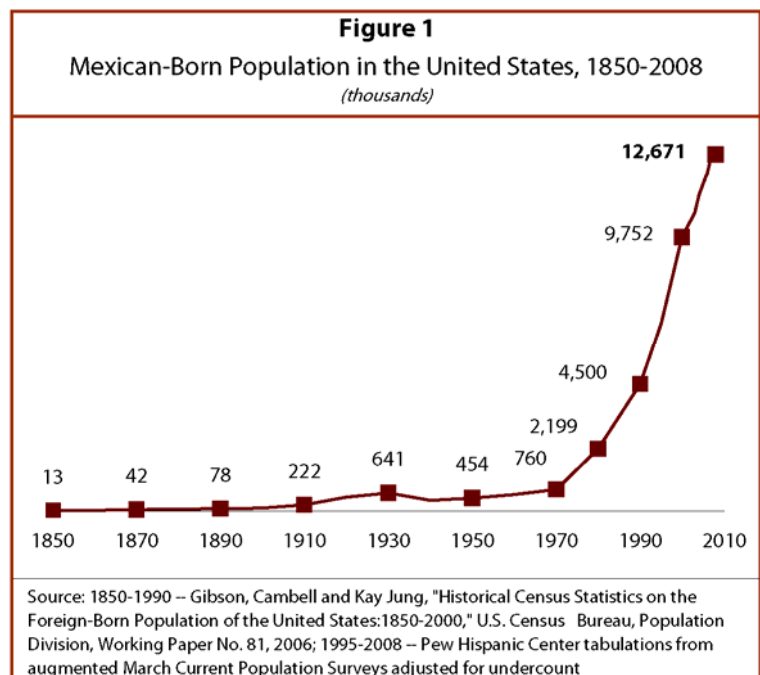


Mexican Immigrants in the United States, 2008

A record 12.7 million Mexican immigrants lived in the United States in 2008, a 17-fold increase since 1970. Mexicans now account for 32% of all immigrants living in this country. The second-largest nationality group of immigrants, Filipinos, account for just 5% of all immigrants in the U.S.

More than half (55%) of the Mexican immigrants in this country are unauthorized. Overall, Mexicans comprise about six-in-ten (59%) of the estimated 11.9 million unauthorized immigrants in the U.S. (see "[A Portrait of Undocumented Immigrants Living in the United States](#)," Passel and Cohn, 2009).

No other country in the world has as many total immigrants from all countries as the United States has immigrants from Mexico alone. Other than the U.S., the country that hosts the largest number of immigrants is Russia, with 12 million foreign born, many of whom are natives of countries that were part of the former Soviet Union.¹

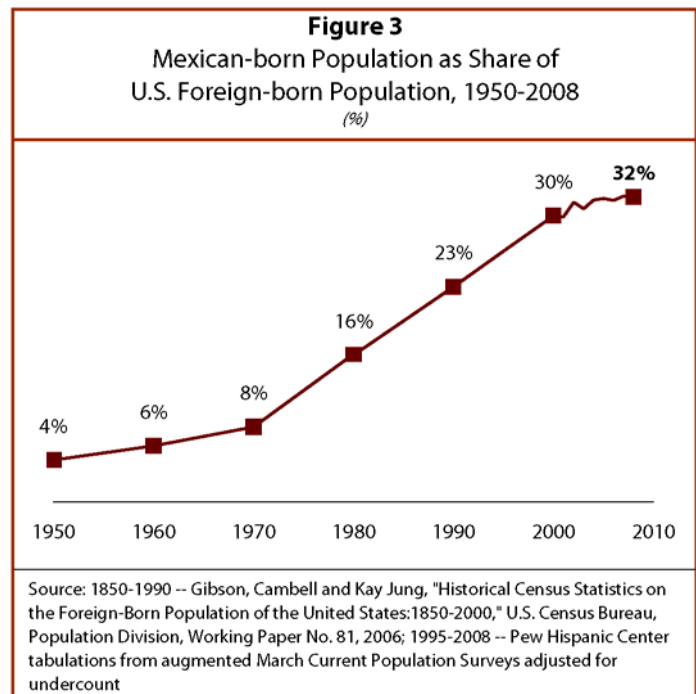
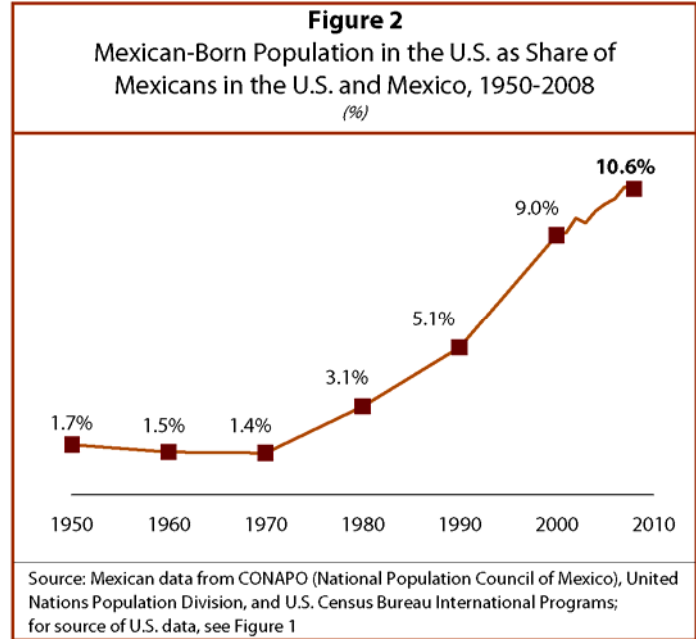


