

A Profile of the Foreign-Born in the Louisville Metropolitan Area

by

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Summary

This profile of immigrants in the Louisville metropolitan area (“Louisville”) is intended to help local officials, policy makers and service providers better understand the size, characteristics and needs of the region’s immigrant population. Immigrants are a growing and important element of the Louisville community and the local economy and workforce, while the children of immigrants are a fast-growing segment of the metropolitan area’s school-age population. Given that immigrants may be unable or reluctant to advocate for themselves, it is important for Louisville’s community leaders to devise policies that both address the needs of immigrants and their families and maximize immigrants’ contributions to the Louisville economy and civic society. To this end, this report will outline the demographic characteristics, strengths, assets and service needs of the diverse communities of immigrants living in Louisville.

The Louisville metropolitan area is defined as Jefferson County and 22 surrounding counties—14 in Kentucky and 8 in Indiana—based on geographic boundaries available in the 2000 Census. This report uses the 2000 Census and more recent data where available to produce a demographic portrait of the immigrant population, with a special focus on refugees. Immigrants—also described as “foreign-born” in the report—are people born outside of the United States, excluding United States citizens born abroad to American parents, or in United States territories such as Puerto Rico. Following are highlights from the analysis:

- **The foreign-born share of the Louisville metropolitan area’s population (4.5 percent) was well below the national average (12 percent) in 2004, but the metropolitan area’s immigrant population is growing rapidly.** In 2004, the foreign-born population of the Louisville metro area was 53,000; this number is likely an underestimate, as Louisville’s immigrants are undercounted in official government surveys, according to local data experts. The 2004 figure represents a 93 percent increase in the foreign-born population since 2000, and a 388 percent increase since 1990. Nationally, the number of immigrants grew by 10 percent between 2000 and 2004 and by 73 percent between 1990 and 2004. Immigrants have become a critical component of the total population growth in Louisville—immigrants represented about half (49 percent) of Jefferson County’s total population growth during the 1990s. Although Louisville has a long history of immigration, the recent rapid growth in the number of newcomers poses challenges for the area’s infrastructure. Employers, elementary and secondary schools, universities, job training centers, hospitals and social service providers are among the many important public and private institutions that must grapple with how to serve this fast-changing population.
- **Louisville’s immigrants are more diverse in their origins than immigrants nationally; they include large numbers of Latin American immigrants as well as refugees from all over the world.** Latin America was the region of origin for 55 percent of all immigrants nationally in 2004, compared to just 38 percent in Louisville. By contrast, a higher share of immigrants in Louisville came from Africa (15 percent) and Asia and the Pacific (35 percent) than was the case nationally (2 and 26 percent, respectively). The share of Louisville immigrants from Europe (12 percent) was just below the national average (16 percent). The diversity of Louisville’s immigrant population means that public schools must be prepared to educate students from diverse cultural backgrounds who speak a wide variety of languages.

Other institutions such as hospital emergency rooms and motor vehicle departments also face a growing need for interpreter services. In fact, at least 77 languages were spoken in the homes of Louisville's residents in 2000, and 78 languages were spoken in Jefferson County schools.

- **Louisville has a lower share of undocumented immigrants than is the case nationally and in most other Southeastern communities.** In 2000, according to our best estimates using census data, the share of Louisville immigrants who were undocumented (18 percent) was lower than the national average (27 percent). The undocumented share in many Southeastern cities exceeded 30 percent—for example, 32 percent of Nashville's immigrants were undocumented. Undocumented immigrants are those who entered the United States illegally, often across the Mexican border; overstayed temporary visas; or otherwise violated the terms of their immigration status. Louisville's relatively low share of undocumented immigrants is associated with a low share of total immigrants from Latin America, as the vast majority of undocumented immigrants come from Mexico and other Latin American countries.
- **Louisville has a high share of refugees, due to its large federal refugee resettlement program.** According to our estimates using census data, 15 percent of Louisville's immigrants are refugees, twice the national share of 7 percent. The actual share of refugees among Louisville's immigrants may be even higher, since refugee admissions data suggest that the census undercounted this population. Refugees are immigrants whom the U.S. government has designated as those having a well-founded fear of persecution in their home countries; the refugee designation makes them eligible for United States government-funded services upon arrival. Refugees are resettled in Kentucky through the Wilson-Fish Program, a public-private partnership that provides benefits and social services during refugees' initial years in the United States. According to data from the Kentucky State Refugee Coordinator—which shows numbers far higher than the census—about 10,800 refugees were resettled in or moved to the Louisville area during 1994 - 2004. These refugees were born in a wide range of countries in the Caribbean, Europe, Africa and Asia, and they contribute greatly to the diversity of Louisville's population. Louisville's successful refugee resettlement program may have lessons to offer those who provide employment and social services to other immigrant groups.
- **Most of Louisville's immigrant groups are highly educated.** In 2000, Louisville foreign-born adults age 25 and over were considerably more likely to have a four-year college degree than native-born residents of the metropolitan area (33 versus 19 percent). Almost half (48 percent) of immigrants born in Asia and the Pacific, and over a third (37 percent) born in Africa had four-year college degrees. All other immigrant groups, except those from Latin America, were more likely than natives to be college graduates. Latin American immigrants, the least educated group, still had a four-year college rate just below natives (17 versus 19 percent). Even when they have high levels of formal education, immigrants often face other barriers to employment, such as lack of English proficiency and difficulty transferring credentials from their home countries.

- **Latin Americans and Africans are the poorest immigrants, while the median income for Asian and European immigrants exceeds that for native-born Louisville residents.** In 1999, nearly a third (30 percent) of immigrants from Latin America had family incomes below the federal poverty level, compared with only 10 percent for European immigrants and 15 percent of native-born Louisville residents. Immigrants from Africa also fared worse than native-born Louisville residents with 19 percent earning below the federal poverty level. On the other hand, median family incomes for Asian immigrants (\$36,000) and European immigrants (\$38,000) exceeded the median for natives (\$30,000), and were more than twice the median income for immigrants from Mexico and other Latin American countries (\$17,000). Due to their relatively high poverty rates, Latin American and African immigrants experience the greatest levels of economic hardship and need for public benefits and social services. Moreover, because Latin Americans are such a large and fast-growing immigrant group, their demands on Louisville's social service infrastructure are likely to increase greatly in the near future.
- **The number of immigrant workers is growing rapidly, especially those who work in low-skilled jobs.** From 1990 to 2000 the number of immigrant workers grew by 158 percent while the number of native-born workers grew by only 10 percent. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of low-skilled immigrant workers (i.e., those without high school degrees) rose even faster (170 percent) while the number of low-skilled natives fell by 19 percent.
- **The best-educated workers earn the highest wages, regardless of whether or not they are immigrants.** The relatively high educational attainment of many immigrant groups is reflected in their high income and earnings. In 1999 immigrants with four-year college degrees earned more than twice as much as high school dropouts (\$19 versus \$8 per hour), and immigrants earned about the same amount as natives with equivalent levels of education. Approximately 60 percent of foreign-born and native-born workers without high school degrees earned less than twice the minimum wage in 1999, compared to just 15 percent of native-born and 22 percent of foreign-born workers with college degrees. These patterns suggest that Louisville's community leaders should invest in education and training programs tailored toward Latin American and other low-income immigrants in order to raise their productivity. Improving immigrants' productivity and wages would also lower their poverty and demand for public benefits and social services.
- **Rapid immigration has more than doubled the number of students enrolled in English as a second language programs in Jefferson County Public Schools over the past seven years.** Between the 1997 - 98 and 2004 - 05 school years, the number of English as a second language (ESL) students in the Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) grew by 122 percent, from 900 to 2,000. Large increases in the number of ESL students are associated with rapidly increasing immigration, as the vast majority of Louisville's immigrants come from non-English speaking countries. These rapid changes in student demographics have dramatic implications for JCPS. As a condition for receipt of federal Title I funding, the No Child Left Behind Act holds schools accountable for the test scores of limited English speaking students, in addition to all students generally. JCPS has invested considerable resources in the education of ESL children and should continue to monitor closely the education of this student population.

- **Immigrant parents with school-age children in Louisville are better educated than native-born parents—the reverse of the national pattern.** In 2000 in Louisville, about the same proportion of children of immigrants and natives (11 and 9 percent) had parents with less than a high school education. But nationally, children of immigrants were more than three times as likely as children of natives to have parents with less than a high school education (34 versus 9 percent). At the other end of the spectrum, a higher share of children of immigrants than natives in Louisville had parents with four-year college degrees (34 versus 24 percent). Nationally, a higher share of children of natives had parents with college degrees (30 versus 26 percent).
- **Despite the relatively high educational attainment of immigrant parents overall, there are many immigrant parents with lower educational attainment—especially those from Latin America—and the number of these immigrant parents is growing rapidly in Louisville, as they are nationally.** These immigrant parents—who are often low-income as well as poorly educated—may need additional incentives or services such as adult education to increase their involvement in their children’s education. Moreover, since many of these less-educated parents also have limited English skills, schools with limited interpretation resources may find it challenging to communicate with them, as required by the No Child Left Behind Act. To meet these requirements, schools serving large numbers of ESL students—for instance, the ESL schools in JCPS—should expand on programs that involve parents and teach them English and other skills.

Introduction

Although Louisville was founded by immigrants, the metropolitan area has relatively little recent experience with immigrants due to the small size of its foreign-born population over the past several decades. Unlike New York, Los Angeles and other large immigration cities, Louisville only became a major immigrant destination during the 1990s. Prior to the 1980s, Louisville had a small population of immigrants, most of whom were older and came from Canada and Europe. But starting in the 1990s, Louisville—like many other cities of the same size in the Southeast and Midwest—became home to increasing numbers of immigrants arriving from across the globe. The recent and diverse character of immigration flows to Louisville makes it important to understand the demographics of the area's immigrants, as well as their contributions, service delivery needs, and economic and social impacts.

This profile of Louisville's immigrants was developed for the Louisville Metro Office for International Affairs to help local officials, policy makers and service providers better understand the size, composition, and needs of the region's immigrant population. The report first provides a portrait of Louisville's foreign-born population with a particular focus on the large and growing refugee population. Subsequently, the analysis turns to the role of immigrants in Louisville's workforce, focusing both on high-wage jobs (where Asian immigrants on average out-earn their United States-born counterparts) as well as low-wage jobs (where Mexican and Central American immigrants predominantly work). Wages and incomes are closely associated with educational attainment, which varies widely across the different immigrant groups. There is also great variation in educational attainment and wages across the industries in which immigrants work. The following section of the report addresses the growing number of immigrant children in the Jefferson County Public School system with a particular focus on those with limited English proficiency.

Finally, the report develops general conclusions and specific policy recommendations from the demographic, workforce, and school data described in the report. These recommendations are intended to be useful to metropolitan and local officials, policy makers, social service providers, advocates, and community leaders, as they strive to meet the challenges posed by rapid recent immigration and chart the course toward a prosperous future for all Louisville residents.

Growth of the Immigrant Population

The rapid growth in Louisville's foreign-born population is taking place during a period of record high United States immigration, at least in terms of absolute numbers. More than 14 million immigrants entered the country during the 1990s, up from 10 million in the 1980s and 7 million in the 1970s. Between 1970 and 2000, the number of immigrants in the country tripled from 10 to 31 million. By 2005 the foreign-born population had risen to over 35 million, suggesting there could be as many as 40 million immigrants in the United States by 2010. The foreign-born share of the United States population has risen dramatically, from 5 percent in 1970 to 12 percent in 2005, and is projected to reach 13 percent by 2010. While high in absolute number, the projected 2010 foreign-born

population would still be a smaller share of the United States population than it was at its peak (15 percent) in the late 1800s.¹

Louisville has a small but rapidly growing foreign-born population. As of 2004, the Louisville metropolitan area had a foreign-born population of 53,000, accounting for 4.5 percent of the area’s population (1.2 million), well below the national average of 12 percent.² Yet Louisville’s foreign-born population is growing much more rapidly than the overall U.S. immigrant population. The number of immigrants in the Louisville metropolitan area grew by 93 percent between 2000 and 2004, and by 388 percent between 1990 and 2004, while nationally the foreign-born population increased by only 73 percent from 1990 to 2004.³ Louisville’s foreign-born population is relatively small when compared to other metropolitan areas of similar size, for instance the 14 peer metropolitan areas in the Southeast and Midwest (table 1). Louisville’s foreign-born population growth rate, however, is in the middle of the range for these peer cities. Between 1990 and 2000, the fastest growing metropolitan areas in these regions—both in terms of overall and immigrant populations—were located in North Carolina and Tennessee. Louisville fits a more modest growth pattern similar to that of peer cities in Alabama, Indiana, Iowa and Kansas. The peer metropolitan areas in Ohio, by contrast, showed slower growth in their immigrant populations.

Table 1: 2000 Foreign-Born Population and 1990-2000 Foreign-Born Population Growth, Louisville and 14 Peer Metropolitan Areas

Greater Metropolitan Area	Total Population,** 2000	Foreign-born Population,** 2000	Share Foreign-born, 2000	Total Population Growth, 1990-2000	Foreign-born Population Growth, 1990-2000
Raleigh--Durham--Chapel Hill, NC	1,188	109	9.2%	68%	292%
Charlotte--Gastonia--Rock Hill, NC--SC	1,499	100	6.7%	32%	315%
Greensboro--Winston-Salem--High Point, NC	1,252	72	5.7%	35%	406%
Jacksonville, FL	1,101	60	5.4%	26%	96%
Omaha, NE--IA	717	34	4.8%	19%	135%
Nashville, TN	1,231	58	4.7%	27%	220%
Columbus, OH	1,540	71	4.6%	15%	98%
Kansas City, MO--KS	1,776	81	4.5%	16%	128%
Richmond--Petersburg, VA	997	45	4.5%	18%	99%
Indianapolis, IN	1,608	54	3.4%	31%	163%
Memphis, TN--AR--MS	1,136	38	3.3%	17%	172%
Louisville, KY--IN (23 Counties)	1,440	36	2.5%	11%	121%
Cincinnati--Hamilton, OH--KY--IN	1,979	51	2.6%	16%	62%
Dayton--Springfield, OH	951	22	2.3%	2%	28%
Birmingham, AL	921	21	2.3%	3%	123%

¹ These figures are based on The Urban Institute projections and analysis of decennial Census and 2005 Current Population Survey data.

² The 2004 estimate of 53,000 is based on an average of three years of data (2003-05) from the United States Current Population Survey (CPS). Due to small sample sizes, the estimates of Louisville’s immigrant population varied widely across these three years: 57,000 in 2003; 42,000 in 2004; and 58,000 in 2005. The geographic definition of the Louisville metropolitan area for 2005 differs slightly from that for 2003-04. Additionally, the metropolitan area defined here is the standard “Metropolitan Statistical Area” (MSA) defined by the census, rather than the 23-county area in the census PUMS we use elsewhere in this report, because the MSA is more easily compared across years of data than the larger 23-county area.

³ The 1990 and 2000 estimates in this report are based on United States Census data. Local officials, advocates and community leaders in Louisville have estimated that the 2000 Census may have undercounted immigrants from some regions—particularly Latin America—by as much as two or three times (Correspondence with Ron Crouch, Director, Kentucky State Data Center, University of Louisville, August 2005).

