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Mexican Lawful Immigrants Among the Least Likely to Become U.S. Citizens

Among Mexicans, desire is high, but about half cite language, cost barriers

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Terminology

The terms “Latino” and “Hispanic” are used interchangeably in this report.

“Foreign born” refers to people born outside of the United States, Puerto Rico or other U.S. territories to parents who were not U.S. citizens.

The following terms are used to describe immigrants and their status in the U.S. In some cases, they differ from official government definitions because of limitations in the available survey data.

- **Lawful immigrant population:** Naturalized citizens, people granted lawful permanent residence (previously known as legal permanent residence), those granted asylum, people admitted as refugees and people admitted under a set of specific authorized temporary statuses for longer-term residence and work.
- **Lawful permanent resident (LPR), lawful permanent resident alien, authorized migrant, or green-card holder:** A citizen of another country who has been granted a visa that allows work and permanent residence in the U.S. For this analysis, lawful permanent residents include those admitted as refugees or granted asylum.
- **Naturalized citizen:** Lawful permanent resident who has fulfilled the length of stay and other requirements to become a U.S. citizen and who has taken the oath of citizenship.
- **Unauthorized migrant:** Citizen of another country who lives in the U.S. without a currently valid visa.
- **Eligible immigrant:** In this report, a lawful permanent resident who is 18 years of age or older and meets the length of stay qualifications to file a petition to become a citizen but has not yet naturalized.
- **Lawful temporary migrant:** A citizen of another country who has been granted temporary residence in the U.S. with a temporary visa that may or may not allow them to work.

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Mexican Lawful Immigrants Among the Least Likely to Become U.S. Citizens

Among Mexicans, desire is high, but about half cite language, cost barriers

The overall percentage of lawful immigrants to the United States choosing to apply for and gaining citizenship is at its highest level in more than two decades. Yet in terms of naturalization rate, Mexicans – the single largest group of lawful immigrants by country of origin – lag well behind green-card holders eligible to apply from other parts of the globe.

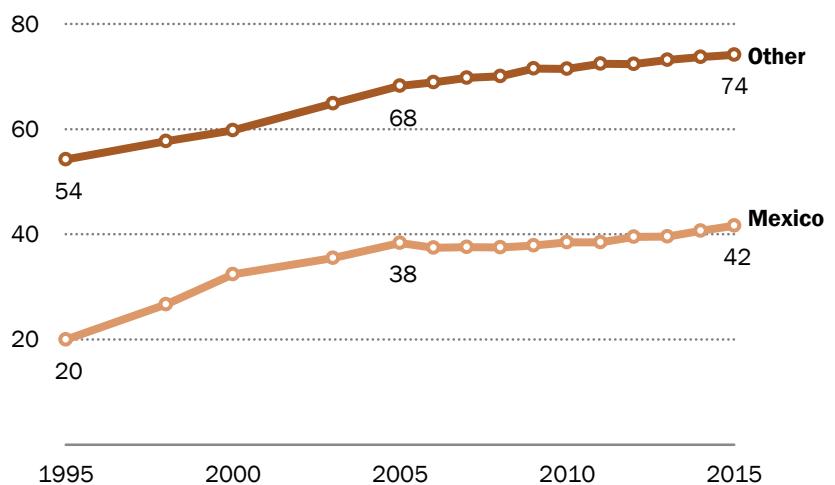
Based on Pew Research Center estimates using the most recent U.S. Census Bureau data available, two-thirds (67%) of lawful immigrants eligible to apply for U.S. citizenship had

applied for and obtained citizenship by 2015. This is the highest share since at least the mid-1990s. But among Mexican lawful immigrants eligible to apply, only 42% had applied for and obtained U.S. citizenship by 2015, a rate little changed since 2005 and one of the lowest among all immigrant groups when it comes to country of origin.

As part of a larger survey of Hispanic immigrants fielded in late 2015, Pew Research Center asked Mexican green-card holders why they had not yet become naturalized U.S. citizens. The most

Naturalization rate of Mexicans vs. other immigrant groups, 1995 to 2015

% naturalized among immigrants eligible to become U.S. citizens



Note: Naturalization is the process through which U.S. lawful permanent residents who fulfill length of stay and other requirements become U.S. citizens.

Source: Pew Research Center estimates for 2005-2015 based on augmented American Community Survey (IPUMS); for 1995-2003 based on March Supplements to the Current Population Survey.

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Naturalization rate

The number of naturalized immigrants divided by the number of naturalized immigrants plus the number of lawful immigrants who are eligible to apply for naturalization in a given year.

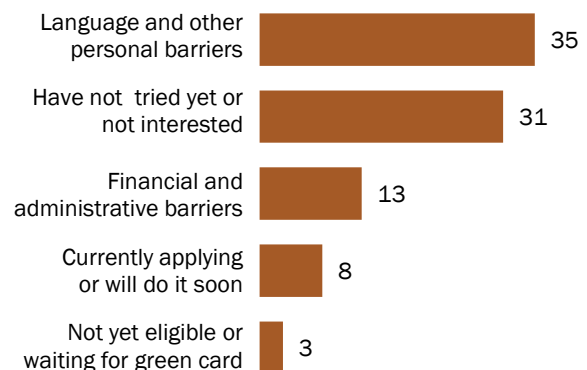
frequent reasons centered on inadequate English skills, lack of time or initiative, and the cost of the U.S. citizenship application. These appear to be significant barriers, as nearly all lawful immigrants from Mexico said they would like to become U.S. citizens someday.