¹ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2009. *International Migration Report 2006: A Global Assessment*. Table 2, p. xvi.

The number of Mexicans living in the U.S. is very large from Mexico’s perspective, too. About 11% of everyone born in Mexico is currently living in the U.S. This large-scale transfer of population has taken place fairly quickly in demographic terms. As of 1970, 760,000 Mexican immigrants, or 1.4% of Mexico’s population, lived in the U.S. And in 1960, Mexico ranked seventh as a source of immigrants to the U.S., behind Italy, Germany, Canada, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and Poland.

Large-scale settlement in the U.S. by Mexicans began in earnest in the 1970s. By 1980, Mexico had the largest foreign-born population here with 2.2 million, or more than twice the second-place country (Germany at 850,000). The number of Mexicans immigrants to the U.S. doubled from 1980 to 1990 and more than doubled from 1990 to 2000. While the growth rate of the Mexican immigrant population has slowed considerably since 2006, the total number reached a record 12.7 million in 2008, or almost 17 times the number in 1970. Mexicans make up the largest number of undocumented immigrants in the U.S. (7.0 million, or 59%) as well as the largest number of legal immigrants (5.7 million, or 21%).

The current Mexican share of all foreign born living in the U.S.—32%—is the highest concentration of immigrants to the U.S. from a single country since the late 19th century. But it is not unprecedented. Irish immigrants represented a third or more of the immigrant population from 1850 to 1870. Germans were 26% to 30% of the foreign-born population from 1850 to 1900.



As a group, Mexican immigrants are younger than either other immigrants or the U.S.-born population. A higher percentage of them are male than either of the other group, and they are more likely to be married. They are less likely to be U.S. citizens than other immigrants, in part because they are more likely to be unauthorized. Mexicans have lower levels of education, lower incomes, larger households and higher poverty rates than other groups (Tables 1-2). They are slightly more likely to be in the labor force, where they are more likely to work in lower-skilled occupations; they currently have a higher unemployment rate than other immigrants or U.S.-born workers (Table 3).

Table 1
 Characteristics of the U.S. Population, by Nativity and Mexican Birth: 2008
(thousands, unless otherwise noted)

	U.S. Born ¹	Foreign Born		
		All Countries	Other than Mexico	Mexico
Total	261,828	39,302	26,631	12,671
Gender				
Male	128,169	20,101	12,842	7,259
Female	133,658	19,201	13,789	5,412
% Female	51%	49%	52%	43%
Age				
Median <i>(in years)</i>	35.7	39.8	42.5	35.4
Age Groups				
Younger than 5	24,502	472	305	167
5-17	46,939	2,729	1,695	1,034
18-29	42,307	7,686	4,427	3,259
30-39	31,375	8,978	5,542	3,435
40-49	36,701	7,789	5,358	2,430
50-64	47,610	7,172	5,494	1,678
65 and older	32,395	4,476	3,810	667
Marital Status (ages 18 and older)				
Married ²	114,478	24,225	16,244	7,981
Never married	42,842	7,167	4,792	2,374
Divorced/separated/widowed	33,067	4,710	3,595	1,115
% Married ²	60%	67%	66%	70%
School Enrollment³				
K-12	60,533	3,093	1,931	1,161
Share of K-12 enrollment	95%	5%	3.0%	1.8%
Educational Attainment (ages 25 and older)				
Less than high school diploma	16,847	10,123	4,035	6,088
High school diploma or equivalent	53,255	8,343	5,947	2,395
Some college	46,280	4,893	3,997	896
Bachelor's degree or more	48,969	9,124	8,595	529
% Less than high school diploma	10%	31%	18%	61%
% Bachelor's degree or more	30%	28%	38%	5%
Median Annual Personal Earnings (for 2007, in dollars)				
All (ages 16 and older with earnings)	\$31,000	\$25,000	\$30,000	\$20,000
Full-time, year-round workers	\$40,000	\$30,000	\$37,000	\$23,000
Persons in Poverty⁴				
Younger than 18	12,516	918	448	470
18-64	15,737	4,964	2,404	2,559
65 and older	2,920	649	522	127
Share of Age Group in Poverty⁴				
Younger than 18	18%	29%	23%	40%
18-64	10%	16%	12%	24%
65 and older	9%	14%	14%	19%
Persons in Households by Type of Household⁵				
In family households	218,650	33,445	22,158	11,287
In married-couple ² households	163,676	25,320	17,062	8,258
% of total in married-couple ² households	63%	64%	64%	65%
In non-family households	43,030	5,834	4,456	1,378
Citizenship				
Citizen	261,828	14,231	12,380	1,850
Non-citizen	---	25,071	14,251	10,820
% Citizen	100%	36%	46%	15%
Hispanic Origin				
Mexican	18,785	---	---	---
Central American	4,011	---	---	---
South American	652	---	---	---
Caribbean	2,803	---	---	---
Other Hispanic	1,925	---	---	---
Year of Entry (foreign-born only)				
Before 1990	---	15,775	11,400	4,375
1990 to 1999	---	11,699	7,506	4,194
2000 or later	---	11,827	7,725	4,102
% 2000 or later	---	30%	29%	32%