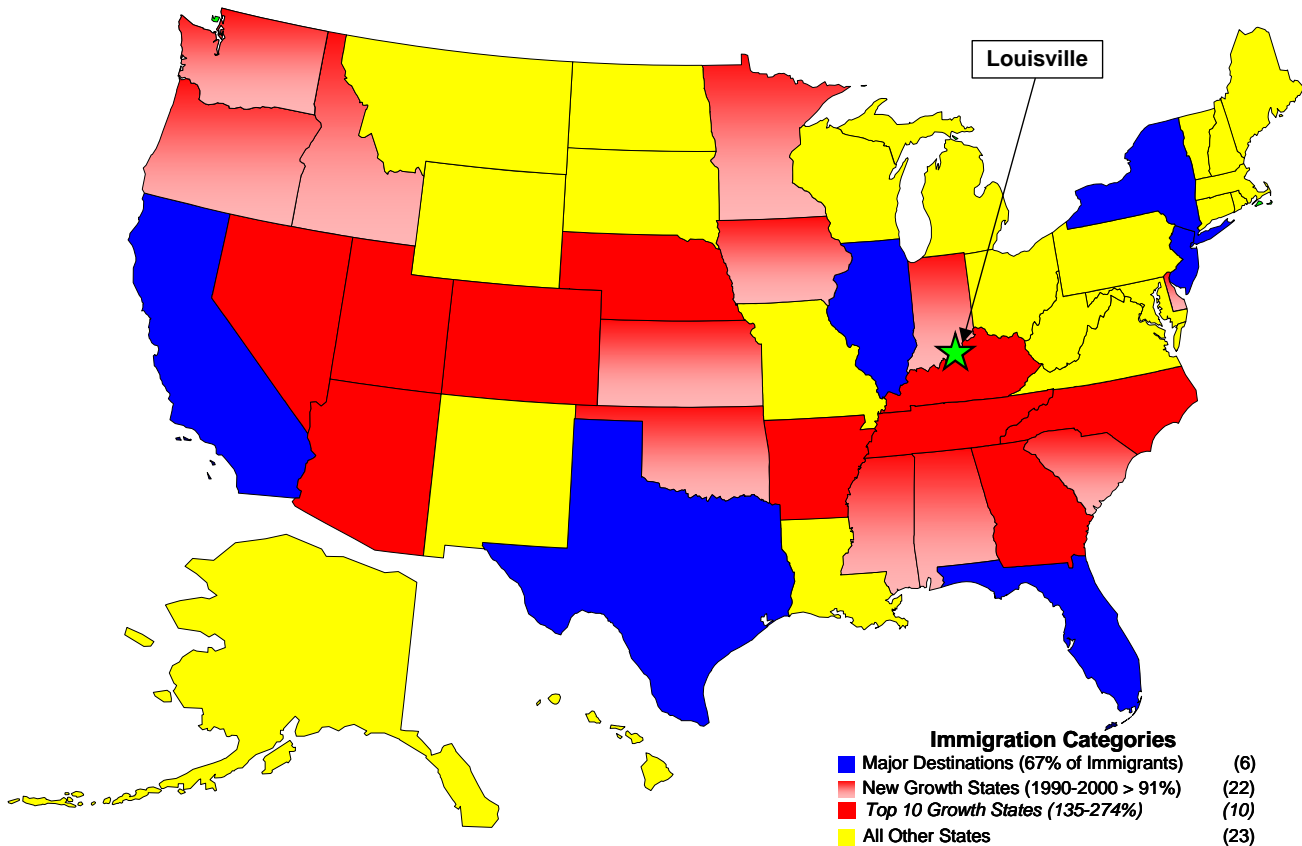
NOTES: Louisville peer metropolitan areas are identified in the Greater Louisville Project (2005).

** Population numbers are rounded to the nearest thousand.

SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of U.S. Census Integrated Public Use Microdata Samples, 1990 and 2000.

Louisville is located between the Midwest and Southeast—two regions that include many of the states with the fastest growing immigrant populations. In 2000, two thirds of all immigrants lived in just six states—California, New York, Texas, Florida, Illinois and New Jersey. But during the 1990s, the number of immigrants grew more rapidly in 22 other “new growth” states located in the Midwest, Southeast, and West except for California (Fix and Capps 2002). These states are shaded red (medium shade in black and white copies) in the map shown in figure 1. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of immigrants in Kentucky grew by 135 percent, making it the tenth fastest growing state. Indiana was the 20th fastest growing state with an increase of 98 percent in the number of immigrants over the decade. By contrast, the total number of immigrants nationally increased by 57 percent during the 1990s.

Figure 1: New Immigration Growth States, 1990 to 2000



SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 1990 and 2000.

The Southeast as a region experienced strong population and economic growth during the 1990s. In most Southeastern states, unemployment remained relatively low during the 1990s, despite the influx of immigrants and internal migrants from other regions of the country; in fact unemployment remained well below the national average in some of the region's major metropolitan areas such as Atlanta, Memphis, Raleigh-Durham and Charlotte (Kohhar, Suro and Tafoya 2005). The labor-driven migration wave to the Southeast was composed largely of Latin American immigrants, who found jobs mostly in lower-skilled, low-wage sectors of the economy such as manufacturing, agriculture and construction. These jobs matched the relatively low levels of English proficiency and educational attainment among recent Latin American immigrants, many of whom are undocumented (Bump, Lowell and Petterson 2005).

The labor migration story in Louisville, however, may be more complex, as we shall see later in this report. Louisville has received a large influx of Latin American immigrants who are engaged in low-skilled jobs throughout various industries in the metropolitan area. According to the census data, however, Louisville has received as many or more highly educated immigrants from diverse origins. These immigrants have contributed strongly to Louisville's economic growth in higher-skilled sectors of the economy.

Definitions, Data Sources and Methodology

This report uses the conventional definition of immigrants as foreign-born people, i.e., those born outside the United States, with two exceptions: (1) people born to United States citizen parents and (2) those born in United States territories such as Puerto Rico. The report also defines several categories of immigrants according to their citizenship and legal status: legal permanent residents, refugees (including asylees), legal temporary residents (including students and temporary workers), undocumented immigrants, and naturalized citizens. The definitions of these categories, which are unique to analysis conducted by The Urban Institute and Pew Hispanic Center, are provided in figure 2.

Figure 2: Definitions of Citizenship and Legal Status Categories

Non-citizens

- *Legal permanent residents (LPRs)* are legally admitted to live permanently in the United States through qualifying for immigrant visas abroad or adjustment to permanent resident status in the United States. LPRs are issued documentation commonly referred to as “green cards,” although the cards have not been green for many years. Almost all LPRs are sponsored (i.e., brought to the United States) by close family members or employers.
- *Refugees and asylees* are granted legal status due to persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution in their home countries. Refugee status is granted before entry to the United States. Refugee status may be granted to a group of persons, although each individual must also qualify for the status. Asylees must meet the same criteria regarding fear of persecution. Unlike refugees, asylees usually arrive in the country without authorization (or overstay a valid visa), later claim asylum, and are granted their legal status while in the United States. After one year, refugees and asylees are generally eligible for permanent residency, and after five years, for naturalization. Almost all “adjust” their status and become LPRs, although they retain certain rights—for instance eligibility for major federal benefit programs—by virtue of their designation as refugees or asylees. In this report, we categorize all immigrants who enter as refugees or are granted asylum as refugees even after they become LPRs or citizens.
- *Temporary legal residents* have been admitted to the United States for a temporary or indefinite period, but have not attained permanent residency. Most are people who have entered for a temporary period, for work, as students, or because of political disruption or natural disasters in their home countries. Some seek to stay for a permanent or indefinite period and have a “pending” status that allows them to remain in the country and work but does not carry the same rights as legal permanent residency.
- *Undocumented immigrants* do not possess a valid visa or other immigration document, because they entered the United States illegally (usually across the Mexican border), stayed longer than their temporary visas permitted, or otherwise violated the terms under which they were admitted. A small number eventually adjust their status and attain legal residency after a sponsorship petition has been filed by a relative, spouse or employer.

Citizens

- *Naturalized citizens* are former LPRs who have become United States citizens through the naturalization process. Typically, LPRs must be in the United States for five or more years to qualify for naturalization, although immigrants who marry citizens can qualify in three years, and some small categories qualify even sooner. LPRs must take a citizenship test—in English—and pass background checks before qualifying to naturalize.
- *Native-born citizens.* All people born in the United States (including the children of non-citizen parents) are granted birthright citizenship, regardless of their parents’ birthplace or legal status. Native-born citizens also include people born in Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, other United States territories and possessions, and those born in foreign countries to a U.S. citizen parent.

The data in this report were obtained from multiple national and local sources. Unless otherwise noted, the data analyzed in the report are taken from the 2000 United States Census of Population and Housing (Census), 5 percent Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS). The 2000 Census PUMS is the largest public-use data set with comparable information on populations across the country—down to the state and local level in most cases—and multiple measures of demographics, labor force characteristics, income and poverty. The census also offers sufficient detail and sample size to conduct in depth comparisons among different groups of immigrants. Where possible, census figures are updated using 2003-05 data from the United States Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Demographic Supplement, which is collected in March. The most recent three years of CPS data are used to increase the precision of the estimates. Although the CPS lacks the sample size and precision of the census, it nevertheless provides a more current picture of the immigrant community.

The census and CPS ask respondents whether or not they are United States-born citizens, naturalized citizens or non-citizens; they do not collect data on the legal status of non-citizens. Over the past decade, The Urban Institute (Passel and Clark 1998) and the Pew Hispanic Center (Passel 2005) have developed techniques for assigning legal status to non-citizens in the census and CPS data. The assignment process begins by identifying refugees and temporary legal residents in the data. Refugees are defined based on their country of birth and year of arrival; temporary legal residents are defined based on length of United States residency, school enrollment, labor force participation, and/or occupation and industry of employment. Once refugees and temporary legal residents are excluded, the remaining non-citizens are categorized as either LPRs or undocumented immigrants. The control total for the number of undocumented immigrants is estimated by subtracting the number of legal immigrants over the course of the past few decades—using United States Department of Homeland Security data—from the total number of non-citizens counted in the Census or CPS, with adjustments made for estimated deaths and emigration from the United States. The control total for undocumented immigrants is used to estimate the number of LPRs versus undocumented immigrants in the census or CPS data. A probabilistic procedure is then used to assign LPR or undocumented status to non-citizens by taking into account their country of origin, length of United States residency, occupation, household composition and other factors.

Given the age of the 2000 Census data and the likelihood that some immigrant groups were undercounted, as well as small sample sizes in the CPS, we chose to incorporate data obtained from local sources to supplement the secondary sources as best as possible. Researchers studying other locations in the United States have found that official census data undercount immigrants, especially Hispanics. For instance, Kasarda and Johnson (2005) estimated that the Census Bureau's 2004 American Community survey undercounted Hispanics—including both immigrants and the native-born—by about 20 percent in North Carolina. Louisville area officials and advocates have estimated that the number of Latin American immigrants—many of whom are undocumented—may be two to three times as high as the official census number. Local experts also told the researchers that the number of refugees is far higher than that recorded in the census.⁴

⁴ Correspondence with Ron Crouch, Director, Kentucky State Data Center, University of Louisville, August 2005.

While it is difficult—if not impossible—to obtain accurate data on the number of undocumented immigrants, reasonably accurate counts of recent refugees are available through the refugee resettlement program. Catholic Charities, which administers Kentucky’s Wilson-Fish refugee program (a public-private partnership with the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Refugee Resettlement), provided data on all refugees resettling to Jefferson County between 1994 and 2004. These refugee resettlement numbers include secondary migrants, those refugees who were initially resettled in other parts of the country but later moved to Louisville. These refugee arrival counts, however, do not account for the small number of refugees who leave Louisville after initially resettling there or who have died.⁵

Researchers also obtained data on the number of English as a Second Language (ESL) students in Louisville public schools for 1997 through 2004, from the Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS). ESL children are those children who were tested in English and whose English skills were found to be below the school district’s definition of proficiency; only those students participating in some form of ESL or other instruction geared toward non-English speaking students are included in our counts. The JCPS data show that through 2004, the number of ESL children—the vast majority of whom have immigrant parents—increased rapidly, suggesting that immigration has continued to accelerate since 2000.

Most of the data and figures in this profile are for the Louisville Metropolitan Area (“Louisville”), which includes Jefferson County and the 22 counties that surround it.⁶ The researchers defined the metropolitan area to include these 23 counties because of geographic boundaries available in the 2000 Census Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS).⁷ The city of Louisville is located within Jefferson County and shares the same metropolitan government as Jefferson County; this area is referred to simply as “Jefferson County” within the report. Due to small sample sizes in the outlying counties, the researchers could not disaggregate data for these counties separately. All figures in the report are either for Jefferson County or for the greater metropolitan area (“Louisville”).

⁵ Correspondence with Rebecca Jordan, State Refugee Coordinator, Catholic Charities, Louisville, Kentucky, August 2005.

⁶ The surrounding counties are: Breckenridge, Bullitt, Grayson, Hardin, Henry, Larue, Marion, Meade, Nelson, Oldham, Spencer, Shelby, Trimble and Washington in Kentucky; and Clark, Crawford, Floyd, Harrison, Lawrence, Orange, Scott and Washington in Indiana.

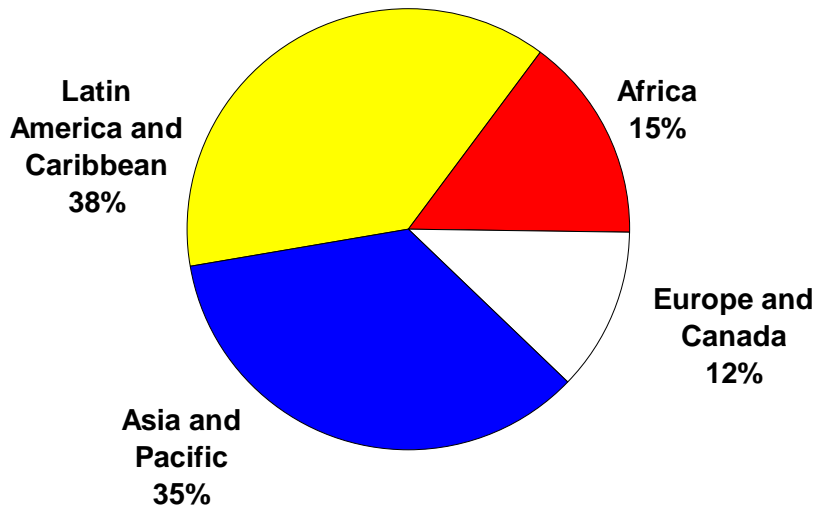
⁷ PUMS data subdivide states into smaller geographic aggregations called Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs), which are based on counties. These aggregations do not always match boundaries for metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs). Because the PUMA boundaries available in the Census 2000 5 percent PUMS data do not exactly correspond with the 13-county Louisville MSA, we expanded our definition of the Louisville area to include several counties that are not in the Louisville MSA, in order to be as inclusive as possible.

The Diverse Origins and Characteristics of Louisville's Immigrants

As of 2004, 4.5 percent of Louisville's residents were foreign-born, compared to a national average of 12 percent. The metropolitan area's foreign-born population includes a diverse mix of people from around the world, and in contrast to the nation and the Southeast as a region, no one single country of origin or ethnic group predominates. This diversity is most visible among the refugees who have established their new homes in Louisville. Although many of Louisville's immigrants have been in the United States for only a short while, on average they are better educated than their native-born peers, and overall they earn comparable wages. But this pattern masks important differences among the diverse groups of immigrants that reside in Louisville.

Region of Birth

Figure 3: Region of Birth for Louisville Foreign Born, 2004

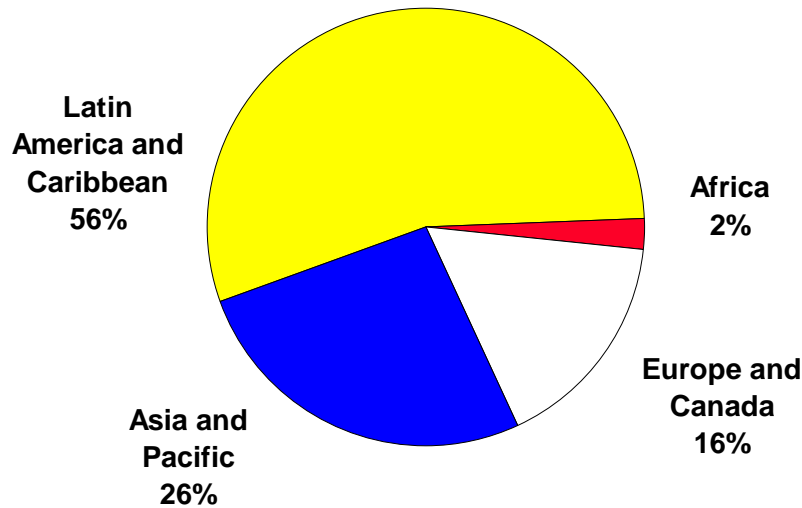


SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Current Population Survey, Annual Demographic and Economic Supplement, March, 2003-05.