Overall, 11.9 million of the nation's [45 million immigrants](#) in 2015 held lawful permanent residence (LPR) status – that is, they held “green cards,” according to Pew Research Center estimates. Of this number, most (9.3 million) had met the [eligibility requirements](#) – including length of residence – to apply for U.S. citizenship in 2015.¹ Mexicans made up 37% of this group and constituted the single largest group of green-card holders without U.S. citizenship by country of origin.²

In the United States, the citizenship, or naturalization, rate among all lawful immigrants steadily increased from 1995 to 2005, rising from 47% to 62%. Until about 2005, the naturalization rate among lawful immigrants from Mexico also increased steadily, but did so more rapidly (from 20% in 1995 to 38% in 2005), narrowing the gap between Mexicans and other immigrants. However, between 2005 and 2010, the naturalization rate of Mexican green-card holders leveled off, even as the rate for lawful permanent residents from other parts of the globe continued to rise. Only in the period from 2011 to 2015 did the rate of naturalization among eligible Mexican immigrants significantly increase again at a pace higher than that of other lawful U.S. immigrants – going from 38% to 42% among Mexicans, compared with a 2-percentage-point increase, from 72% to 74% among non-Mexican immigrants.

For Mexican green-card holders, what is the main reason they have not yet become U.S. citizens?

% of Mexican lawful permanent residents who said



Note: Other responses and volunteered responses of “Don’t know/refused” not shown.
Source: National Survey of Latinos conducted Oct. 21-Nov. 30, 2015.
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¹ The benefits of U.S. citizenship include the right to vote in federal elections and protection from deportation. Naturalized immigrants also are eligible to apply for certain financial aid grants from the government, including college scholarships, and they gain a number of legal rights and become eligible for federal employment, among [other benefits](#)

² Pew Research Center estimates of the lawful permanent resident population and the number of immigrants who are eligible to naturalize differ from prior [estimates](#) released by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security due to differences in methodology and data sources. See methodology for details.

As of 2015, the naturalization rate for lawful Mexican immigrants trailed that of green-card holders from the Middle East by 42 percentage points (42% vs. 83%), and was 33 points behind green-card holders from Africa, 74% of whom had naturalized by 2015. Middle Eastern immigrants had the highest naturalization rate among all immigrant origin groups, while [African immigrants](#) saw the highest increase in naturalization rate in the last decade.

Early signs are that 2017 could see an increase in the rate of naturalization of lawful permanent residents.

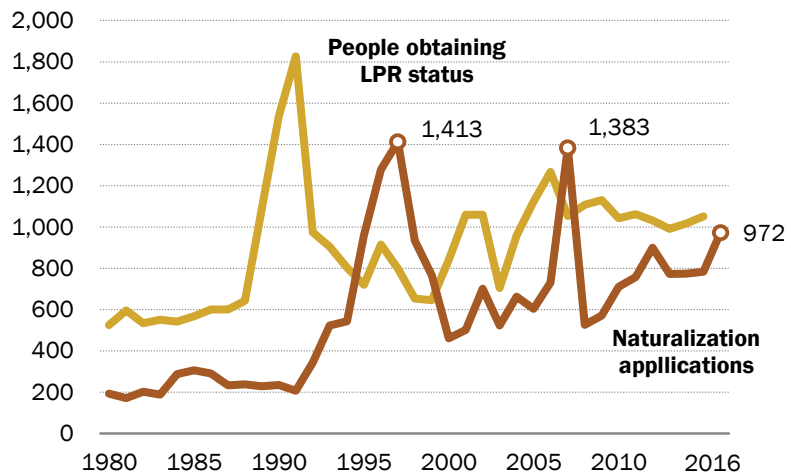
According to the latest figures released by the U.S.

Department of Homeland Security's Citizenship and Immigration Services, there were 525,000 naturalization [applications](#) submitted during the first half of fiscal year 2017, which started Oct. 1.³ That number is up 21% from the 435,000 applications submitted in the same period of 2016, which already had seen a spike on naturalization applications compared with previous years. The total applications for fiscal 2016 were up by 24% compared with 2015, and represented the highest number of applications for naturalization since 2008. Meanwhile, the number of lawful permanent residents admitted since 2010, many of whom would have recently become eligible to apply for citizenship, has stabilized at around 1 million per year since 2010.

Even so, the volume of citizenship applications in 2017 and 2016 still pales in comparison to the record levels seen in 1997 (1.41 million applications) and 2007 (1.38 million). These spikes were triggered in large part by congressional legislation passed a decade earlier that provided a path to

Trends in obtainment of lawful permanent residence and naturalization applications

In thousands, per fiscal year



Note: For lawful permanent residents data are only available through fiscal year 2015. Lawful permanent resident admissions include both new immigrant arrivals and people adjusting their status. Data labels are for naturalization applications and represent years 1997, 2007 and 2016.

Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Yearbook of Immigration Statistics 2015, for 1980 to 2016. Naturalizations applications for 2016: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

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³ Fiscal year runs from Oct. 1 through Sept. 31 each year.

lawful permanent residence and eventual citizenship for many unauthorized immigrants.⁴ The spike in 2007 occurred ahead of an increase in the citizenship application fee for adults, which rose from \$330 to \$595 on July 30, 2007.

Some have posited that fiscal 2016's growth in applications and the more recent spike during the first quarter of fiscal 2017 (right after the election) are attributable to anti-immigrant rhetoric associated with [2016 U.S. presidential election](#). There is also evidence that some organizations worked to help lawful immigrants submit naturalization applications during the campaign.⁵ But at least some immigrants may have applied to avoid a further \$45 increase in the citizenship application fee that was scheduled to go into effect Dec. 23, 2016. That increase, which raised the total application fee to [\\$640 per adult](#), was officially announced in May 2016.

⁴ In 1996, Congress also passed three laws that limited the public benefits and legal protections of noncitizens, and expanded the list of offenses for which immigrants – including legal permanent residents – can be deported.

⁵ In 2012, a Pew Research Center [survey](#) showed that acquiring civil and legal rights, particularly the right to vote, was the main reason for naturalization given by Hispanic legal permanent residents, followed by benefits and opportunities derived from citizenship and reasons connected to their family.

Naturalization rates among Mexican and other Latino immigrants

In 2015, half (52%) of all Latino lawful immigrants (mainly originating from Mexico, as well as Central and South America) eligible to become U.S. citizens had in fact naturalized. Among this group, Mexicans had a naturalization rate of 42%, compared with 64% among lawful immigrants from other countries in Latin America.