¹U.S. born* includes persons born in the United States, Puerto Rico or other U.S. territories as well as those born elsewhere to parents who are U.S. citizens.

²Married* includes cohabiting partners. ³School enrollment for ages 15 and under is based on enrollment rates from the American Community Survey. See Passel and Cohn (2009). ⁴For detailed information on how poverty status is determined, see <http://usa.ipums.org/usa-action/variableDescription/variableDescription.do?mnemonic=POVERTY>. ⁵The household population excludes persons living in institutions, college dormitories and other group quarters.

Note: Based on civilian noninstitutional population. The symbol --- indicates estimate not available or not defined.

Source: Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of augmented March 2008 Current Population Survey adjusted for undercount. See Passel and Cohn (2009) for details on estimates.

Table 2
Characteristics of Households in the United States, by Nativity and Mexican Birth: 2008

	U.S. Born ¹	Foreign Born		
		All Countries	Other than Mexico	Mexico
Total Households (in thousands)	101,058	16,610	11,769	4,841
Homeownership (households, in thousands)				
In owner-occupied homes	71,007	8,658	6,535	2,122
In renter-occupied homes	30,052	7,952	5,234	2,719
Homeownership rate	70%	52%	56%	44%
Household Annual Income (in dollars)				
Median	50,500	44,000	50,000	33,300
Household Size				
Average number of persons (mean)	2.4	3.1	2.8	3.8

¹"U.S. born" includes persons born in the United States, Puerto Rico or other U.S. territories as well as those born elsewhere to parents who are U.S. citizens. A foreign-born household is one where either the householder or spouse, if present, is foreign born.

Note: Based on civilian noninstitutional population. The symbol --- indicates estimate not available or not defined.

Source: Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of augmented March 2008 Current Population Survey adjusted for undercount. See Passel and Cohn (2009) for details on estimates.

Table 3
Employment by Industry and Occupation in the United States, by Nativity and Mexican Birth: 2008
(thousands, unless otherwise noted)

	U.S. Born ¹	Foreign Born		
		All Countries	Other than Mexico	Mexico
Employment Status (civilians ages 16 and older)				
Employed	122,555	23,616	16,014	7,602
Unemployed	6,899	1,496	828	668
Not in labor force	68,640	11,620	8,172	3,448
Unemployment rate (% of labor force)	5.3%	6.0%	4.9%	8.1%
Labor force participation (%)	65%	68%	67%	71%
Industries²				
Construction, agriculture & mining	10,476	3,446	1,304	2,142
Manufacturing	12,988	3,030	1,880	1,150
Trade & transportation	24,606	4,109	3,016	1,092
Information, finance & other services	74,485	13,031	9,814	3,217
Occupations²				
Management, professional & related occupations	45,974	6,427	5,855	572
Services	18,992	5,367	3,254	2,113
Sales & office support	31,972	4,069	3,242	828
Construction, extraction & farming	6,714	3,188	1,096	2,091
Maintenance, production, transportation & material moving	18,902	4,565	2,567	1,997

¹"U.S. born" includes persons born in the United States, Puerto Rico or other U.S. territories as well as those born elsewhere to parents who are U.S. citizens.

²Currently employed civilians ages 16 and older.

Note: Based on civilian noninstitutional population. The symbol --- indicates estimate not available or not defined.

Source: Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of augmented March 2008 Current Population Survey adjusted for undercount. See Passel and Cohn (2009) for details on estimates.