Latin Americans and Asians account for about three quarters of immigrants in Louisville, as nationally. In Louisville, Latin American immigrants were the largest immigrant group in 2004 (38 percent), followed closely by Asians and Pacific Islanders (35 percent, figure 3). Relatively smaller shares of immigrants were composed of Africans (15 percent) and Europeans and Canadians (12 percent). The three most common countries of birth for immigrants in 2004 were Mexico (11,000), Vietnam (5,000) and India (5,000).⁸

⁸ These estimates are based on averaging three years (2003-2005) of the CPS. According to local sources Latin American and Caribbean immigrants were undercounted in the 2000 Census and subsequently in the CPS, but the magnitude of the

Figure 4: Region of Birth for United States Foreign-Born, 2004



SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Current Population Survey, Annual Demographic and Economic Supplement, March, 2004.

Nationally, however, the share of Latin American immigrants is far higher than the share of Asians and Pacific Islanders (figure 4). In the United States in 2004, Latin Americans accounted for over half (55 percent) of the foreign born, but Asians just one quarter (26 percent). A far smaller share of immigrants comes from Africa nationally (2 percent) than in Louisville (15 percent).⁹

The pattern of immigrant origins in the nearby Nashville metropolitan area, by contrast, is much closer to the national pattern. In Nashville in 2004, Latin Americans were the largest immigrant group (59 percent of all immigrants). Asians were the second largest group (21 percent), while immigrants from Europe and Canada composed nearly the same percentage as nationally (17 versus 16 percent). Africans were the smallest immigrant group in Nashville (2 percent).¹⁰

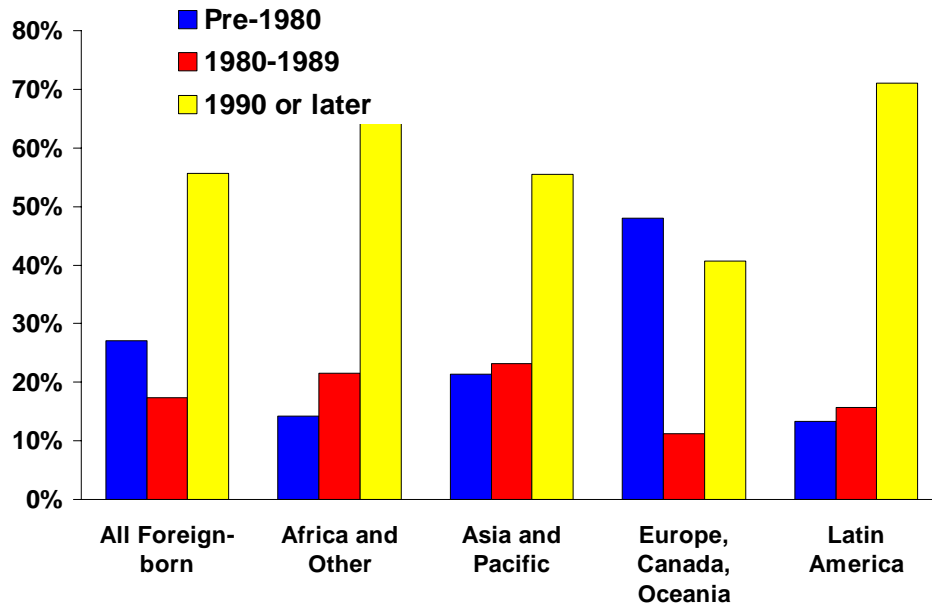
undercount cannot be determined accurately. Local sources also indicate that there is a large immigrant community from Bosnia and Herzegovina, but because of the small sample size we are unable to estimate their number using the CPS. Also, local experts believe that the number of immigrants from Mexico, Vietnam, and India are undercounted in the CPS.

⁹ These estimates are based on the 2004 CPS.

¹⁰ These estimates are based on the 2003-05 CPS.

Period of Arrival

Figure 5: Entry Date for Foreign-Born Groups in Louisville, 2000



SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

Louisville has a substantial population of recent immigrants. In 2000, 56 percent of Louisville immigrants had arrived in the United States within the last decade, with considerably smaller populations arriving prior to 1980 (27 percent) and during the 1980s (17 percent). Nationally, 42 percent of immigrants came during the 1990s, while 30 percent had arrived before 1980. Thus, on average Louisville’s immigrants have been in the United States for a shorter period of time than immigrants across the rest of the country. More recent immigrants are not as likely to be well established within the community or accustomed to U.S. institutions, raising additional integration challenges for Louisville.

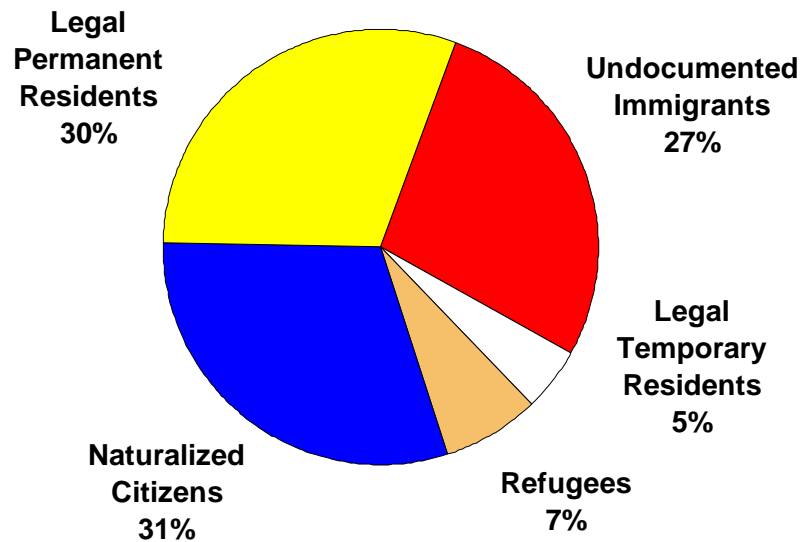
The arrival patterns of Louisville immigrants, however, differ dramatically by region of birth. Latin Americans are the most recent immigrant population, but a majority of immigrants from Asia and Africa also arrived during the 1990s (figure 5).¹¹ By contrast, almost half of immigrants from Europe, Canada, and Oceania arrived prior to 1980.¹²

¹¹ It is possible that immigrants from some countries outside Latin America have larger shares that arrived between 1990 and 2000. Small sample sizes in the census, however, do not allow comparison of arrival periods for individual country-of-origin groups.

¹² Throughout the rest of this report immigrants from Australia and New Zealand (“Oceania”) are grouped with immigrants from Europe and Canada because they are mostly non-Hispanic white and speak English.

Citizenship and Legal Status

Figure 6: Citizenship and Legal Status of United States Immigrants, 2000

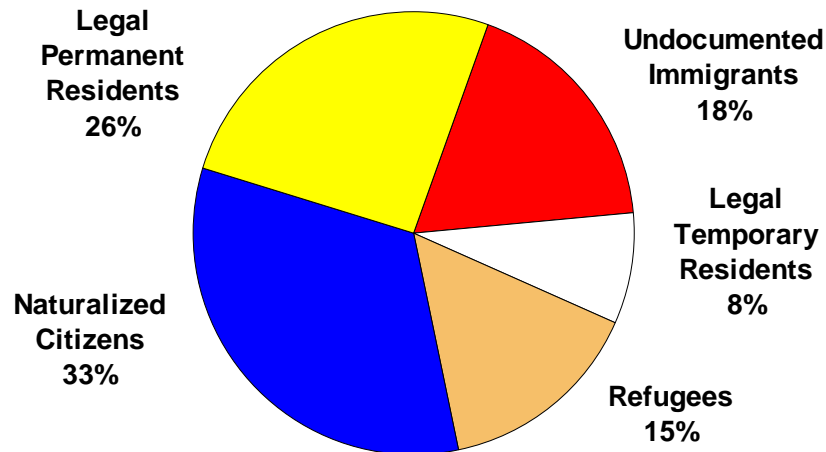


SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

Nationally, the undocumented immigrant population is growing faster than the overall immigrant population (Passel 2005), and has become a topic of considerable public concern and policy discussion. Estimated at over 10 million in 2004, the undocumented now make up almost 30 percent of all immigrants—the same share as LPRs. In 2000, however, their share of all immigrants was somewhat lower nationally: 27 percent (figure 6). Shares of undocumented immigrants are especially high in states near the Southwestern border with Mexico and those with the fastest growing, most recent immigrant populations—including most of the Southeast (Passel 2005). But this is not the case for Louisville, which has a more diverse immigrant population and is a considerable distance from the Mexican border.

Louisville's 2000 foreign-born population had a relatively low share of undocumented immigrants (18 percent), when compared with the United States as a whole (27 percent) and neighboring Nashville (32 percent). Twenty-six percent of Louisville's immigrants were LPRs (figure 7). This was just below the national average of 30 percent in 2000.

Figure 7: Citizenship and Legal Status of Louisville Immigrants, 2000



SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

In Louisville, as nationally, one-third of all foreign-born residents were naturalized United States citizens. Nationally, European immigrants—who are generally older and have been in the United States longer—and Asian immigrants—who are usually well educated—are relatively more likely to naturalize. Latin American immigrants, however, have lower naturalization rates, putting them at a disadvantage in terms of voting strength, political power, and civic incorporation (Fix, Passel and Sucher 2003). Those immigrants who have naturalized are generally eligible to vote, and may participate more fully in Louisville’s civic society; naturalized immigrants are also eligible for all public benefits and services on the same terms as United States-born citizens.

Refugees and Asylees

Louisville's foreign-born population is unusual in that a relatively large share is composed of refugees or asylees. In 2000 according to our estimates using the census, 15 percent of Louisville's immigrants were refugees and asylees, twice the national average (7 percent). But this estimate is likely an undercount, as data on refugee admissions show much larger numbers of refugees moving to Louisville during the 1990s and since 2000. In fact, the actual share of immigrants who are refugees may be much higher than 15 percent in Louisville, but it is difficult to calculate this exact share since other immigrants are also undercounted in the official census data.

Table 2: Refugees Resettled in or Moving to Louisville, Federal Fiscal Years 1994-2004

Fiscal Year	Total Inflow
Total 1994-2004	10,800
1994*	500
1995	1,000
1996	1,100
1997	1,000
1998	1,300
1999	1,300
2000	1,100
2001	900
2002	700
2003	500
2004	1,300

NOTES: The Federal Fiscal Year runs from October 1 to September 30. Inflow numbers—which include both refugees resettled directly to Louisville and those moving to Louisville after initial resettlement somewhere else in the United States—are rounded to the nearest 100, and totals might not add up to exact quoted totals because of rounding.

* Excludes first quarter of Fiscal Year 1994.

SOURCE: Kentucky Wilson Fish Project, 2005.

According to data from the Kentucky State Refugee Coordinator, Louisville received about 10,800 refugees—including those who were resettled directly in the area, and those who moved to Louisville from other parts of the United States—between 1994 and 2004 (table 2). Of these, about 3,500 moved to Louisville during 2001-04, and 7,300 between 1994 and 2000. The census includes about 1,600 refugees who entered the United States before 1994, a period for which resettlement data was not available.¹³

¹³ As a result, the total number of refugees resettled in or eventually moving to the Louisville area is likely to be close to 12,000, although some of these refugees may have died or moved to other locations within the United States.

Table 3: Countries of Birth for Refugees Resettled in or Moving to Louisville, Federal Fiscal Years 1994-2004

Country	Inflow	Percent
Total	10,800	100%
Cuba	4,200	39%
Bosnia	3,000	28%
Somalia	800	7%
Iraq	700	6%
Vietnam	600	5%
Former Soviet Republics*	400	4%
Sudan	300	3%
Kosovo	300	3%
Liberia	100	1%
Congo	100	1%
Iran	80	1%
Other	300	3%

NOTES: The Federal Fiscal Year runs from October 1 to September 30. Inflow numbers—which include both refugees resettled directly to Louisville and those moving to Louisville after initial resettlement somewhere else in the United States—are rounded to the nearest 100, and totals might not add up because of rounding.

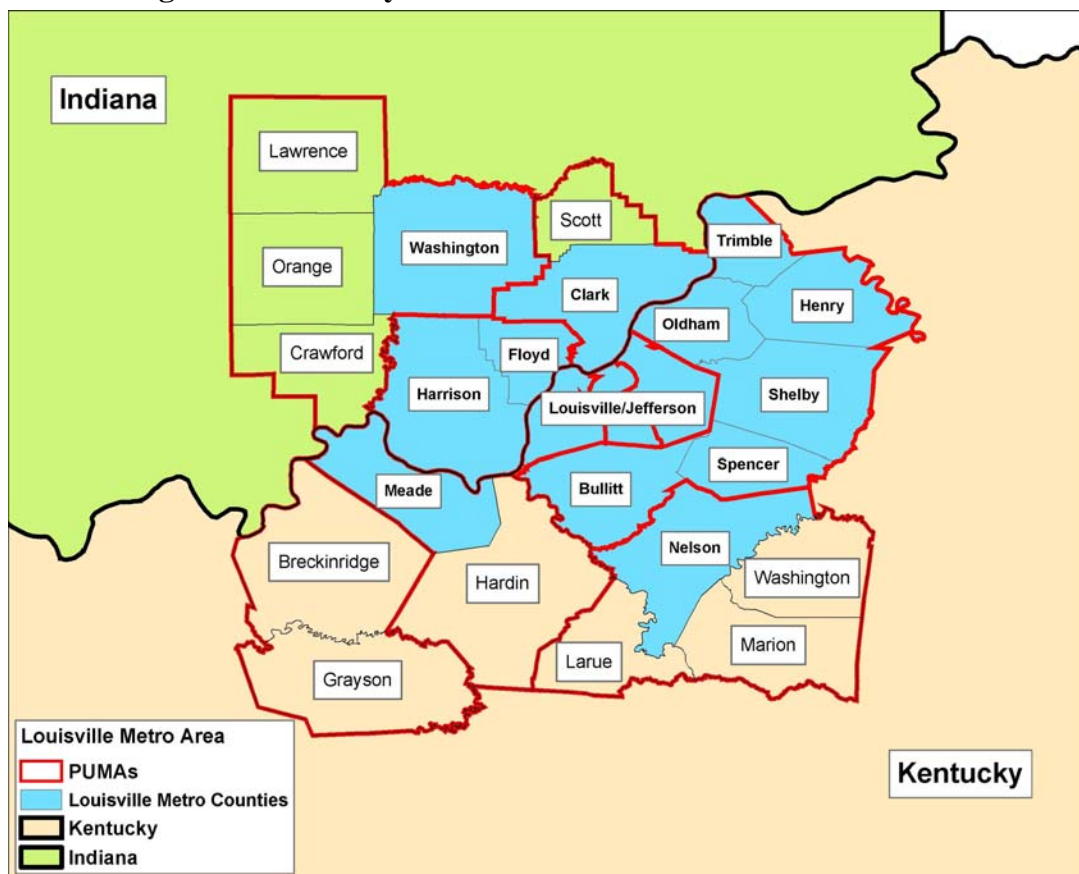
* Former Soviet Republics include Russia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and other unidentified countries.

SOURCE: Kentucky Wilson Fish Project, 2005.

The large number of refugees, who come from a wide variety of countries across the globe, contributes significantly to the diversity of the region. Two of the most common source countries for refugees arriving in Louisville between 1994 and 2004 were also the largest sources of refugees nationally: Cuba (39 percent) and Vietnam (5 percent). But in contrast to the national pattern, Bosnia is the second most common refugee country (28 percent) in Louisville. Also among the top 5 countries, Somalia and Iraq both accounted for 6 to 7 percent of all refugees. The former Soviet Union, Sudan, Kosovo, Liberia, Congo, and Iran rounded out the top 11 countries, at roughly 1 to 4 percent each (table 3). The strong regional diversity of Louisville refugees means that no single language or culture is dominant among them. This diversity can also create challenges, for example in the Jefferson County Public Schools, where intake centers for non-English speakers have worked with Catholic Charities Migration and Refugee Services to develop cultural adjustment programs for refugee children and their parents.

Dispersal across the Louisville Metropolitan Area

Figure 8: Boundary Definitions for the Louisville Metro Area



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau.

The data in this report are for Jefferson County and 22 surrounding counties in Indiana and Kentucky (figure 8). Our definition of the metropolitan area is based on public use Microdata areas (PUMAs) available for analysis in the census. Although our metropolitan area is larger than the 13-county official Louisville Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), we choose to enlarge the area in order to be as inclusive as possible. The alternative would have been to exclude some counties in the MSA.