In its 2015 survey of Latino immigrants, Pew Research Center found that among lawful Mexican immigrants and other Latino immigrants, the desire to become U.S. citizens was high. Nearly all (98%) Mexican lawful immigrants and 94% of other lawful Latino immigrants said they would naturalize if they could.

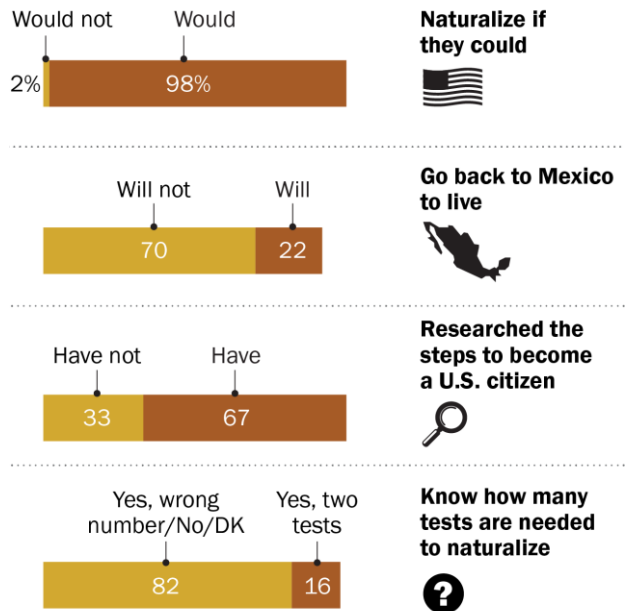
The survey also found that about two-thirds (67%) of Mexican lawful permanent residents said they had investigated the citizenship application process, compared with 80% of non-Mexican Latino lawful permanent residents. And a large majority of Mexican and other Latino lawful permanent residents (70% and 66% respectively) said they planned to stay in the U.S. and not return to their home country later in life, one reason some of them might seek U.S. citizenship.

Despite their wish to naturalize, many Latino lawful immigrants were not familiar with details of the process. Just 16% of Mexican and 21% of other Latino lawful immigrants correctly answered that two tests are part of the U.S. naturalization process.

It is not only Latino lawful permanent resident immigrants who want to become U.S. citizens: In the 2015 survey, Latino immigrants who did not have a green card and were not eligible to naturalize (a group likely in the country without authorization) also wanted to become U.S.

Motivation for naturalizing among Mexican lawful immigrants

% of Mexican lawful immigrants who said they ...



Note: Refused not shown for all categories. Don't know not shown for the top three categories.

Source: National Survey of Latinos conducted Oct. 21-Nov. 30, 2015.

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citizens.⁶ According to the survey, fully 91% in this group said they would naturalize if they could, and about one-third (32%) had done some research into the steps needed to become a U.S. citizen, though only 5% knew they need to take two tests to naturalize.

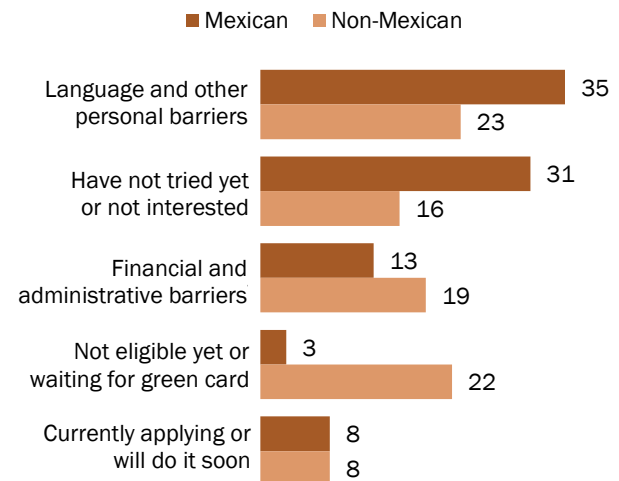
Mexican and non-Mexican Latino lawful immigrants face somewhat similar barriers to citizenship

Asked why they hadn't yet naturalized, the Center's 2015 survey found that 35% of Mexican and 23% of other Latino immigrants with green cards identified personal barriers, such as a lack of English proficiency. Another common reason given was a lack of interest or just having not applied yet. About a third (31%) of Mexican lawful immigrants said this, while only 16% of non-Mexican Latino immigrants said the same. An additional 13% of Mexican and 19% of non-Mexican lawful immigrants identified financial and administrative barriers, mainly the cost of naturalization.

This report is based on three data sources. Data on naturalization trends among lawful immigrants are based on Pew Research Center estimates based on the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) and Current Population Survey (CPS). The ACS is a year-round survey of 3.5 million households conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. The CPS is a monthly survey of about 55,000 households conducted jointly by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Census Bureau. Each March, the CPS is expanded to produce additional data on the nation's foreign-born population and other topics. Legal status of immigrants in the ACS and CPS is inferred based on methods described in the Center's research on [unauthorized immigrants](#) in the U.S.

Reasons for not naturalizing among Hispanic lawful immigrants of Mexican and other origins

% of Hispanic lawful permanent residents who said ...



Note: Other responses and volunteered responses of "Don't know/refused" not shown.

Source: National Survey of Latinos conducted Oct. 21-Nov. 30, 2015.

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⁶ A Pew Research Center analysis of Current Population Survey data indicates that approximately 98% of Hispanic immigrants who are neither U.S. citizens nor lawful permanent residents are unauthorized immigrants. ([Livingston, 2009](#))

Latino immigrant attitudes about naturalization come from a nationally representative bilingual telephone survey of 1,500 Latino adults, including 795 immigrants. The survey was conducted between Oct. 21 and Nov. 30, 2015. The margin of error for the full sample is plus or minus 3.3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level; for foreign-born Latinos, the margin of error is plus or minus 4.4 percentage points. For a full description of the survey methodology, see the [Methodology](#) section at the end of the report.

