrants, TPS beneficiaries are included as undocumented residents in order to maintain consistency with other population totals.

Race/Ethnicity: All mentions of race and ethnicity in this report refer to the population sorted into the "single-race" race categories as specified in the 1997 U.S. Office of Management and Budget standards for collection of data on race and ethnicity. References to "Anglo" denote non-Hispanic individuals who identify as white.

MODEL APPROACH, ASSUMPTIONS AND DEFINITIONS

MODEL APPROACH:

1. Identify baseline economic data and trends: We examined historical data on employment from 2007 to 2016 (broken out by citizenship status and industry) from American Community Survey microdata to examine the mix of industries that both native-born and foreign-born workers moved into over the past 9 years. Compound annual growth rates for employment were calculated for each industry and citizenship group (native, foreign born with legal status and undocumented). CHF then used data provided by the Bureau of Economic Analysis on the Houston region's GDP by industrial sector to calculate a figure for average output per worker by industrial sector.
2. Analyze historical data to determine base-case growth rate: CHF analyzed growth rates for the period of 2007 to 2016. This period was chosen based due to data availability and because 2007 and 2016 are representative of the long-term performance of the regional economy (both years did not feature boom/bust periods that would skew the projections). In terms of this model, 'base case' represents historical growth.
3. Define alternate scenarios & forecast employment: In addition to the base case, we designed three scenarios: a higher immigration scenario with immigration increased across the board by 30 percent compared to the historical rate, a lower immigration scenario with all forms of immigration decreased 30 percent compared to the historical rate, and a deportation scenario where the region would lose all of its undocumented workers.
4. Sum total impact on Houston economy from each scenario: The total impact on the Houston economy of each scenario is calculated as the forecasted employment change under each scenario multiplied by the economic output per worker figure calculated from BEA data. The result is reported in terms of the differential in GDP that would result from each scenario when indexed to the historical base case.

MODEL ASSUMPTIONS

- In order to assess how changes in employment by industrial sector affect the region's overall GDP, we calculated an indirect measure of employment's effect on the economy with regional GDP by industrial sector as well as employment by industrial sector. One key assumption included in this approach is that the ratio merges all workers within an industry into the same category regardless of their citizenship status, skill level, or income. Due to limits regarding data availability, we were unable to create a more precise figure for average worker output that was broken out by both industry sector and citizenship/skill level. Instead, we compensated by examining historical data employment data to adjust the model based on the mix of industries which industries immigrant employees are entering.
- A second assumption is that the immigrants who will arrive to the Houston region in the future will resemble the assortment of immigrants who have arrived in the past nine years in terms of their skill level and which industries they work in. However, what kind of immigrants come to the Houston region going forward could substantially change, particularly if the federal government modifies policies pertaining to the number of visas allocated for high- or low-skilled workers.
- The model works by accepting an input for projected change in employment and estimates future GDP by assuming that all other factors remain constant. In reality, a decrease in available workers would likely cause employers to divert resources that they would use to hire workers toward capital investment and automation. A future study might further explore the question of to what extent such a substitution effect would occur if the region's labor supply was constrained by a decrease in immigration.

MODEL DEFINITIONS

Data Source: The majority of data that appears in our analysis came from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2007 and 2016 American Community Survey 1-year sample microdata, downloaded from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) database. Unless otherwise noted, this data is weighted using the person weight for analysis at the individual level. Geography: Data in our analysis refers to the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) of Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, Texas, based on the Office of Management and Budget's 2015 definition, including the counties of Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, and Waller.

GDP: We derive the figures of immigrants' contributions to GDP based on immigrants' share of employment in the 1-year ACS sample from 2016. We use GDP statistics from the Bureau of Economic Analysis and apply the share as a proxy for productivity. Due to constraints with the available data, information on the industry sectors of Transportation and Wholesale Trade were omitted from the study. All figures cited in GDP projections for 2036 are given in 2016 dollars.

Citizenship Status: For the purposes of our analysis, individuals are sorted into one of three categories: native citizens, immigrants with legal status ("documented foreign born"), and undocumented immigrants ("undocumented foreign born"). Native citizens include those who were born abroad of American parents and those born within the United States. Immigrants with legal status includes naturalized citizens as well as permanent residents without citizenship status.