In 2000 about two-thirds of Louisville's immigrants resided within Jefferson County (24,000 out of 36,000).¹⁴ The foreign-born share of the total population was higher in Jefferson County (3.4 percent) than in the overall metropolitan area (2.5 percent). Among the counties in the metropolitan area, only Hardin (4.6 percent) and Shelby (3.9 percent)—both in Kentucky—had a higher concentration of immigrants than Jefferson County (table 4).

¹⁴ County-level estimates of the foreign-born population are not available more recently than the 2000 Census except for Jefferson County. The 2004 American Community Survey (ACS) estimated that there were 30,000 immigrants in Jefferson County but did not provide estimates for any of the outlying counties.

Table 4: Foreign-Born and Total Populations for Louisville Metropolitan Area, by County, 2000

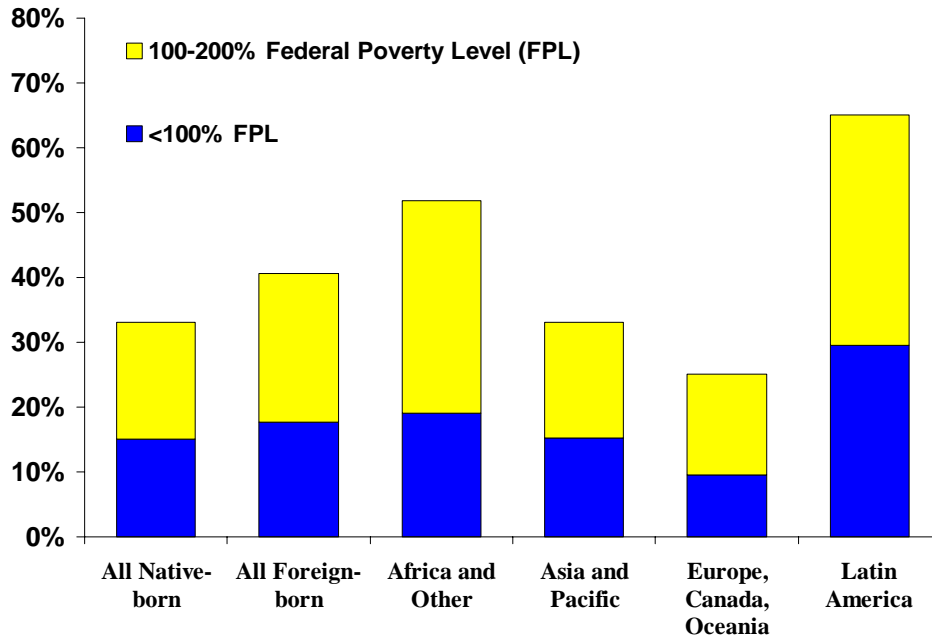
County and State	Total Population	Native-born Population	Foreign-born Population	Foreign-born Share
Louisville 23 county area total	1,440,200	1,403,900	36,200	2.5%
Jefferson County, Kentucky	693,600	669,700	23,900	3.4%
Hardin County, Kentucky	94,200	89,900	4,300	4.6%
Clark County, Indiana	96,500	94,800	1,700	1.8%
Shelby County, Kentucky	33,300	32,100	1,300	3.9%
Floyd County, Indiana	70,800	70,000	800	1.1%
Oldham County, Kentucky	46,200	45,400	700	1.5%
Meade County, Kentucky	26,300	25,800	500	1.9%
Nelson County, Kentucky	37,500	37,000	500	1.3%
Bullitt County, Kentucky	61,200	60,900	400	0.7%
Lawrence County, Indiana	45,900	45,500	400	0.9%
Harrison County, Indiana	34,300	34,000	300	0.9%
Henry County, Kentucky	15,100	14,900	200	1.3%
Marion County, Kentucky	18,200	18,000	200	1.1%
Orange County, Indiana	19,300	19,100	200	1.0%
Breckinridge County, Kentucky	18,600	18,500	100	0.5%
Grayson County, Kentucky	24,100	23,900	100	0.4%
Larue County, Kentucky	13,400	13,300	100	0.7%
Scott County, Indiana	23,000	22,900	100	0.4%
Spencer County, Kentucky	11,800	11,600	100	0.8%
Trimble County, Kentucky	8,100	8,000	100	1.2%
Washington County, Indiana	27,200	27,100	100	0.4%
Washington County, Kentucky	10,900	10,800	100	0.9%
Crawford County, Indiana	10,700	10,700	0	0.0%

NOTE: All figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.

SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

Poverty and Low Income Rates

Figure 9: Poverty and Low Income Rates for Louisville Families, by Place of Birth for Family Head, 1999



SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

Louisville’s immigrants overall are slightly more likely to be poor than United States-born Louisville residents. In 1999, 18 percent of Louisville’s foreign-born residents were poor, and 41 percent were low-income (below 200 percent of the federal poverty level).¹⁵ This compares with a poverty rate of 15 percent and a low-income rate of 33 percent for native-born Louisville residents (figure 9). Nationally, about one quarter (26 percent) of immigrants were poor and almost half (49 percent) were low income in 1999. Compared with Louisville, the rest of the country has substantially higher shares of Mexican and other Latin American immigrants, who tend to be poorer. Even though Louisville immigrants are poorer than native-born Louisville residents, these patterns indicate that the income gap between natives and immigrants is smaller in Louisville than in the United States as a whole.

Poverty and low-income rates vary greatly across the different immigrant groups in Louisville. In 2000, immigrants from Latin America had the highest rates: about two thirds (65 percent) were low income, and nearly a third (30 percent) was poor. African immigrants had the next highest poverty rate (19 percent), but this rate was much lower than that for Latin American immigrants. Immigrants

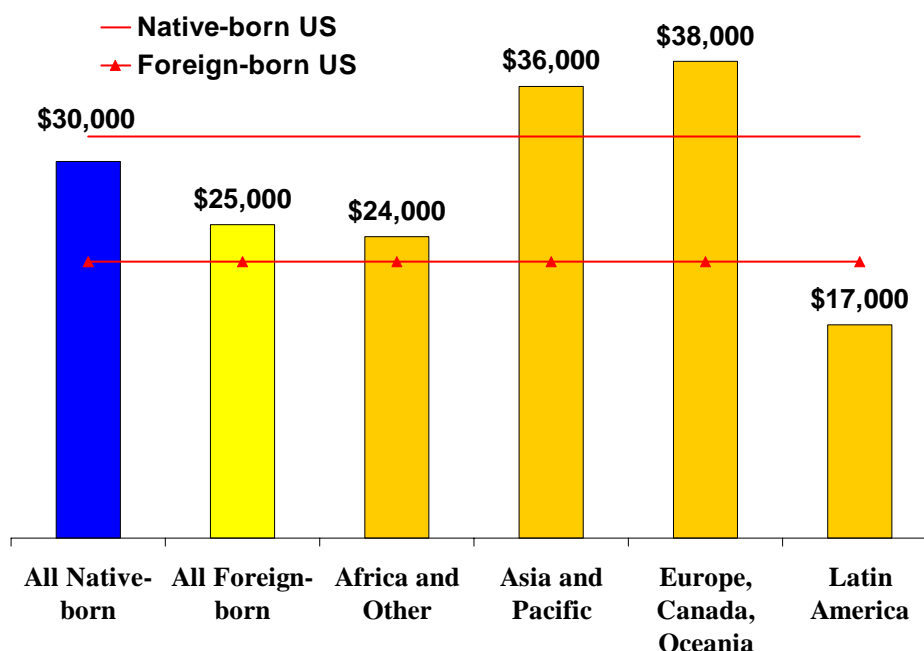
¹⁵ The 2000 Census measured income and poverty for the year before the survey (1999). In 1999, the federal poverty level was \$17,029 for a family of four, slightly higher for larger families and lower for smaller families.

from Asia were about as likely to be poor as native-born Louisville residents, with a poverty rate of 15 percent. Immigrants from Europe had the lowest poverty rate of any group (10 percent).

In general recent immigrants tend to be poorer than those who are more established. Since Louisville has a high share of recent immigrants, it is likely that immigrant poverty rates will improve over time as the area’s immigrants and refugees become more economically mobile and integrated. On the other hand, if larger and larger numbers of Latin American immigrants move to Louisville in the near term, that may temporarily increase poverty in the metropolitan area.

Median Family Income

Figure 10: Median Income for Louisville Families, by Place of Birth for Family Head, 1999



SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

Louisville’s immigrants are slightly better off economically than immigrants nationally (figure 10). In 1999, the median family income of all Louisville immigrants (\$25,000) was higher than that for immigrants nationally (\$22,000).¹⁶ The median family income of Louisville immigrants, however, was substantially below that for native-born Louisville residents (\$30,000).

As with poverty, there is great variation in family income among immigrant groups. The median family incomes of immigrants from Europe (\$38,000) and Asia and the Pacific (\$36,000) actually exceeded those of native-born Louisville residents in 1999. Comparing the highest and lowest

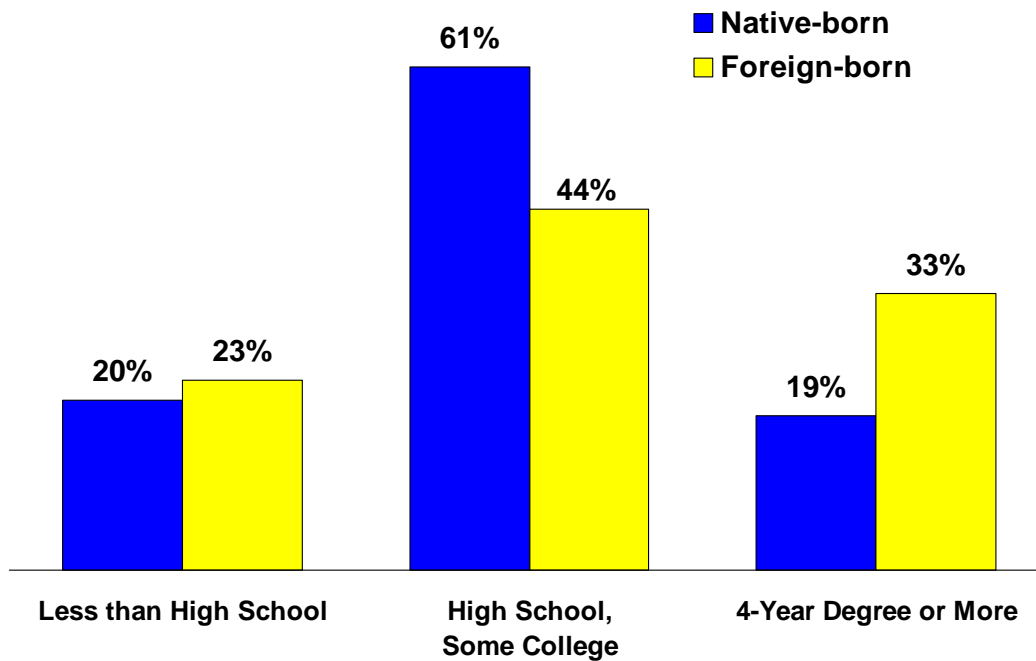
¹⁶ The 2000 Census measured income for the year before the survey (1999). In our analysis of the Census data, we define families as individuals or nuclear family groups (parents and minor children). Our family differs substantially from that used by the Census Bureau for their official data: their families include larger groups of relatives living together, and they *exclude* individuals from family income calculations. Additionally, we *exclude* public assistance income from all our income and poverty calculations. As a result, our median income figures appear lower than those published by the Census Bureau.

ends of the spectrum, the median family income of immigrants from Europe (\$38,000) was more than twice as high as that of immigrants from Latin America (\$17,000).

Three factors are related to the fact that Latin American immigrants have the lowest incomes and the highest poverty rates. First, compared to other groups they have been in the United States for the shortest amount of time. Second they have relatively low educational attainment, and third they have high rates of limited English proficiency.

Educational Attainment

Figure 11: Educational Attainment of Louisville Adults Age 25 and over, by Nativity, 2000

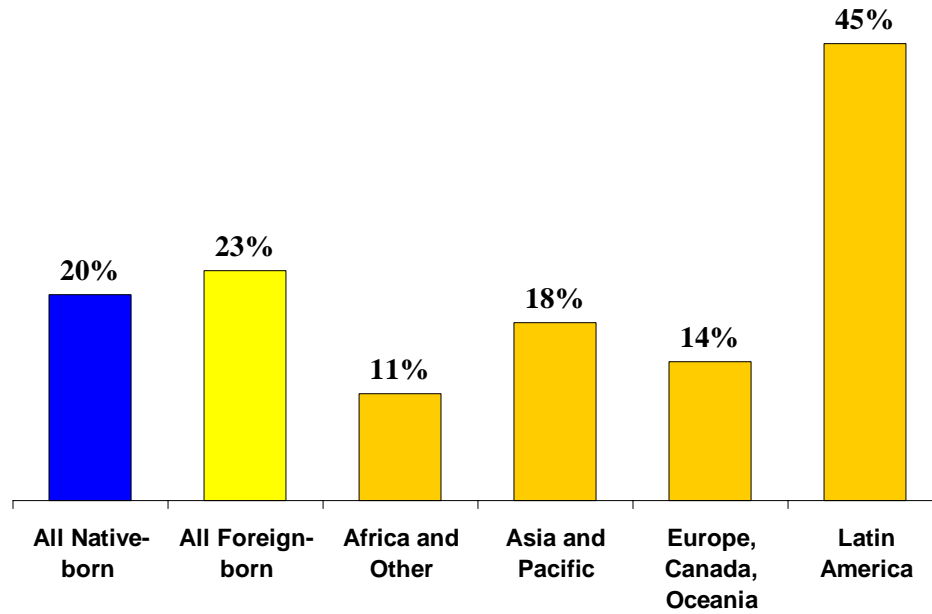


SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

Louisville's immigrants are more likely to have college degrees than natives, and they have more formal schooling on average than immigrants nationally. In 2000, 23 percent of foreign-born adults age 25 and over had less than a high school degree, compared with 20 percent of native-born Louisville adults (figure 11). At the other end of the spectrum, a much higher share of immigrants than natives had a four-year college degree or more (33 versus 19 percent). Immigrants in Louisville are also better educated than immigrants nationally: they are less likely to lack a high school degree (23 versus 38 percent) and more likely to have four-year college degrees (33 versus 24 percent).

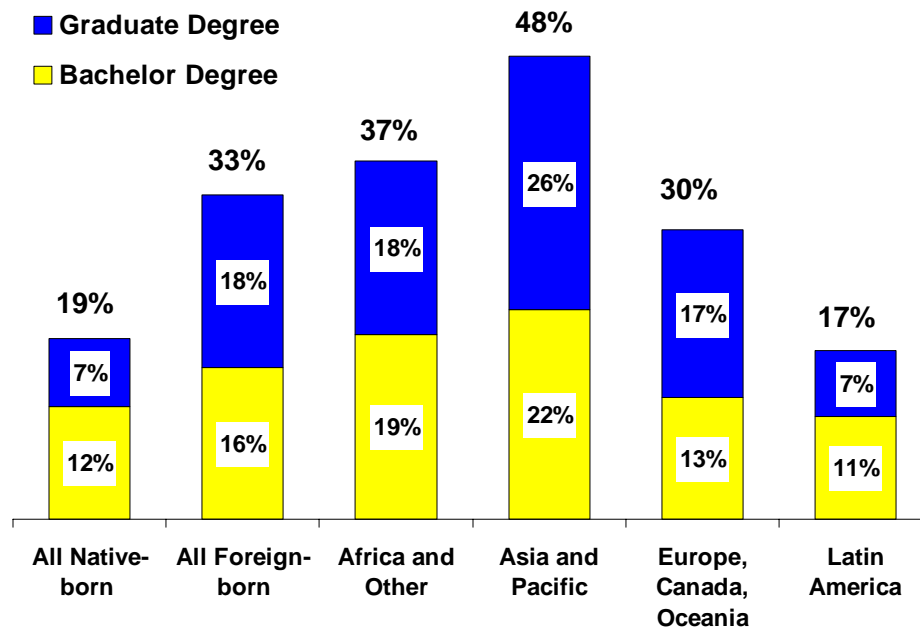
Educational attainment varies across immigrant groups: Latin American immigrants have far less formal education than native-born Louisville residents, while immigrants from other regions are generally better educated than natives (figure 12). Almost half (45 percent) of immigrants age 25 and over from Latin America lacked a high school degree in 2000. African immigrants, by contrast, were much less likely to lack a high school education than natives (11 versus 20 percent).