U.S. Citizenship Eligibility

To become a U.S. citizen, a lawful permanent resident in most cases must:

- Be at least 18 years old.
- Have lived in the U.S. continuously for five years.
- Be able to speak, write, read and understand basic English.
- Answer questions that demonstrate knowledge of U.S. government and history.
- Undergo a successful background check.
- Demonstrate attachment to the principles of the U.S. Constitution.
- Take the oath of citizenship swearing allegiance to the U.S.

Some of those requirements are waived for certain groups:

- Spouses of U.S. citizens can naturalize after three years of continuous residence, if the sponsoring spouse has been a U.S. citizen for all three years.
- Foreign-born minor children become citizens when their parents naturalize.
- Foreign-born minor children who are adopted by U.S. citizens are eligible for citizenship upon their arrival in the U.S.
- Military personnel, their spouses and foreign-born minor children are eligible for expedited and overseas citizenship processing with the possibility of having some of the eligibility requirements diminished or waived. Additionally, in the case of death as result of combat while serving in active duty, citizenship may be granted posthumously to the military member and immediate family members.

The filing fees of processing a citizenship request for all applicants were \$680 at the time of the Center's survey in 2015. This included a \$595 filing fee and an \$85 biometric services fee for processing fingerprints. Starting [Dec. 23, 2016](#), the citizenship application fee rose by \$45.

The filing [fee could be waived](#) for applicants with family incomes below 150% of the poverty line, if they, their spouse or head of household receives a means-tested benefit, or if the applicant is experiencing a financial hardship that prevents them from paying the fee (such as unexpected medical bills). Starting Dec. 23, 2016 there is also a reduced filing fee of \$320 available for naturalization applicants with family incomes between 150% and 200% the poverty line.

1. Recent trends in naturalization, 1995-2015

In 2015, 67% of lawful permanent residents eligible to become U.S. citizens had done so, the highest level in two decades and a 20-percentage-point increase since 1995.

The population of naturalized U.S. citizens reached 19.8 million in 2015, a historic high that reflects both an increase in the population of eligible immigrants and an increased likelihood that those who are eligible to apply for citizenship actually do so.

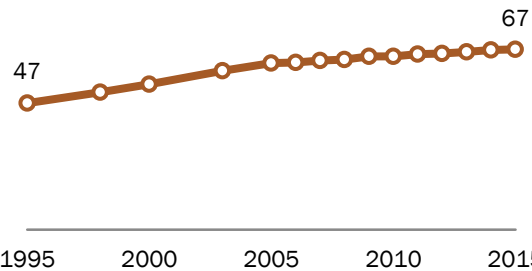
The total number of lawful immigrants – naturalized U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents – more than doubled since the 1970s, reaching 31.6 million in 2015. And since 2005, the number of lawful permanent resident admissions⁷ alone has exceeded 1 million annually, with the exception of 2013.

In 2015, a majority (62%) of all the lawful immigrants living in the country had already become naturalized citizens. The rest – 11.9 million – are green-card holders who could eventually naturalize and become U.S. citizens.

In 2015, naturalized citizens accounted for 44% of the nearly **45 million total** immigrants living in the U.S., up from 33% of the 33 million immigrants in 2000. (Total immigrants include naturalized citizens, lawful permanent residents, unauthorized immigrants and temporary lawful residents.) During this period, the share of lawful

U.S. immigrant naturalization rate reaches new high in 2015

% naturalized among immigrants eligible to become U.S. citizens

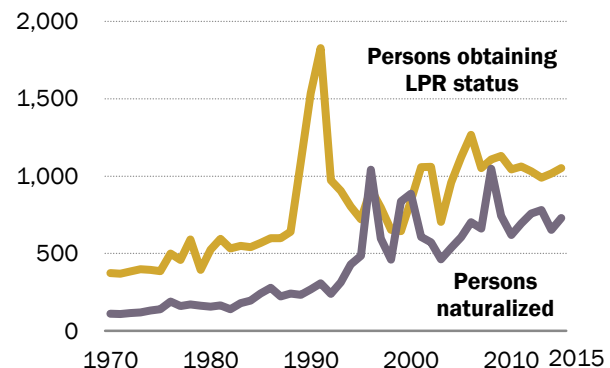


Source: Pew Research Center estimates for 2005-2015 based on augmented American Community Survey (IPUMS); for 1995-2003 based on March Supplements to the Current Population Survey. "Mexican Lawful Immigrants Among the Least Likely to Become U.S. Citizens"

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Annual naturalizations and immigrants obtaining lawful permanent residence

In thousands, per fiscal year



Note: Lawful permanent resident admissions include both new immigrant arrivals and people adjusting their status
Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Yearbook of Immigration Statistics 2015. "Mexican Lawful Immigrants Among the Least Likely to Become U.S. Citizens"

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⁷ Lawful permanent resident admissions include both new immigrant arrivals and people who have adjusted their status.

permanent residents among the foreign-born population shrank from 36% in 2000 to 27% in 2015.

Mexican lawful immigrants have one of the lowest naturalization rates

Among the 9.3 million immigrants eligible to apply for U.S. citizenship in 2015, 3.5 million were from Mexico. That made Mexican immigrants the single largest origin group among those eligible to naturalize, accounting for more than a third of the group.