Undocumented Population: Data on the undocumented population in the Houston area is a result of an imputation performed by researchers at New American Economy. Using data from the 2007 and 2016 ACS, they adapted a methodological approach designed by Harvard economist George Borjas to arrive at an estimate of the undocumented population. These figures include those with Temporary Protected Status and individuals enrolled in DACA. Estimates regarding the economic contribution of undocumented immigrants and the role they play in various industries are made using the same methods.

Native Labor Substitution: The consensus of academic literature suggests that, in general, immigrants do not jeopardize the wages or jobs held by native Americans. One recent report from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine found "little evidence that immigration significantly affects the overall employment levels of native-born workers." As such, our projection model does not factor in possible substitution effects resulting from immigrant laborers displacing existing native-held jobs; it treats the relationship between native and immigrant employment as independent from each other.

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PARTNERS

CHF IMMIGRATION COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS

Amy Gasca is president of CGA Energy Corp. Before forming her own energy consulting firm, she held various executive roles at companies including Just Energy, Shell and BP. She is also an adjunct professor at the University of Houston Bauer School of Business and is an active board member and participant with various non-for-profit organizations that inspire immigrants, women and minorities to pursue higher levels of education. She was born in Mexico City and immigrated to the U.S. more than 35 years ago.

Carlos Lara, a native of Mexico City, has dedicated several decades to understanding, developing and fostering business initiatives related to the U.S. Hispanic market. As an entrepreneur, business strategist, investor and corporate executive, he has successfully led marketing and sales efforts for public and private organizations. His unique background and network enabled him to develop business ventures related to emerging technologies and internet initiatives; sports franchises and entertainment; retail electricity; and mass Hispanic retail sales. He serves on several community and business boards.

RATIONAL MIDDLE

RATIONAL MIDDLE. IMMIGRATION

Rational Middle is working to change the immigration debate by creating films that present the facts and frame them with historical context and personal stories. Through the films, social media messaging, and public events, it opens a path for the public at large to have a civil, solutions-based conversation.

For immigration, Rational Middle is focusing on the challenges facing the country through the eyes of immigrants, municipalities, business owners, and citizens on the ground who find themselves confronted with this issue.

Providing this holistic view is what sets the Rational Middle of Immigration apart from other discussions currently taking place and that could help us find some common ground in the immigration debate. Their goal is to inform the general public, shape sensible policy solutions, and create a deeper understanding of this important challenge.

Screening and grassroots outreach meetings throughout the state are planned for 2019.

Watch the video documentaries here at **rationalmiddle.com/immigration**.

BAKER INSTITUTE MEXICO CENTER

méxico center
Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy

The Mexico Center at Rice University's Baker Institute provides policymakers, the public and industry leaders with quality, data-driven analysis of the policy issues that affect Mexico and the United States. The center's nonpartisan research assists public policy coordination by framing problems, providing policy alternatives and contributing to informed decisions that consider both U.S. and Mexican interests.

In conjunction with actors in both countries, the Mexico Center envisions a future in which coordinated policy decisions maximize benefits for all who live in the North American region.

In order to facilitate the task of public policy coordination between Mexico and the United States, the center reaches out to scholars and other experts to produce original, empirical research on issues such as trade, energy and human mobility; fosters the exchange of ideas through public events that bring together decision-makers from both sides of the border; and gathers input from government officials, the private sector and the general public to develop effective and pragmatic policy recommendations.

Learn more at **bakerinstiitute.org/mexico-center.**

ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE

ADL® SOUTHWEST

Founded in 1913, ADL is the nation's premier civil rights/human relations organization. With a distinguished history of reminding the world just how tenuous civil rights are, ADL mobilizes people to engage in reasonable discourse together to find solutions to serve our diverse society.

A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with supporters and partners throughout the United States and around the world, ADL is rooted in Jewish values, speaking up for those whose voices are not always heard. With a network of more than two dozen regional offices nationwide, ADL has a presence on the ground and in the community, organizing and galvanizing grassroots support around the most pressing issues of the day.