Figure 12: Share with Less than a High School Degree, Louisville Adults Ages 25 and over, by Place of Birth, 2000



SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

Figure 13: Share with 4 Year College Degree, Louisville Adults Ages 25 and over, by Place of Birth, 2000



NOTES: Numbers might not add up because of rounding.

SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

All immigrant groups except Latin Americans are more likely to have college degrees than natives (figure 13). In 2000, almost half (48 percent) of immigrants born in Asia and the Pacific had a four-year college degree, over twice the share for native-born adults age 25 and over (19 percent). All other immigrant groups except for those from Latin America were more likely than natives to be college graduates. Even Latin Americans, the least educated immigrant group, were only slightly less likely than natives to have a college degree (17 versus 19 percent).

Even more remarkably, Louisville's immigrants are much more likely than natives to hold graduate degrees. In 2000, the share of immigrants with graduate degrees—Masters, Ph.D.s, or professional degrees—was almost three times as high as the share for natives (18 percent versus 7 percent). Almost four times as many Asians had graduate degrees (26 percent) as natives. The shares of European and African immigrants with graduate degrees were also significantly higher than for natives (17 and 18 percent, respectively), while the share for Latin Americans was about the same as for natives.

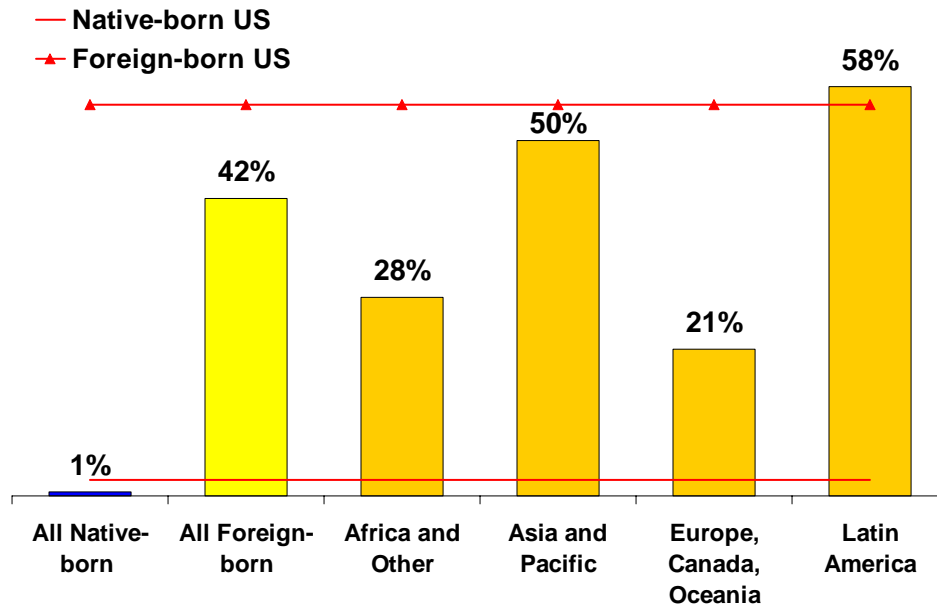
Additionally, immigrants are slightly more likely than natives to be enrolled in post-secondary education in Louisville. According to the 2000 Census, 13 percent of immigrants (including international students) ages 18 to 40 were enrolled in college or graduate school, compared with 11 percent of natives. Louisville attracts international students who pursue a post-secondary education, as well as international scholars who bring diversity and international experience to the classroom. Based on data from Louisville post-secondary education institutions, there were at least 1,000 international students with temporary visas enrolled in post-secondary education in Louisville during the 2005-06 school year.¹⁷ Close to 800 international students representing 87 countries attended the University of Louisville during the Fall 2005 semester, and close to 250 international scholars representing 40 countries contributed to university research during the 2004-05 school year.¹⁸

¹⁷ The number of other immigrant students enrolled in post-secondary education could not be calculated precisely because not all higher education institutions collect nativity information. Additionally, there are no data on the number of students who are naturalized citizens or LPRs (as opposed to having temporary student visas).

¹⁸ Correspondence with Sharolyn Pepper, International Student Coordinator, University of Louisville and Jennifer Knupp, Multicultural Affairs Coordinator, Jefferson Community and Technical College.

English Proficiency of Adults

Figure 14: Share Limited English Proficient Louisville Adults Ages 18 and over, by Place of Birth, 2000

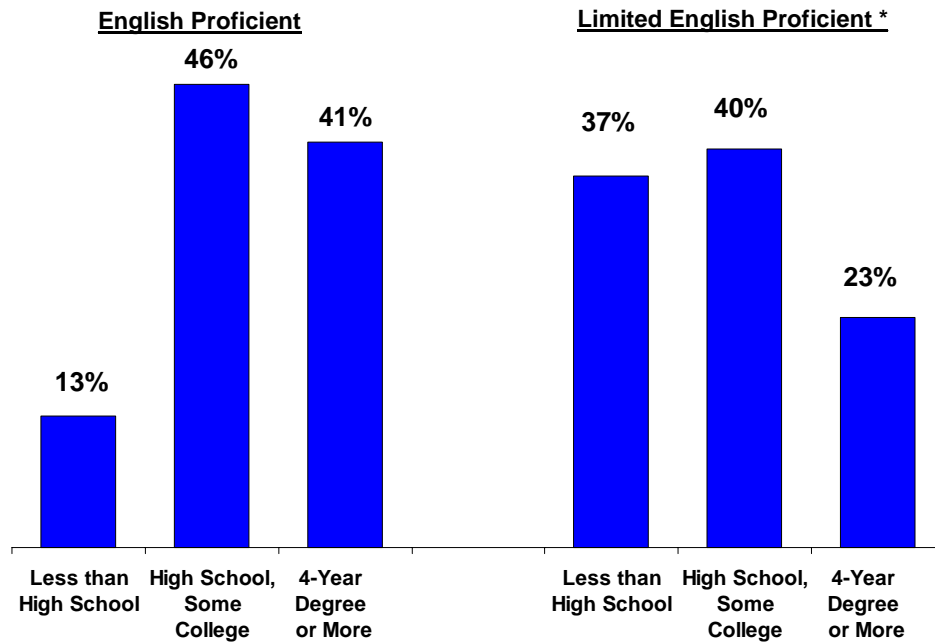


SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of U.S. Census, 2000.

Nearly half of Louisville’s immigrants are limited English proficient (LEP); but again there is wide variation by region of origin.¹⁹ Forty-two percent of immigrants over age 17 were LEP in 2000, compared to less than 1 percent of native-born Louisville adults (figure 14). Immigrants from Latin America were the most likely to be LEP (58 percent), followed by immigrants from Asia (50 percent); the majority of immigrants from other regions of the world were proficient in English. Immigrants from Europe, Canada, and Oceania, as well as those from Africa were the least likely to be LEP (21 and 28 percent respectively), which is not surprising considering that English is either the official language or widely adopted as a second language in these regions.

¹⁹ In all households where a language other than English is spoken, the census asks whether members of the household over age 5 speak English “very well,” “well,” “not well,” or “not at all”. The census categorizes all people speaking English well, not well, or not at all as limited English proficient.

**Figure 15: Educational Attainment by English Proficiency for Louisville Immigrants
Ages 25 and over, 2000**



* Speaks a language other than English at home, and speaks English less than “very well.”
SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

There is a strong correlation between English proficiency and educational attainment among immigrants. In 2000, the share of LEP immigrants over age 25 with less than a high school degree was 37 percent, almost three times the share for English proficient immigrants (13 percent). The share of LEP immigrants with a four-year college degree or more was 23 percent, compared with 41 percent for English proficient immigrants (figure 15). Thus those groups of immigrants with the lowest educational attainment (Latin American immigrants) are generally the most likely to be limited English proficient. Immigrants from Asia, however, have high levels of limited English proficiency despite their above-average educational attainment.

Languages Spoken by Louisville’s Immigrants

Table 5: Top 10 Languages for Limited English Proficient Immigrants in Louisville, Ages 5 and over, 2000

Language	Number of LEP Immigrants	Percentage of All LEP Immigrants
Spanish	6,000	40%
Korean	1,200	9%
Vietnamese	1,200	8%
Chinese	900	6%
Arabic	700	5%
Russian	600	4%
Tagalog	500	3%
Serbo-Croatian	500	3%
German	400	3%
French	300	2%

SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

Despite the great diversity of origins among Louisville’s immigrants, Spanish is by far the most common language among those who are not proficient in English (table 5). In 2000, 40 percent of LEP immigrants ages five and above in Louisville spoke Spanish, compared with 61 percent nationally.²⁰ Other languages commonly spoken by Louisville’s LEP immigrants were Asian and European languages (Korean, Vietnamese, Chinese, Arabic and Russian), but each one of these accounted for less than 10 percent of all LEP immigrants. The wide diversity of languages beyond Spanish spoken by Louisville immigrants makes providing interpretation and translation assistance for these immigrant groups more challenging.

The increasing number and diversity of LEP immigrants has also created rising demand for adult education services. To meet this demand, the Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) Adult and Continuing Education Program provides adult education and English as a second language (ESL) classes for immigrants and other LEP adults. The number of students served by the program has increased from about 300 in fiscal year 1996 to more than 1,500 in fiscal year 2005.²¹ The number of LEP adults served by JCPS, however, is a small fraction of the number of LEP immigrants living in the county.

²⁰ The census does not report English proficiency below age five.

²¹ The numbers include students from Puerto Rico that are native-born citizen and are based on correspondence with Celeste Goodwin, ESL Coordinator, Adult and Continuing Education, Jefferson County Public Schools.

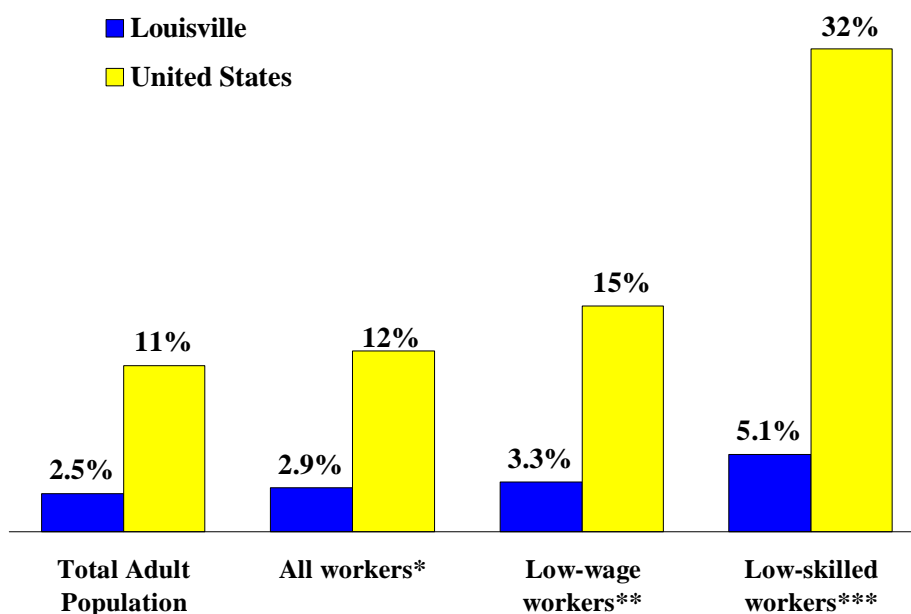
Immigrants in Louisville's Workforce

Immigrants compose small but growing shares of workers at both the low and high-skilled ends of Louisville's workforce; the number of immigrant workers, however, is increasing most rapidly in low-skilled jobs. In 1990 immigrants represented 1.5 percent of Louisville's labor force and a similar share of the low-skilled labor force, defined here as workers with less than a high school education. By 2000, the share of immigrants in Louisville's overall labor force had doubled to 3 percent. From 1990 to 2000 the number of immigrant workers grew by 158 percent while the number of native-born workers grew by only 10 percent. Between 1990 and 2000, the foreign-born share of low-skilled workers rose even faster—to 5 percent—because the number of immigrant workers grew by 170 percent while the number of low-skilled natives actually *fell* by 19 percent.

At the high-skilled end of the workforce, immigrants also play an important role in the region's economy. Immigrant workers represent a significant share—5 percent—of all workers with at least a college degree. Moreover, immigrant workers are more likely to have a 4-year college degree or higher, than natives (37 versus 22 percent). Immigrants are significantly more likely than natives to hold college degrees in key industries such as health care (59 versus 29 percent) and professional, scientific, and technical services (87 versus 50 percent).

Workforce Participation

Figure 16: Foreign-Born Shares of Louisville Population and Workforce, 2000



NOTES:

* Workers are 18 to 64 years old, employed and earning non-zero wages.

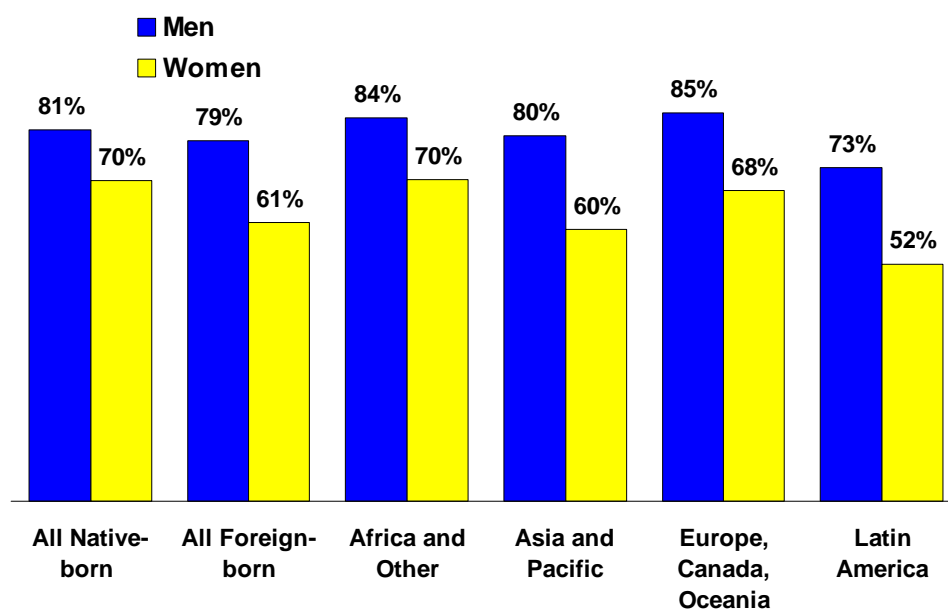
** Low-wage workers earned less than twice the minimum wage in 1999.

*** Low-skilled workers have less than a high school education.

SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

Louisville has an unusually high share of highly skilled and highly paid foreign-born workers, but also has a large population of low-skilled immigrant workers who fill key jobs in a variety of industries. The share of immigrants in Louisville’s labor force (2.9 percent) is much smaller than their share of the United States labor force (12 percent) in 2000 (figure 16). Fitting the national pattern, a slightly higher share of Louisville’s low-wage labor force was composed of immigrants (3.3 percent).²² But immigrants made up a much higher share of low-skilled workers—those with less than a high school degree (5.1 percent). Thus Louisville, like the United States in general, relies on immigrants for a disproportionately higher percentage of its lower-paid and lower-skilled workers (Capps et al. 2003).

Figure 17: Employment Rates for Louisville Able-bodied Adults Ages 18 to 64, by Gender and Place of Birth, 2000



SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

In Louisville as nationally, most immigrants are working. Immigrant men are as likely as native-born men to be employed, but immigrant women—especially those born in Latin America—are substantially less likely to work than native-born women (Capps et al. 2003).²³ In 2000 the employment rate among foreign-born men overall in Louisville (79 percent) was just below that that for U.S.-born men (81 percent, figure 17). Men born in Europe or Canada (85 percent) and Africa (84

²² Low-wage workers are defined as those earning less than twice the minimum wage, or \$10.30 in Louisville in 1999. Wages are defined based on total earnings divided by the total number of weeks worked and average hours worked per week. Total earnings include wage and salary income and, in the case of self-employed workers, non-zero self-employment income. The census asked respondents about their incomes, weeks of work, and average hours worked per week in 1999, the year before the survey was taken.