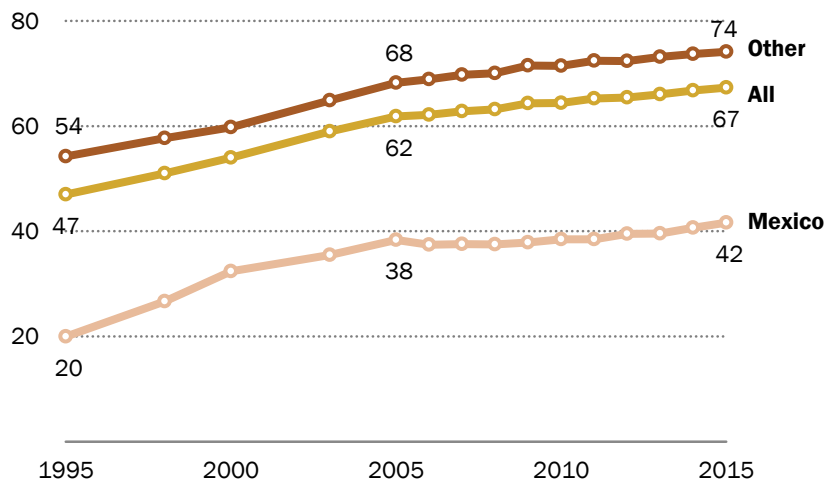
The naturalization rate among eligible Mexican immigrants has varied over time. In 1995, 20% of then-eligible-to-naturalize Mexicans had done so, compared with a naturalization rate of 54% among non-Mexican immigrants eligible to naturalize – a gap of 34 percentage points. However, in the late 1990s, the Mexican

naturalization rate rose more sharply than it did among non-Mexicans overall. As a result, the gap fell to 27 percentage points in 2000 – a record low. From 2005 to 2010, the Mexican naturalization rate had again grown more slowly than it had for other immigrants. From 2011 to 2015, the rate of naturalization for Mexicans grew faster than it did for other immigrants. By 2015, while the Mexican naturalization rate had risen to 42%, for non-Mexicans it had risen to 74% in the same year, leading to a 32-percentage-point gap.

The lower naturalization rate among Mexican immigrants may be influenced by multiple factors. First, Mexican immigrants may maintain closer ties to Mexico because of its proximity to the U.S. and might return home at some point, which would reduce their interest in applying for

Naturalization rate of Mexican and other immigrant groups, 1995 to 2015

% naturalized among immigrants eligible to become U.S. citizens



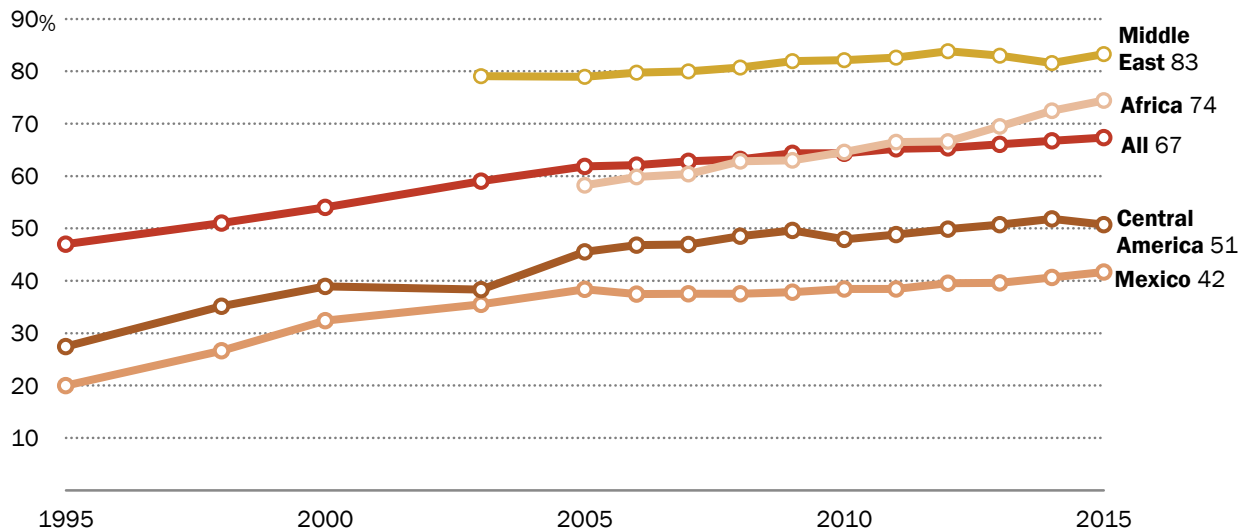
Note: Naturalization is the process through which U.S. lawful permanent residents who fulfill length of stay and other requirements become U.S. citizens.
Source: Pew Research Center estimates for 2005-2015 based on augmented American Community Survey (IPUMS); for 1995-2003 based on March Supplements to the Current Population Survey.
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citizenship. Second, there are personal and administrative barriers that make applying for citizenship difficult for some immigrants, such as a lack of English proficiency. Only about one-fourth (26%) of Mexican immigrants eligible to naturalize are proficient in English, compared with about half (51%) of lawful immigrants from other countries of origin. Also, the cost of naturalization is a possible barrier for some applicants. Overall, lawful Mexican immigrants have lower family incomes than lawful immigrants of other origins⁸. In addition, Mexican immigrants may not be aware that they can hold both U.S. and Mexican citizenship at the same time. (Prior to 1998, Mexico did not allow its citizens to hold dual citizenship, though this has since changed.) A Pew Research Center [survey](#) of Mexican immigrants in 2012 showed 29% were not aware this was possible. Also, some lawful immigrants might perceive that citizenship awards [few additional benefits](#) to their lawful permanent resident status.

Naturalization rate of Mexican and other immigrant groups by region of origin

% naturalized among immigrants eligible to become U.S. citizens, 1995 to 2015



Note: Naturalization is the process through which U.S. lawful permanent residents who fulfill length of stay and other requirements become U.S. citizens. Data for the Middle East for 1995-2003 and Africa for 1995-2005 not available due to small sample size.

Source: Pew Research Center estimates for 2005-2015 based on augmented American Community Survey (IPUMS); for 1995-2003 based on March Supplements to the Current Population Survey.

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⁸ There is a fee waiver available for immigrants with household incomes at or below 150% the poverty line, if they, spouse or head of household receive a means-tested benefit, or if the applicant is experiencing a financial hardship that prevents them from paying for the fee (such as unexpected medical bills). Among Mexican immigrants eligible for naturalization, 44% could qualify for a fee waiver, compared with 26% of immigrants from other origins, based on their household income.