- ADL is not only the world's leading organization fighting anti-Semitism, ADL provides law enforcement and communities with the information they need to stay safe from extremist threats of every kind. ADL is also the largest NGO trainer of law enforcement in the Country.
- ADL pursues fair treatment for all through legislatures, the courts and the public square—both federally and at the grassroots level.
- ADL's acclaimed education programs guide youth and adults to reject biases, appreciate differences and create welcoming environments. In the Southwest Region alone, over 400 schools are part of ADL's No Place for Hate® program.

For more information, visit **houston.adl.org.**

PARTNERS

HOUSTON HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Leader of Houston's New Majority®

The Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce is the leading advocate for Hispanic business and civic interests in the Greater Houston area. Through its issue advocacy, its media platforms with an audience reach of more than 3 million people, and its robust membership network, the Chamber is the leading united voice for its members and all of Hispanic Houston.

The Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce serves as a catalyst for business opportunity and growth by:

- Creating business opportunities for its members and corporate partners through its strong network of local, national, and international partnerships.
- Organizing and sponsoring a wide array of programming—educational seminars, networking events, business-centric educational panels, and much more.
- Identifying new and existing business opportunities and introducing members to new sources of business and commerce.

The Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce has developed and fostered strategic partnerships that often result in innovative public policy, stronger community relationships, and countless economic opportunities for its members. Chamber membership is composed of a wide array of entrepreneurs, executives, small businesses and Fortune 500 firms.

Learn more at **houstonhispanicchamber.com.**

HOUSTON IMMIGRATION LEGAL SERVICES COLLABORATIVE

HOUSTON IMMIGRATION
LEGAL SERVICES COLLABORATIVE

The Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative (HILSC) was formed in 2013 to address the lack of legal services capacity in the Houston region. HILSC membership includes over 40 nonprofit immigration legal services providers, advocacy organizations, law school legal clinics and private foundations.

HILSC aims to create a network of effective and efficient services to help low-income immigrants get information and legal representation.

HILSC brings together Houston's best and brightest non-profit and legal minds to:

- Increase the quality and quantity of immigration legal services.
- Incubate and collaboratively develop creative solutions to systemic shortcomings in the provision of immigration legal services.
- Improve and streamline immigrants' access to legal and social services.
- Be a source of reliable and timely information about changing immigration policies and resources.
- Provide funding for nonprofit immigration services providers.

Learn more at **houstonimmigration.org.**

NATIONAL IMMIGRATION FORUM

NATIONAL
IMMIGRATION
FORUM

Founded in 1982, the National Immigration Forum advocates for the value of immigrants and immigration to our nation. In service to this mission, the Forum promotes responsible federal immigration policies, addressing today's economic and national security needs while honoring the ideals of our Founding Fathers, who created America as a land of opportunity.

For 30 years, the Forum has worked to advance sound federal immigration solutions through its policy expertise, communications outreach and coalition building work, which forges powerful alliances of diverse constituencies across the country to build consensus on the important role of immigrants in America.

The Forum's work is centered around four overarching priority concerns:

- Immigration Reform and Workforce Needs
- Integration and Citizenship
- Borders and Interior Enforcement
- State and Local Immigration Developments

Learn more at **immigrationforum.org.**

NEW AMERICAN ECONOMY

New
American
Economy

New American Economy (NAE) is a bipartisan research and advocacy organization fighting for smart federal, state, and local immigration policies that help grow our economy and create jobs for all Americans.

NAE makes the economic case for immigration in four ways:

- Using powerful research to demonstrate how immigration impacts our economy.
- Organizing champions at the grassroots and influencer levels to build support for immigration.
- Partnering with state and local leaders to advocate for policies that recognize the value immigrants add locally.
- Showing immigrant contributions to American culture through film, food, art, sports, comedy, and more.

Now active in more than 70 communities, NAE works with policymakers, business, and civic leaders to promote policies and programs that help create jobs and drive economic growth.

Learn more at **newamericaneconomy.org.**

OUR TEAM

CHF STAFF

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President & CEO

Laura Goldberg
Vice President, Strategic Initiatives and Communications

Russell Richard
Vice President, Leadership and Engagement

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