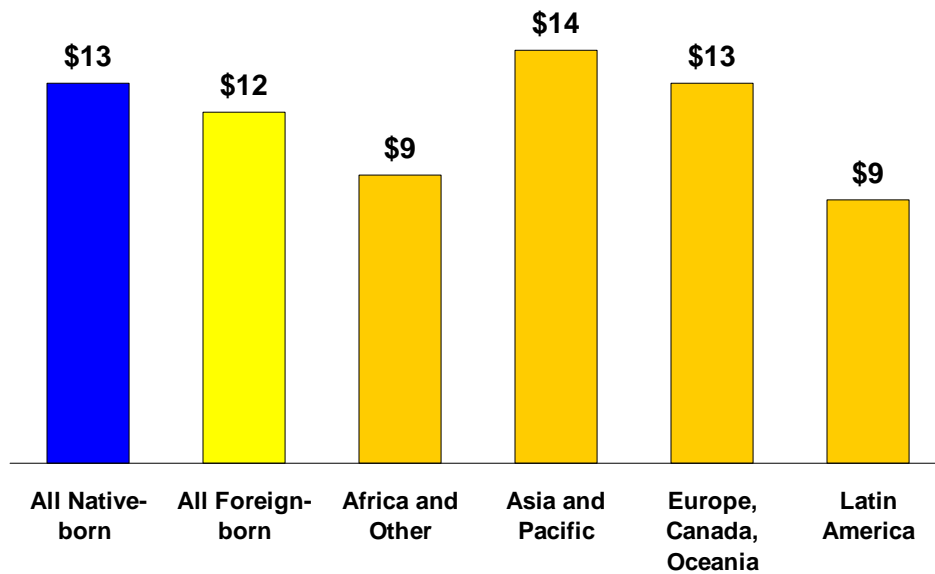
²³ Employment rates were calculated for adults age 18 to 64 who did not report an employment disability. Employed adults (or “workers”) are all those who answered the census question about current employment with “Employed, at work,” “Employed, with a job but not at work,” “Armed Forces, at work,” or “Armed Forces, with a job but not at work.”

percent) had slightly higher employment rates than native-born men. Men born in Latin America had a lower employment rate, but that rate was still almost three quarters (73 percent).

Immigrant women, on the other hand, are substantially less likely than native-born women to work. The overall employment rate for foreign-born women in Louisville (61 percent) was below that for U.S.-born women (70 percent) in 2000. Foreign-born women from Africa had the highest employment rate (70 percent), followed closely by women from Europe (68 percent). By contrast, only about half (52 percent) of Latin American women worked in 2000.

Hourly Wages

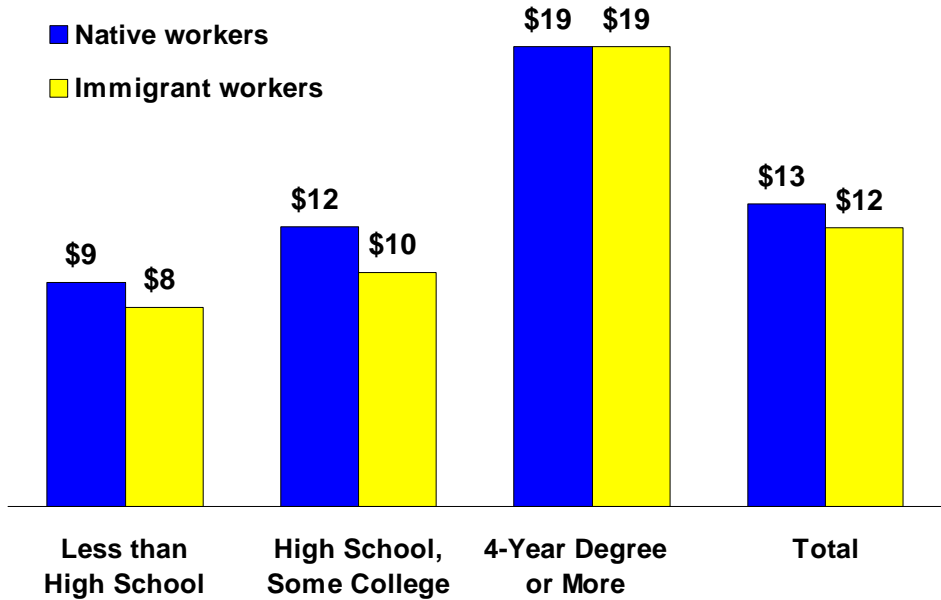
Figure 18: Median Hourly Wage for Louisville Workers Ages 18-64, by Place of Birth, 1999



SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

Louisville immigrants are, on average, paid about the same as native-born workers (figure 18). In 1999, median hourly wages for Asian immigrants (\$14) and European immigrants (\$13) were about the same as the hourly wage for native-born workers (\$13). African and Latin American workers had a substantially lower median hourly wage (\$9). The relatively low wage for Latin American immigrants may be a function of the fact that they have the lowest educational attainment of any immigrant group. African immigrants, however, earn relatively low wages despite higher educational attainment.

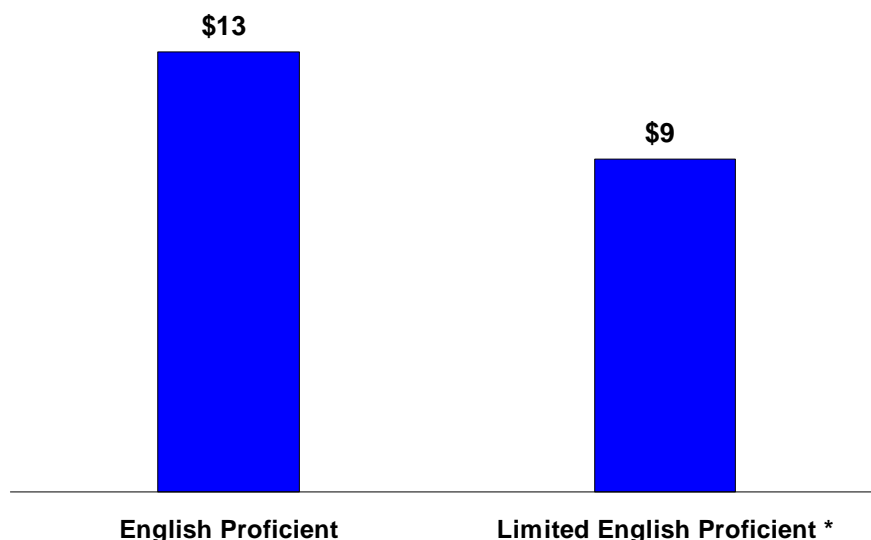
Figure 19: Median Hourly Wage for Louisville Workers Ages 18-64, by Nativity and Education, 1999



SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

The best-educated workers earn the highest wages, regardless of whether or not they are immigrants. In 1999 college-educated immigrants earned more than twice as much as high school dropouts (\$19 versus \$8 per hour). At each stage of educational attainment displayed here, immigrants earned about the same median hourly wage as immigrants (figure 19).

Figure 20: Median Hourly Wage for Foreign-born Louisville Workers Ages 18-64, by English Proficiency, 1999



NOTES:

* Speak English less than “very well.”

SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

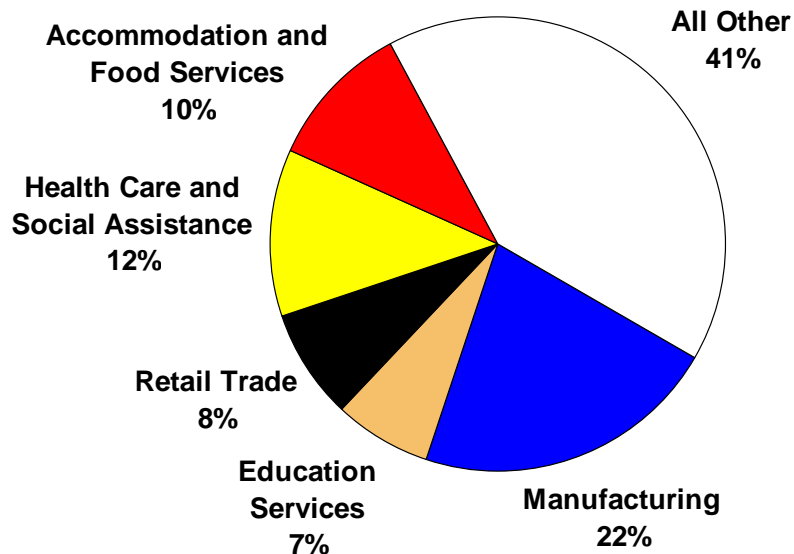
Immigrants’ wages are also strongly affected by English proficiency: in 1999 English proficient foreign-born workers earned a median hourly wage of \$13, almost 50 percent higher than LEP foreign-born workers (\$9, figure 20). LEP immigrants may earn relatively low wages because they have lower educational attainment than more proficient immigrants. Additionally, some better-educated immigrants may experience barriers to high-wage employment in the United States because of limited English skills and difficulty translating credentials from their home countries.

Investment in education offers significant rewards for both immigrant and native-born workers, as seen in the large differential in hourly wages between immigrants with a college education and those without a high school degree. Immigrant workers may need ESL instruction in addition to regular adult education programming to improve their productivity and earnings.

The adult education and ESL programs offered by JCPS and other providers have a large potential payoff for immigrants in terms of future wages and productivity. Investments in adult education for immigrants will also provide returns to the Louisville metropolitan area generally in terms of higher immigrant purchasing power, higher tax collections, and lower expenditures on social services.

Major Industries of Immigrant Employment

Figure 21: Major Industries of Employment for Foreign-born Louisville Workers
Ages 18-64, 2000



SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

Louisville’s immigrant workers are employed across a range of higher and lower-skilled industries. Five major census industry categories—manufacturing, retail trade, education services, health care and social assistance, and accommodation and food services—together employed nearly 60 percent of Louisville’s immigrant workers in 2000 (figure 21).²⁴ Manufacturing was the most common industry, employing 22 percent of all immigrant workers. Education services and health care and social services represent relatively high-skilled, high-paying immigrant industries. Manufacturing, retail trade, and accommodation and food, however, are lower-skilled industries.

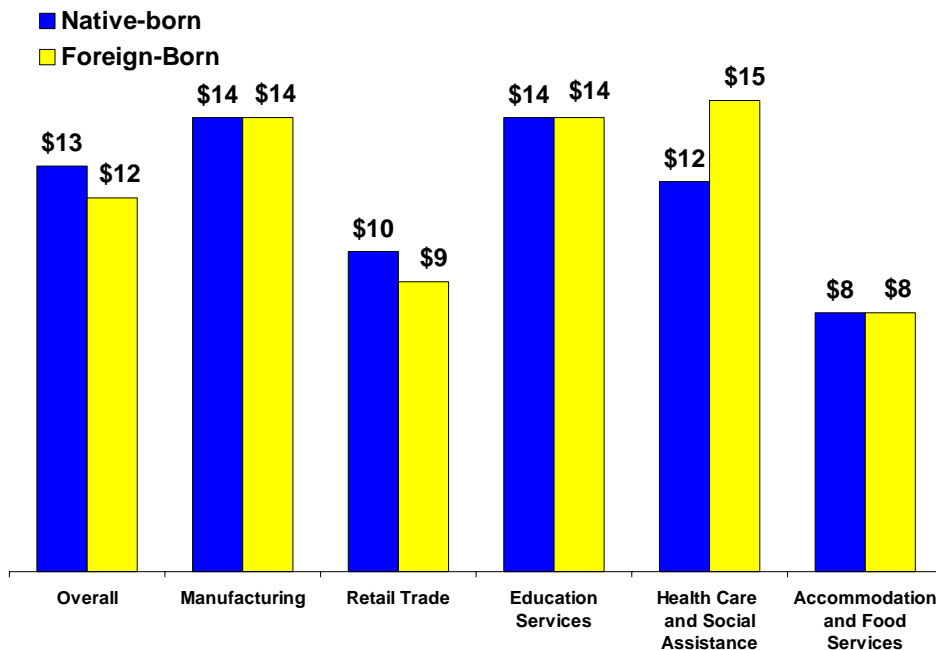
The major census category entitled health care and social assistance—which employed 12 percent of immigrants in 2000—includes 15 out of the 25 fastest growing occupations in Louisville, according to KentuckianaWorks.²⁵ For instance, the demand for three health and social service occupations—medical assistants, physicians assistants, and social and human services assistants—is projected to grow by more than 50 percent between 2002 and 2012. During this ten-year period, the

²⁴ For this analysis we use the broad industry categories in the 2000 Census, in order to create a large enough sample for analysis within each industry. Note that industry codes have changed recently and so the industry labels we use—drawn from the 2000 Census—may not be comparable to those for other data sources.

²⁵ KentuckianaWorks, “Occupational Outlook,” Louisville, Ky., <http://www.kentuckianaworks.org/outlook>, accessed February 2006.

demand for health care workers overall is projected to grow by 29 percent, for employees in education services by 28 percent, and for social services by 26 percent. These strong demand projections bode well for the future employment of high-skilled immigrants in these industries, and mean that Louisville will likely continue to draw large numbers of high-skilled immigrant workers in the future.

Figure 22: Median Hourly Wage for Louisville Workers Ages 18-64, by Nativity and Selected Industries, 1999

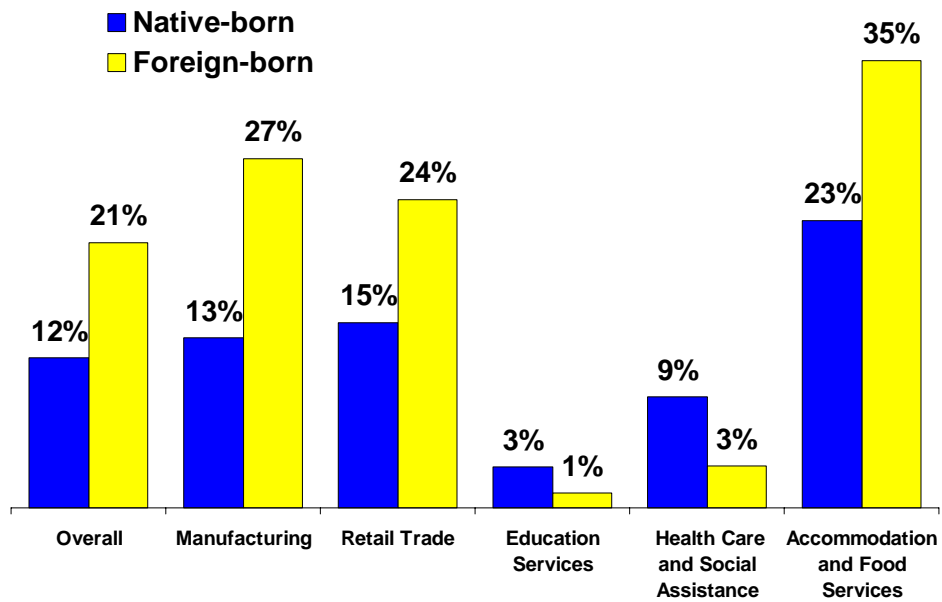


SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

Immigrants in the highest-paid sectors of Louisville’s economy earned as much or more than United States-born workers in 1999, although overall native workers earned slightly more than immigrants (\$13 versus \$12 per hour, figure 22). The industry with the highest median hourly wage for foreign-born workers was health care and social assistance, with foreign-born workers earning more than native workers (\$15 versus \$12).²⁶ Immigrants also earned as much as natives on average in manufacturing (\$14 per hour) and education services (\$14 per hour). The industries with the lowest median hourly wages for foreign-born workers were accommodation and food (\$8) and retail trade (\$9).

²⁶ The industries shown in the figures are not inclusive of all industries but represent the most common industries of immigrant employment as displayed in figure 21.