2. Why Mexican lawful immigrants have not naturalized

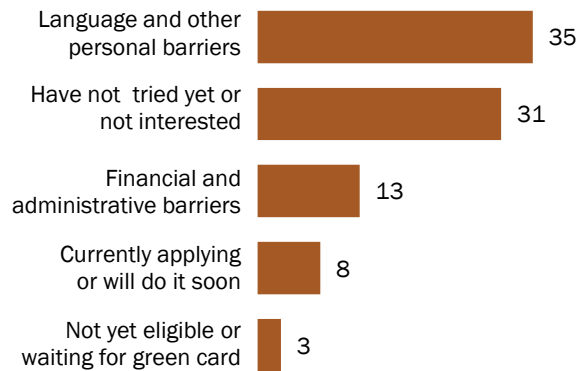
Despite their very low rate of naturalization, many Mexican lawful immigrant adults who had not yet naturalized said they wanted to do so, according to the 2015 Pew Research Center survey. For example, nearly all (98%) said they would naturalize if they could, and about two-thirds (67%) said they had researched the administrative steps needed to become a U.S. citizen, an indication of their interest in seeking U.S. citizenship. In addition, 70% said they did not intend to return to Mexico and live there later in life, a further indication of the potential interest of Mexican immigrants in applying for U.S. citizenship and staying in the United States.

Even so, these same immigrants cited many reasons for not having applied for U.S. citizenship yet. Among Mexican lawful permanent residents, about a third (35%) said in an open-ended question that the primary reason for not naturalizing was either language or personal barriers. Another 31% said they had either not tried to apply for naturalization yet or were not interested. An additional 13% cited financial or administrative barriers.

Looking more deeply at the reasons Mexican lawful permanent residents gave for not having naturalized, 27% said they needed to learn English (the leading reason among cited language and other personal barriers). Another 18% said they had not applied because they did not have the time to do so (the leading reason among those saying they had not tried to apply or had no interest). And 8% cited the cost of the application as the reason they have not yet naturalized (the leading reason among cited financial and administrative barriers).

What is the main reason you have not yet naturalized?

% of Mexican lawful permanent residents who said ...



Note: Other responses and volunteered responses of “Don’t know/refused” not shown.

Source: National Survey of Latinos conducted Oct. 21-Nov. 30, 2015.

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In addition, 8% said they either were currently applying for U.S. citizenship or would do so within the next year. And 3% said they were not yet eligible to naturalize⁹.

The survey also revealed that although a large majority of Mexican green-card holders said they had done research into the steps to become U.S. citizens, only 16% knew how many tests would be required during the application process, suggesting that even though many have explored what it would take to become a U.S. citizen, many still did not fully understand the process.

Differences between Mexican and non-Mexican Hispanic lawful permanent residents for not seeking U.S. citizenship

Latino lawful immigrants from countries other than Mexico had a significantly higher rate of naturalization than their Mexican counterparts (62% vs. 42% in 2015). However, in general terms, both groups showed similar levels of motivation to apply for naturalization, and faced similar barriers in their path to U.S. citizenship, according to the Pew Research Center survey.

Among non-Mexican Latino lawful immigrants, 94% said they would naturalize if they could, and 66% said they were planning to stay in the U.S. and not return to their home countries (compared with 98% and 70% among Mexican lawful immigrants).

In addition, non-Mexican lawful Latino immigrants were as likely as Mexican lawful immigrants to have said they had researched the steps to become a U.S. citizen (80% of non-Mexican vs. 67% of Mexican lawful immigrants). However, only 21% Latino green-

Reasons for not naturalizing among Hispanic LPRs of Mexican and other origins

% of Hispanic lawful permanent residents who said ...

Mexican		Non-Mexican	
Language and other personal barriers	35	Language and other personal barriers	23
Have not tried yet or not interested	31	Not eligible yet or waiting for green card	22
Financial and administrative barriers	13	Financial and administrative barriers	19
Currently applying or will do it soon	8	Have not tried yet or not interested	16
Not eligible yet or waiting for green card	3	Currently applying or will do it soon	8
Other reasons	6	Other reasons	12

Note: Other responses and volunteered responses of "Don't know/refused" not shown.

Source: National Survey of Latinos conducted Oct. 21-Nov. 30, 2015.

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⁹ According to U.S. Department of Homeland Security requirements, in order to apply for U.S. citizenship, an LPR needs to be at least 18 years of age and spend at least five years holding a permanent resident card – or three years for those married to a U.S. citizen – before becoming eligible to apply. [among other requirements.](#)

card holders of other origins correctly said that they needed to take two tests to gain U.S. citizenship, similar to the share among Mexican lawful immigrants (16%).

In terms of specific barriers to naturalization, Hispanic lawful permanent residents of non-Mexican origin and those of Mexican origin cited somewhat similar reasons for not naturalizing. Mexican lawful immigrants were as likely as their non-Mexican Hispanic counterparts to have said that language and other personal reasons were the main barriers for them to become naturalized U.S. citizens (35% vs. 23%, respectively). By contrast, Mexican green-card holders were significantly more likely than non-Mexican Hispanics to show a lack of interest or said they had not had time to take steps to naturalize (31% vs. 16%).

Not being eligible yet for naturalization or waiting for their green card was the main reason for 22% of non-Mexican Latino lawful permanent residents, while only 3% of Mexican LPRs said this.¹⁰ Also, financial and administrative issues were just as important to non-Mexican Latino lawful permanent residents (19%) as to Mexican lawful permanent residents (13%).

¹⁰ No statistically significant differences were found in the ranking of the reasons or the gaps between Mexican and non-Mexican Hispanic immigrants when respondents who volunteered that they were not eligible to naturalize were removed from the analysis. The same was found when removing those who had been in the U.S. less than five years and were likely not eligible to naturalize due to the length of stay requirement.