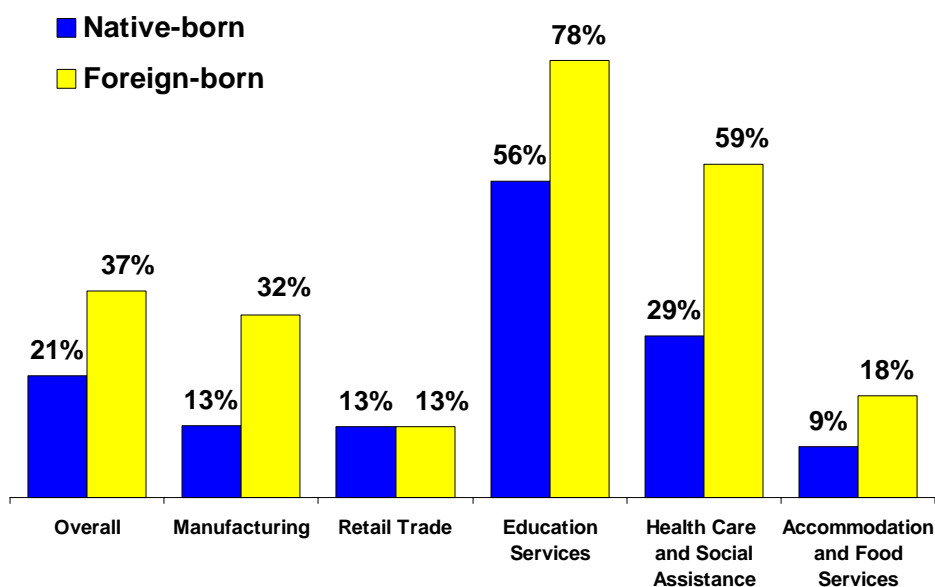
Figure 23: Share without a High School Degree, Louisville Workers Ages 18-64, by Nativity and Selected Industries, 1999



SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

Low-skilled immigrant workers are highly concentrated in lower-paid industries, and in most industries immigrants are more likely than United States-born workers to lack a high school degree (figure 23). In 1999, the industry with the highest share of foreign-born workers without a high school degree was accommodation and food services (35 percent), followed by manufacturing (27 percent), and retail trade (24 percent). The industries with the lowest shares of both foreign-born and native-born workers without high school degrees were education services and health care and social assistance.

Figure 24: Share with a 4-Year College Degree, Louisville Workers Ages 18-64, by Nativity and Selected Industries, 1999



SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

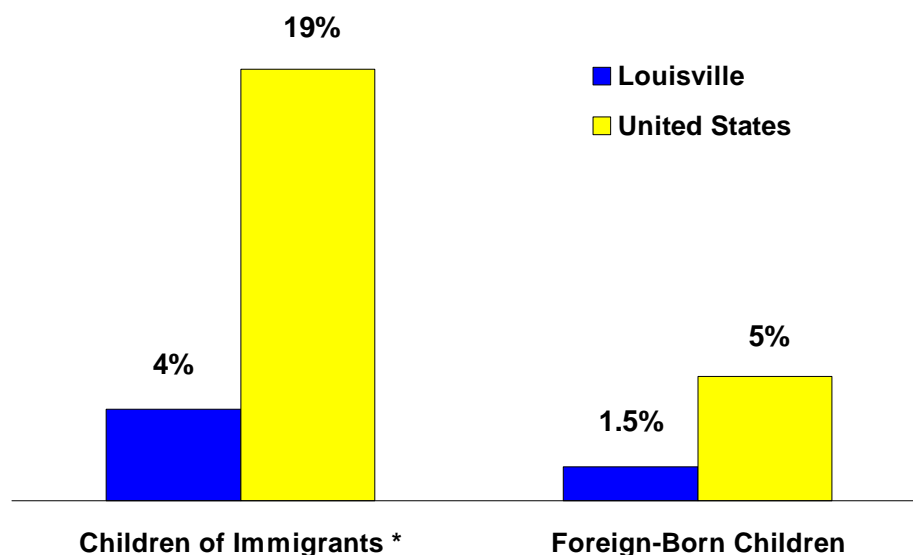
At the other end of the spectrum, immigrants in Louisville’s labor force are generally more likely than natives to have a four-year college degree, and the shares of immigrants with college degrees are especially high in the highest paying industries (figure 24). For instance, in 1999, 78 percent of immigrants working in education services had a college education (versus 56 percent of natives), as did 59 percent of immigrants working in health care and social assistance (versus 29 percent of natives). Even in manufacturing, nearly a third of foreign-born workers (32 percent) held college degrees, compared to just 13 percent of natives. The high shares of college graduates across these industries may explain why immigrants earn as much or more than native workers.

Children of Immigrants in Louisville Schools

Following national trends, the children of immigrants are an increasing proportion of school children across the Louisville metropolitan area. The number of limited English proficient (LEP) children in schools in Louisville is also growing rapidly—about one in five children of immigrants is LEP. Children of immigrants in Louisville, however, are less likely to be LEP and come from lower income families than children of immigrants nationally.

The increasing numbers of LEP children have important implications for Louisville area public schools, which are now held accountable for these children's performance under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. As a condition for receipt of federal Title I funding, NCLB requires schools and districts to improve the performance of LEP students—as well as black, Hispanic, Asian, low-income and disabled students—on assessments of reading and mathematics beginning in 3rd grade (U.S. Department of Education 2002). Schools that do not sufficiently improve the performance of students in these groups over an extended period are subject to interventions, including allowing parents to send their children to another school and offering supplemental services such as after-school programs. Continued failure to meet performance targets may eventually lead to school restructuring and possibly even closure (Capps et al 2005). Parents of LEP students and immigrant parents have the same rights as other parents under NCLB: to be informed of their children's progress on assessments, their schools' progress on meeting standards, and the right to transfer their children to other schools if their local schools fail to sufficiently progress. Parents of LEP children must also be informed about the type of language instruction their children are receiving and that they have the right to refuse English as a second language instruction for their children (U.S. Department of Education 2004). As the number of immigrants and LEP children rises in Louisville's public schools, these NCLB provisions will take on increasing importance.

Figure 25: Nativity of School Children and their Parents, Louisville and the United States, 2000



NOTES: School children are ages 3 to 20 and enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade.

* At least one parent is foreign-born.

SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

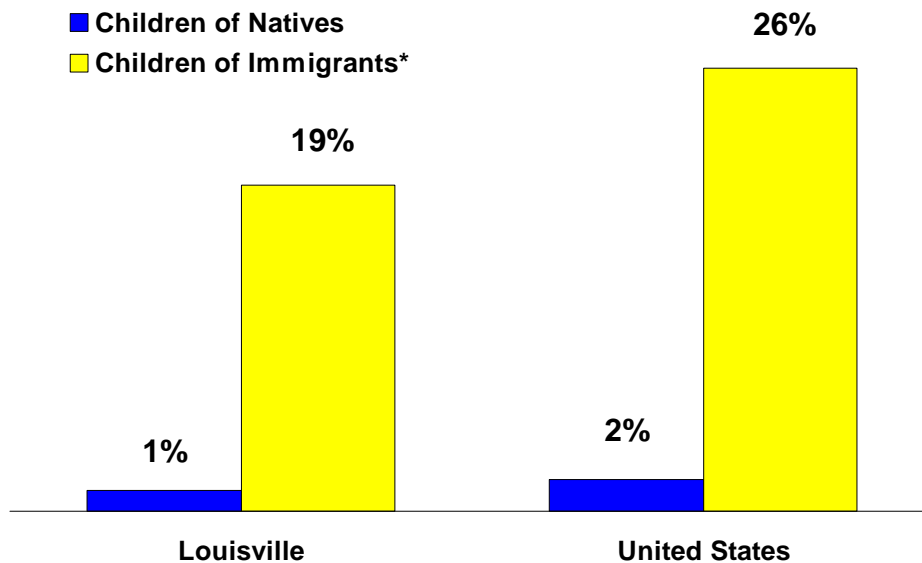
A small, but growing, number of children in Louisville are children of immigrants. In 2000 about 4 percent of children enrolled in kindergarten (K) through the 12th grade in Louisville area public schools had at least one foreign-born parent, but a much smaller share were themselves immigrants (1.5 percent, figure 25).²⁷ About two thirds of Louisville children of immigrants were U.S.-born citizens (i.e., second generation), and one third were foreign-born, first-generation immigrants. Nationally, about three quarters of school age children of immigrants were second generation, and one quarter were foreign-born (Capps et al. 2005a). However, in 2000 the share of children of immigrants nationwide was 19 percent, several times higher than the share in Louisville. But like Louisville's foreign-born population, the area's immigrant student-age population (ages 3 to 20) grew rapidly (by 66 percent) between 1990 and 2000.²⁸

²⁷ This figure includes children ages 3 to 20 reported by the census as enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade and living in Jefferson or any of the surrounding 22 counties in the greater metropolitan area.

²⁸ This figure is based on percentage change in the population of children ages 3 to 20 with at least one immigrant parent, using the official Metropolitan Statistical Area boundaries for 1990 and 2000 because these boundaries are comparable across decades.

Limited English Proficient Children in the Louisville Area Public Schools

Figure 26: Limited English Proficient Share of School Children, by Parental Nativity, Louisville and the United States, 2000



NOTES: School children are ages 5 to 20 and enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade. Limited English proficient children speak a language other than English at home and speak English less than very well. The census does not measure English proficiency below age 5.

* At least one parent is foreign-born.

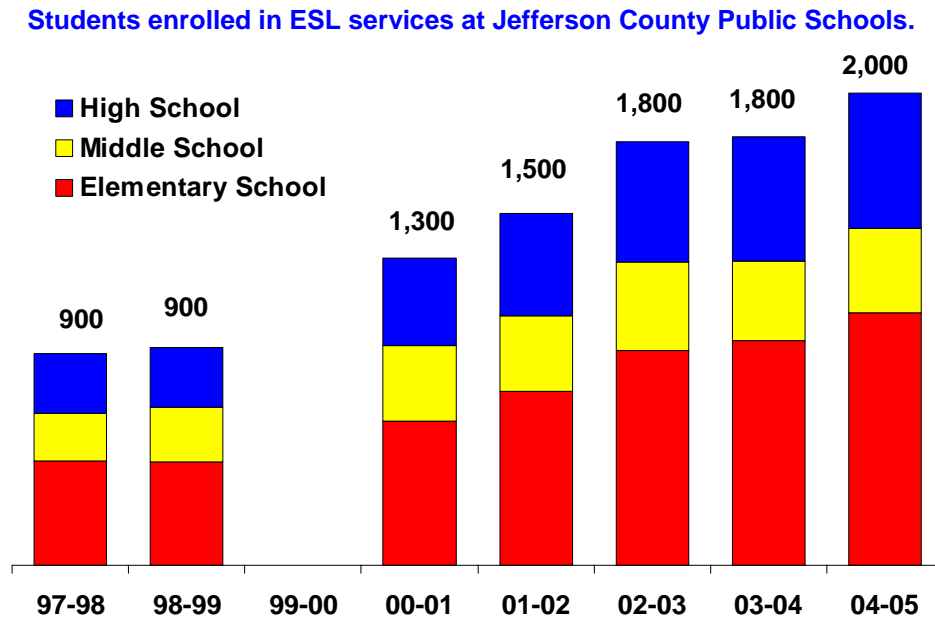
SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

A significant share, but nowhere near a majority of immigrants' children have limited English skills. About one fifth (19 percent) of the children of immigrants in the 23-county Louisville area were limited English proficient (LEP), compared to about one quarter nationally in 2000 (figure 26).²⁹ Only 1 percent of the children of natives in Louisville were LEP in 2000, close to the national figure (2 percent). The lower proportion of LEP children among children of immigrants in Louisville than nationally may be explained in part by the relatively high shares of Louisville immigrants who come from European countries (where they often learn English as a second language) and who have at least a high school degree. It is also possible that highly educated parents from Asian countries teach their children English before they enter school, or support their English language instruction while in school. Immigrants from Latin America, however, are the most likely to be LEP and to lack a high school education, and so their children are most likely to enter school as LEP students.

²⁹ The census definition of LEP varies considerably from that employed by school districts. In the census data, LEP persons are those who speak a language other than English in the home, and are reported as speaking English less than "very well" by the census respondent. By contrast, most school districts—including JCPS—test children's English language comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing.

English as a Second Language Children in Jefferson County Public Schools

Figure 27: Growth in the Number of English as a Second Language Students, Jefferson County Public Schools, 1997-2005



NOTES: Enrollment totals are rounded to the nearest 100 students. Students who waived the ESL services are excluded from the totals. Data is not available for 1999-2000.

SOURCE: Jefferson County Public Schools Data Books, 1997-2005.

The number of LEP children—termed English as a Second Language (ESL) students in the JCPS—has *more than doubled* during the past seven school years.³⁰ According to school district data, there were about 900 ESL children during the 1997-98 school year; by 2004-05 their number had risen 122 percent to 2,000 (figure 27).³¹ The number of ESL children in elementary schools showed the greatest increase—141 percent, and by 2004, just over half (53 percent) of Jefferson County ESL children were enrolled in elementary schools. The share of ESL students in Jefferson County averaged 1 percent for the 1997-2001 period, and 2 percent for 2002-05. Nationally, the share of LEP children is highest in elementary school and falls across the grades as students learn English (Capps et al. 2005a). Additionally, the number of children of immigrants nationally is increasing most rapidly among the youngest children—those under age 5—who are not yet in school (Capps et al. 2004). As a result, the number of LEP children in Louisville area elementary schools should continue to increase rapidly in the near future.

³⁰ Researchers obtained data on ESL enrollment from Jefferson County but did not inquire about data for the school districts in the other 22 counties in the Louisville area.

³¹ In the JCPS data, ESL children are students enrolled in ESL classes or receive other ESL support. Some parents choose to waive ESL services for their children, and these children are excluded from the data.

Despite the fact that there are fewer LEP children in high schools than elementary schools, working with these children to help them learn English and other subject areas may be more challenging, because the foreign-born share is higher among secondary than elementary LEP students. Many LEP students in secondary schools are “late entering” immigrants; they may have received little or no schooling in their home countries and often do not speak English at all (Capps et al. 2005a). Additionally, secondary schools may need to provide English as a Second Language or other specialized programs for late entering LEP students, and they are generally not as well equipped as elementary schools to provide services for LEP students (Ruiz de Velasco, Fix and Clewell 2000).

Data from the United States Census Bureau show even higher numbers and a faster growth rate in the number of school-age LEP children than the ESL children identified in the JCPS data. The Census estimated that there were 2,300 LEP children ages 5 to 17 in Jefferson County in 2000, while data from the ACS suggest that there were 4,500 LEP children by 2004; both these estimates are about twice as large as the JCPS ESL enrollment data.³² Moreover, the Census and ACS data show faster growth in the number of LEP children: a 96 percent increase in the number of LEP children in just four years, from 2000 to 2004.

Regardless of the source, these data suggest that LEP children are a rapidly increasing group of students in public schools in the Louisville area. Continuing increases in the number of LEP children and the LEP testing requirements in NCLB will put pressure on the schools—especially in Jefferson County—to improve the academic performance of LEP students. Successful strategies to educate LEP children and involve their parents will therefore be important components of the schools’ efforts to meet NCLB requirements.

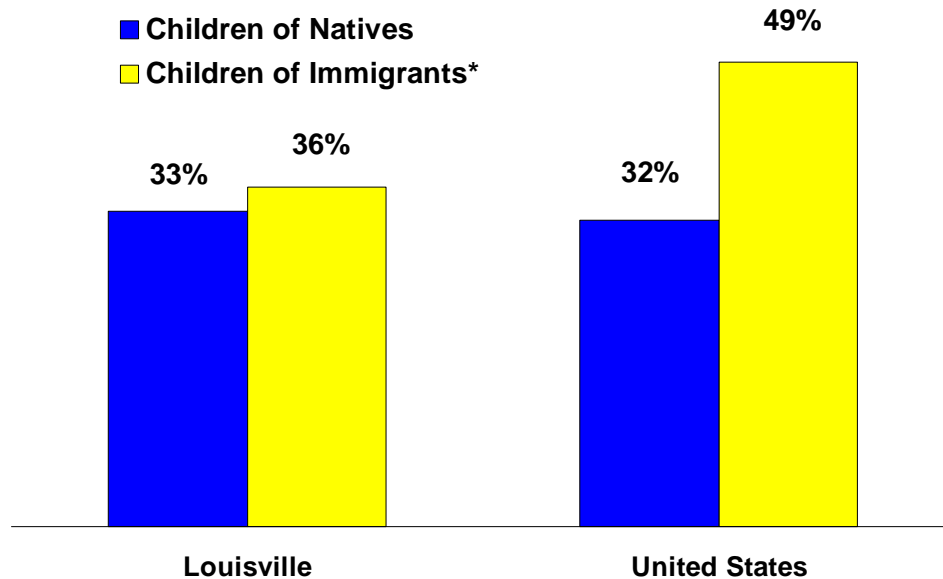
In order to meet the demand for ESL education for elementary and secondary school students, JCPS operates 38 schools that offer ESL programs that span all grade levels. The school district has hired 66 ESL certified teachers and 65 bilingual associate instructors. Each ESL program has two units: (1) an intake center that provides initial language assessment and helps parents with enrollment forms, student placement, and transportation; and (2) an instructional unit that provides technical assistance to ESL and mainstream teachers. The intake unit works with Catholic Charities Migration and Refugee Services to provide cultural adjustment services to refugee children and their parents, since many refugees are served through the ESL schools. The district does not have a bilingual education program, but the bilingual associate instructors provide assistance to ESL students when needed.³³

³² There are several reasons why the schools’ data might show different results from the census and ACS data. First, the census and ACS provide data from samples, and the ACS has a low sample size and broad range of error at the county level in 2004. On the other hand, the JCPS data are actual student counts, and therefore more precise. Second, the census and ACS use data on English proficiency as reported by the respondent, while the schools data use program enrollment data. Some LEP students in Jefferson County are not enrolled in ESL classes. Third, some of the older children reported as LEP in the census and ACS may not be enrolled in school.

³³ The description of the JCPS ESL Schools program is for the 2005-06 school year and is based on correspondence with Berta Calvert, ESL Coordinator, JCPS Gheens Academy.

Low-Income Children of Immigrants in Louisville

Figure 28: Low-Income Share of School Children, by Parental Nativity, Louisville and United States, 1999



NOTES: School children are ages 3 to 20 and enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade. Low-income children have family incomes below 185% of the Federal poverty level.

* At least one parent is foreign-born.

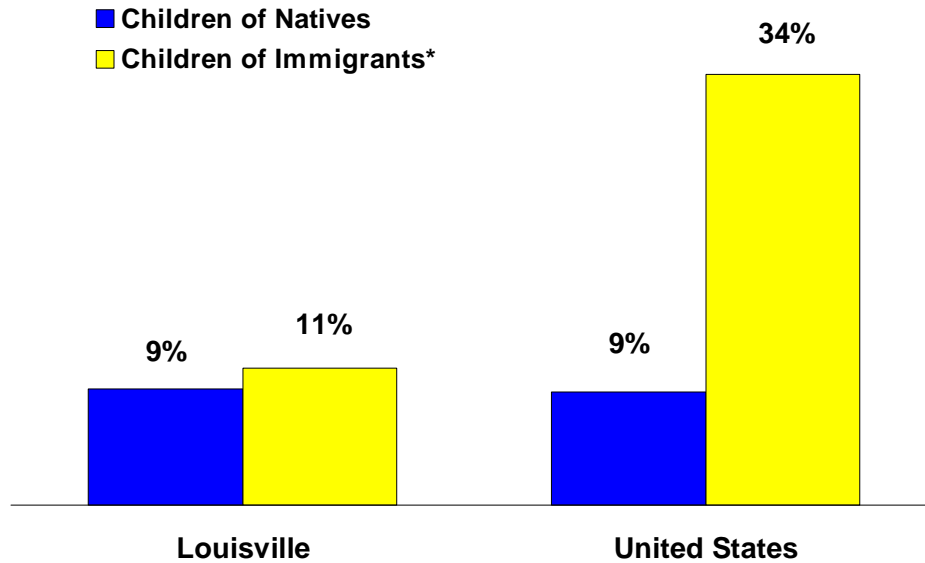
SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

Low-income children represent another protected student group specified in NCLB. In Louisville, in stark contrast to the national pattern, there is little difference in the low-income share between children of immigrants and natives. In 1999, 36 percent of Louisville children of immigrants in kindergarten through 12th grade were low-income, just above the rate for children of natives (33 percent).³⁴ Nationally, almost half (49 percent) of children of immigrants were low-income, compared to 32 percent of children of natives (figure 28). As shown earlier in this report, Louisville's immigrants have relatively high incomes due to their diverse backgrounds and high levels of educational attainment. Thus, the rapid rise in recent immigration may not be increasing the low-income population in Louisville's public schools as rapidly as that population is increasing nationally. Again, the relatively low share of Latin American immigrants in Louisville—at least as reported in official census data—may be part of the explanation.

³⁴ Here we define low income as 185 percent of the federal poverty level, the threshold for eligibility for the National School Lunch Program and the definition of low-income specified in the NCLB Act.

Educational Attainment of Parents

Figure 29: Share of Parents without a High School Degree for School Children, by Parental Nativity, Louisville and the United States, 2000



NOTES: School children are ages 3 to 20 and enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade. Neither parent has a high school degree.

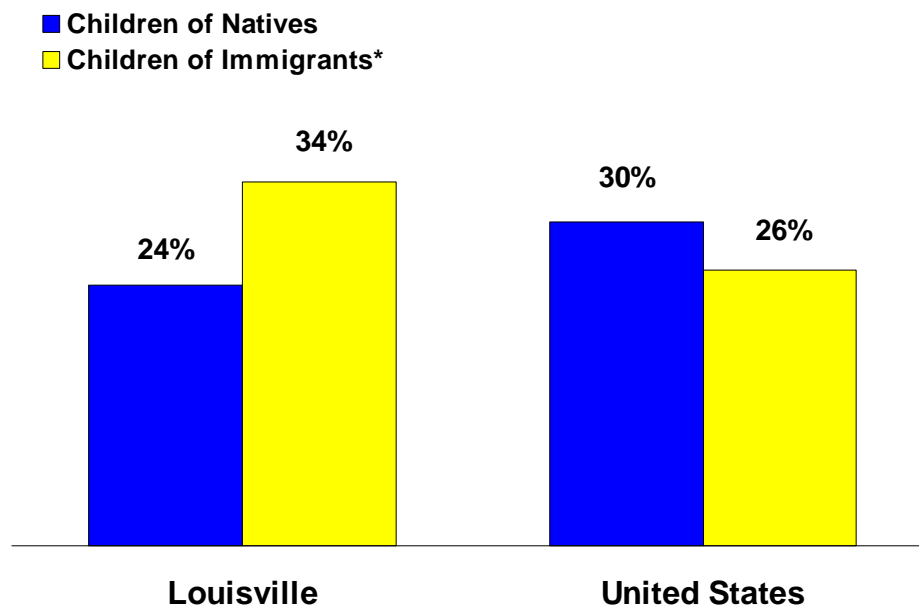
* At least one parent is foreign-born.

SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

An even greater contrast to the national pattern can be seen in the relatively high educational attainment of immigrant parents in Louisville. In 2000, about the same proportion of children of immigrants and natives (11 versus 9 percent) had parents with less than a high school education.³⁵ But nationally, children of immigrants were three times as likely as children of natives to have parents with less than a high school education (34 versus 9 percent—see figure 29).

³⁵ In the case of two parent families, neither parent had a high school education.

Figure 30: Share of Parents with a 4-Year College Degree for School Children, by Parental Nativity, Louisville and the United States, 2000



NOTES: School children are ages 3 to 20 and enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade. At least one parent has a 4-year college degree.

* At least one parent is foreign-born.

SOURCE: The Urban Institute analysis of United States Census, 2000.

At the other end of the educational spectrum, Louisville children of immigrants are more likely to have parents with a college education, while the national pattern is the reverse. In 2000, over a third of children of immigrants in Louisville (34 percent) had at least one parent with a four-year college degree or more education, compared with 24 percent of children of natives. Nationally, 30 percent of children of natives had parents with at least a college education, compared with only 26 percent of children of immigrants (figure 30).

The fact that Louisville's immigrant parents are relatively well-educated is a major asset for the public schools. Well-educated parents are more likely to be involved in their children's education, for instance by participating in school activities and helping their children with homework (Haskins and Rouse 2005). As Louisville area schools work to meet the new accountability provisions in NCLB—including those relating to the performance of LEP children—involving immigrant parents will be a key strategy in their success.

Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

The rapidly growing and increasingly diverse immigrant population in the Louisville metropolitan area presents both challenges and opportunities to the area's local governments, along with public and private institutions. Here we present a number of general as well as more concrete recommendations to help ensure that Louisville's immigrant population integrates successfully into the region's economy, social fabric and political community.

Continue to welcome immigrants to Louisville to support the region's future workforce growth. New immigrants are mostly in their younger working years and come to the United States for better employment opportunities. Louisville, like other cities of its size in the Midwest and Southeast, is home to an increasing number of immigrants, and its economy will become increasingly dependent on foreign-born labor as the population ages and baby boomers in the current workforce retire. Immigrants are already a critical component of the region's lower-skilled labor force, as the number of native-born workers without a high school degree shrank by almost 20 percent during the 1990s. As the number of less educated native-born workers falls even further, immigrants will increasingly meet the demand for low-skilled labor in sectors such as construction, manufacturing, retail trade, accommodation and food services.

Support efforts by the region's employers and higher education institutions to attract and retain highly skilled immigrants. Compared to the United States as a whole, the Louisville area has an unusually well educated and highly skilled immigrant population. The region's universities attract substantial numbers of international students and scholars, and industries such as health care, education, professional services, and the sciences employ growing numbers of highly skilled immigrants. Louisville's public and private sector leaders should consider the important roles that highly educated immigrants could play—for instance in filling shortages in health care occupations—as they chart the region's economic future. Higher education institutions, local employers, and public-private partnerships should work together to find employment and develop long-term career paths for foreign-born students graduating from Louisville universities. In this way the region would retain more foreign-born graduates, instead of losing these highly skilled immigrants to other cities.

Expand adult education services. Regardless of nativity, better-educated workers earn more than those with little education. Although a large share (one-third) of Louisville's immigrants has a college degree or more, nearly a quarter lack a high school diploma. Whether it is ensuring immigrants have access to basic literacy services, General Educational Development (GED) programs or affordable community college classes, there are few investments a community can make in its immigrant population as important as education. This investment will especially help Latin American immigrants—who have the lowest levels of formal education—maximize their productivity in the workforce and integrate successfully in the Louisville community.

Expand provision of English as a second language to immigrant adults. The analysis in this report indicates that both well-educated and less educated immigrants could benefit from a better knowledge of the English language, because workers with better English skills have higher earnings. Therefore, Louisville officials and community leaders might consider ways to expand the availability of English as a second language classes and tailor those classes to groups of immigrants with different needs. Some classes may be geared to workers in specific industries, focusing on vocabulary useful to

those occupations—for instance in health care or hospitality. Flexible hours would help ensure that people with different work schedules are accommodated. Classes could be offered through employers, at community centers, or even apartments near where immigrants live. Many large private employers, such as hotels and restaurant chains, provide English as a second language to their workers. Louisville might investigate ways to provide incentives to employers that provide these services and information on how to do so.

Assist immigrants in transferring education and credentials from their home countries to the U.S. labor market. Many well-educated immigrants must work in fields that are not their areas of expertise because U.S. employers do not accept degrees or certificates that they earned in foreign countries. Helping immigrants find ways to become re-certified in nursing, medicine, and scientific research, for example, would help those groups maximize their potential earnings. Efforts to help transfer credentials or help get immigrants re-certified are especially important in the education, health care and social service industries, where the demand for workers is expected to increase rapidly in the near future.

Provide translation and interpretation for critical public services. Most immigrants to the Louisville area come from non-English speaking countries in Latin America and Asia, and not all immigrants are able to learn English quickly, particularly if they work long hours soon after arrival. Rapid growth in the population of immigrants who do not speak English well makes it increasingly important for public institutions such as hospitals, departments of motor vehicles and social service providers to offer translation and interpretation services. Louisville’s immigrant population—which is even more diverse than the foreign-born nationally—needs interpreters fluent not only in Spanish but also in a wide array of other languages. In order to increase immigrants’ access to critical services, larger cities such as New York have begun translating documents and hiring bilingual staff that speak common languages such as Spanish. Contracted interpreters from the community and language lines—where interpreters are available over the phone—have been successfully employed to assist immigrants who speak less common languages. A combination of translated documents, bilingual staff, contracted interpreters and telephone interpreter services would help ensure the access of Louisville’s immigrants to services when they need them, and help improve the overall health, public safety and well-being of Louisville’s residents.

Build on the successes of Louisville’s refugee resettlement program. Services to refugees are a critical component of immigrant integration in Louisville, where the share of refugees among the foreign-born is at least twice the national average. Louisville’s success in resettling refugees, especially with regard to employment, may provide lessons for the integration of immigrants and limited English speakers more broadly. Are there successful employment training and placement strategies used in the refugee program that can be applied to other immigrant groups? Or can cultural adjustment services—such as those used to integrated refugee children into the Jefferson County Public Schools—be replicated for other groups of immigrants? State, local and private sector resources would be needed to support such programs for non-refugee immigrants, as only refugees are eligible for federal assistance in these areas.

Focus on the education of immigrants’ children to ensure that they learn English. The rapid growth in the number of children of immigrants and LEP children in Louisville raises significant challenges for the public school system. The federal No Child Left Behind Act requires schools to document improvement in the test scores of students who speak English as a second language. NCLB

also holds schools accountable for the academic performance of other groups that include immigrants' children—for instance, Hispanic, Asian, and low-income students. On one hand, by requiring that LEP student performance be measured separately, the law places a much-needed magnifying lens on the performance of those children. On the other hand, though, school districts with diverse LEP student populations have struggled with how to test non-English speakers, provide appropriate ESL instruction, and ensure that LEP students pass standardized reading, math and science tests.

The Jefferson County Public Schools have invested significant resources in the education of these children through ESL schools and intake centers. JCPS should continue to expand these services to meet the growing numbers of LEP students from immigrant backgrounds, and might consider offering technical assistance to nearby school districts to establish similar programs. JCPS and the other districts should continue to ensure that schools and teachers have the tools and resources they need to both teach and assess the growing number of LEP students. Of course, Louisville's schools must also grapple with the demand for bilingual teachers, aides and staff who can communicate with LEP students and their parents. All of these efforts will likely be expensive, and a combination of federal, state and local resources should be targeted toward the education of LEP students. Investment in the education of immigrants' children, however, will yield large returns when these children become skilled workers in Louisville's future labor force.

Increase immigrants' access to health insurance and health care. Nationally, immigrants have less access to health care than natives because of lower insurance coverage, language difficulties, and other barriers. Immigrants are more likely to be uninsured than native because they are more likely to be in occupations that might not carry insurance coverage, and because they might not be eligible for public programs. Children of immigrants, even if they are U.S.-born citizens, are also less likely to be insured. In addition, immigrants face other barriers to health care, such as language, cultural differences, and fears about approaching providers for health care. Immigrants might have difficulty scheduling appointments because they are more likely to be in sectors with inflexible work schedules or no sick leave. They might also have difficulty finding transportation for their appointments (Capps et al. 2005b).

Louisville can improve immigrants' access to health care through the Louisville Metro Center for Health Equity and similar local efforts. The Center for Health Equity works with the community, health care professionals, researchers, and policy makers to improve access to healthcare resources in the community for everyone, including immigrants. Louisville should increase outreach efforts to enroll eligible immigrants and their children in public health insurance programs, such as the Kentucky State Health Insurance Assistance Program and the Kentucky Children's Health Insurance Program. The Louisville Metro Health Department's clinics should expand preventive health services for immigrant communities. Immigrants' access to health care services can also be improved through provision of translation and interpretation services at hospitals, clinics, and other health care facilities.

Plan comprehensive and accessible services for immigrants to facilitate their integration into the community. Louisville should develop the means to reach newcomer populations to provide existing services more efficiently and implement new programs successfully. The city should ponder creative ways to disseminate information and integrate programs for immigrants—for instance, by building on the model of the refugee resettlement program and expanding services to other immigrants, working through the Louisville Office for International Affairs to plan new programs, or simply creating a centrally located point-of-access center for newcomers. No matter what option Louisville chooses, the most essential elements would include information and guidance on a wide range of services and other topics, for instance: employment opportunities; citizenship, voting and other civic responsibilities; English courses, adult education and training; interpretation and translation services; housing and transportation; health care and social services; and public schools and child care arrangements. By taking a more proactive role in planning the integration of immigrants, Louisville would not only make the city even more accommodating to immigrants, but also further increase the prospects for them to become productive, contributing members of the community.

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