Acknowledgements

This report was written by Ana Gonzalez-Barrera, senior researcher. Jeffrey S. Passel, senior demographer, provided statistical guidance. Gonzalez-Barrera and Gustavo López, research assistant, led development of the survey questionnaire. Kyley McGeeney, senior methodologist, provided guidance on the questionnaire's development. Mark Hugo Lopez, director of Global Migration and Demography research; James Bell, vice president for global strategy; D'Vera Cohn, senior writer/editor; and Molly Rohal, communications manager, provided editorial guidance. Gonzalez-Barrera and López created charts and tables. López and Jynnah Radford, research assistant, number-checked the report and its graphics. Anna Brown, research analyst, number-checked the survey topline. Ariana Rodriguez-Gitler, digital producer, assisted with formatting and production. Aleksandra Sandstrom copy edited the report. Find related reports online at pewresearch.org/hispanic.

Methodology

Estimates of the lawful permanent resident and foreign-born U.S. citizen population

The estimates presented in this report for the U.S. lawful immigrant population, including the number of foreign-born U.S. citizens and those eligible to apply for citizenship, are based on a residual estimation methodology developed to estimate the unauthorized immigrant population in the U.S.

The residual estimation methodology compares a demographic estimate of the number of immigrants residing legally in the country with the total number of immigrants as measured by a survey – either the American Community Survey or the March Supplement to the Current Population Survey. The difference is assumed to be the number of unauthorized immigrants in the survey, a number that later is adjusted for omissions from the survey (see below). The basic estimate is:

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Unauthorized} \\ \text{Immigrants} \\ \text{(U)} \end{array} = \begin{array}{l} \text{Survey, Total} \\ \text{Foreign Born} \\ \text{(F)} \end{array} - \begin{array}{l} \text{Estimated Lawful} \\ \text{Immigrant Population} \\ \text{(L)} \end{array}$$

The lawful resident immigrant population is estimated by applying demographic methods to counts of lawful admissions covering the period since 1980 obtained from the Department of Homeland Security's [Office of Immigration Statistics](#) and its predecessor at the Immigration and Naturalization Service, with projections to current years, when necessary. Initial estimates here are calculated separately for age-gender groups in six states (California, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New York and Texas) and the balance of the country; within these areas the estimates are further subdivided into immigrant populations from 35 countries or groups of countries by period of arrival in the United States. Variants of the residual method have been widely used and are generally accepted as the best current estimates ([Baker and Rytina, 2013](#); [Warren and Warren, 2013](#)). See also [Passel, Cohn and Gonzalez-Barrera \(2013\)](#), [Passel and Cohn \(2008\)](#), [Passel \(2007\)](#) and Passel et al. (2004) for more details.

The overall estimates for unauthorized immigrants build on these residuals by adjusting for survey omissions for these six states and the balance of the country, subdivided for Mexican immigrants and other groups of immigrants (balance of Latin America, South and East Asia, rest of world) depending on sample size and state.

Once the residual estimates have been produced, individual foreign-born respondents in the survey are assigned a specific status (one option being unauthorized immigrant) based on the individual's demographic, social, economic, geographic and family characteristics in numbers that agree with the initial residual estimates for the estimated lawful immigrant and unauthorized immigrant populations. These status assignments are the basis for the characteristics reported here (including, for example, specific countries of birth, detailed state estimates and period of arrival). A final step in the weighting-estimation process involves developing final state-level estimates that take into account trends over time in the estimates.

Comparability with previous estimates

The estimates presented here for 1995-2015 are internally consistent and comparable across years. The 2005-2015 estimates are based on the American Community Survey (ACS); those for 1995, 1998, 2000 and 2003, on the March Current Population Survey (CPS). The estimates presented in this report supersede all previous published Pew Research Center estimates, especially estimates for the same dates using different data. For 2005-2015, some previous estimates have been based on the CPS rather than the ACS; see for example a [2012 Pew Research Center report](#) covering 1995-2011 using only CPS-based estimates and a [2015 publication](#) with ACS-based estimates for 2005-2012 and preliminary estimates for 2013-2015 based on the CPS. ACS-based estimates are superior to CPS-based estimates for the reasons discussed below. Previous Center releases since September 2013 ([Passel and Cohn, 2015](#); [Passel et al., 2014](#); [Passel, Cohn and Gonzalez-Barrera, 2013](#) and related graphics) include a mix of CPS-based and ACS-based estimates, but also show CPS-based estimates for additional years – 1996-1997, 1999, 2001-2002 and 2004. These earlier estimates are consistent with estimates published here.

The estimates in this report and previous Center publications since 2013 are based on survey data consistent with the censuses of 1990, 2000 and 2010. For the 1995-2009 surveys, special weights were developed to align with both the preceding and subsequent censuses (see below). As such, population figures for these years are not identical to those published from the original surveys.

Status assignments: Lawful and unauthorized immigrants

Individual survey respondents are assigned a status as a lawful or unauthorized immigrant based on the individual's demographic, social, economic and geographic characteristics so that the resulting number of immigrants in various categories agrees with the totals from the residual estimates. The assignment procedure employs a variety of methods, assumptions and data sources.

First, all immigrants entering the U.S. before 1980 are assumed to be lawful immigrants. Then, the ACS and CPS data are corrected for known over-reporting of naturalized citizenship on the part of recently arrived immigrants (Passel et al., 1997). Specifically, immigrants in the U.S. less than six years are not eligible to naturalize unless they are married to a U.S. citizen, in which case they can naturalize after three years. Immigrants reporting as naturalized who fail to meet these requirements are moved into the noncitizen category. All remaining naturalized citizens from countries other than Mexico and those in Central America are assigned as lawful. Persons entering the U.S. as refugees are identified on the basis of country of birth and year of immigration to align with known admissions of refugees and asylees (persons granted asylum). Then, individuals holding certain kinds of temporary visas are identified in the survey and each is assigned a specific lawful temporary migration status using information on country of birth, date of entry, occupation, education and certain family characteristics. The specific visa types identified and supporting variables are:

- Diplomats and embassy employees (A visa)
- Foreign students (F, M visa)
- Visiting scholars (J visa)
- Physicians (J visa)
- Registered nurses (H-1A visas)
- Intracompany transfers (L visas)
- “High-tech” guest workers (H-1B visas)
- International organizations (G visas)
- Religious workers (R visas)
- Exchange visitors (J visas)
- Athletes, artists and entertainers (O, P visas)
- Spouses and children within the various categories

Finally, immigrants are screened on the basis of occupations, participation in public programs and family relationships with the U.S. born and lawful immigrants. Some individuals are assigned as lawful immigrants on the basis of these characteristics:

- Refugees and naturalized citizens
- Lawful temporary immigrants
- Persons working for the government or the Armed Forces
- Veterans or members of the Armed Forces
- Participants in government programs not open to unauthorized immigrants:
 - Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

(TANF), Medicare, Medicaid and food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP)

Persons entering the U.S. before 1980

Persons with certain occupations that require lawful status or government licensing (e.g. police officers and other law enforcement occupations, lawyers, health care professionals)

Children of citizens and lawful temporary migrants

Most immediate relatives of U.S. citizens, especially spouses

Other family members, especially those entering the U.S before lawful residents

As result of these steps, the foreign-born population is divided between individuals with “definitely lawful” status (including long-term residents, naturalized citizens, refugees and asylees, lawful temporary migrants and some lawful permanent residents) and a group of “potentially unauthorized” migrants. (See [Passel, 2007](#) and [Passel et al., 2004](#) for additional detail.)

One change instituted for the new status assignments using the 2013- 2015 ACS was to assume that virtually all Cubans entering the U.S. are lawful residents, even if they are not assigned refugee status, because they are treated differently from other arrivals based on the [Cuban Adjustment Act of 1966](#). Status assignments for other years did not take this into account and, as a result, assigned too many Cubans as unauthorized. To make adjustments for this omission, a weighting adjustment was made in the CPS-based estimates for 1995-2003 and ACS-based estimates for 2005-2012. In these adjustments, the weight previously assigned to unauthorized Cubans was reassigned to unauthorized immigrants from other parts of Latin America while keeping in place the overall total estimates for states.

The number of potentially unauthorized migrants typically exceeds the estimated number of unauthorized migrants (from the residual estimates) by 20-35% nationally. So, to have a result consistent with the residual estimate of lawful and unauthorized immigrants, probabilistic methods are employed to assign lawful or unauthorized status to these potentially unauthorized individuals. The base probability for each assignment is the ratio of the residual estimate to the number of potentially unauthorized immigrants. These initial probabilities are first adjusted separately for parents living with their children and all others (to ensure that an appropriate number of unauthorized children are selected) and then by broad occupation categories.

After this last step in the probabilistic assignment process, there is a check to ensure that the statuses of family members are consistent; for example, all family members entering the country at the same time are assumed to have the same status. The resulting populations for unauthorized immigrants are compared with the residual estimates; if they disagree, the assignment

probabilities are adjusted and the random assignments are repeated. The entire process requires several iterations to produce estimates that agree with the demographically derived population totals. At the end, the final estimates agree with the residual estimates for the six individual states noted earlier and for the balance of the country; for lawful and unauthorized immigrants in each area born in Mexico, Latin America, Asia and the rest of the world (subject to sample size considerations); and for children, working-age men and working-age women within each category. Finally, the survey weights for the foreign-born are adjusted upward for survey omissions (undercount) so the tabulated figures agree with the adjusted analytic, demographic estimates of the total number of lawful immigrants and unauthorized migrants developed in the very first step.

Data sources and survey weights

The American Community Survey is an ongoing survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. The survey collects detailed information on a broad range of topics, including country of birth, year of immigration and citizenship – the information required for the residual estimates. The ACS has a continuous collection design with monthly samples of about 250,000; the nominal annual sample size was about 2.9 million households for 2005-2009 with about 1.9 million included in the final sample. The initial sample was expanded to almost 3.3 million addresses for 2011 and over 3.5 million for 2012; [the final sample for 2014 included more than 2.3 million addresses](#).

For this report, public-use samples of individual survey records from the ACS are tabulated to provide the data used in the estimation process. The public-use file is a representative 1% sample of the entire U.S. (including about 3 million individual records for each year 2005-2015) obtained from the [Integrated Public-Use Microdata Series](#) or IPUMS. The ACS began full-scale operation in 2005 covering only the household population; since 2006 it has covered the entire U.S. population. ACS data are released by the Census Bureau in September for the previous year.

The other survey data source used for residual estimates comes from March Supplements to the Current Population Survey. The CPS is a monthly survey currently of about 55,000 households conducted jointly by the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Census Bureau](#). Since 2001, the March Supplement sample has been expanded to about 80,000 households; before then, the expanded March Supplement sample included about 50,000. The CPS universe covers the civilian noninstitutional population. The CPS was redesigned in 1994 and, for the first time, included the information required for the residual estimates (i.e., country of birth, date of immigration and citizenship). Some limitations of the initial March Supplement of redesigned CPS, 1994 – especially the limited coding of country of birth – preclude its use in making these estimates, so the first CPS-based estimates are for March 1995. CPS data are released by the Census Bureau in September for the previous March.

The population estimates for the surveys are based on the latest available figures at the time the survey weights are estimated. This process produces the best estimates available at the time of the survey, but it does not guarantee that a time series produced across multiple surveys is consistent or accurate. Significant discontinuities can be introduced when the Census Bureau changes its population estimation methods, as it did several times early in the 2000s and in [2007 and 2008](#) ([Passel and Cohn, 2010](#)), or when the entire estimates series is [recalibrated to take into account the results of a new census](#).

The estimates shown for lawful immigrants and the underlying survey data are derived from ACS IPUMS 1% samples for 2005-2015 and March CPS public-use files for 1995, 1998, 2000 and 2003, which have been reweighted to take into account population estimates consistent with the 1990 census, the 2000 census, the 2010 census and the most recent population estimates. The population estimates used to reweight the ACS for 2005 through 2009 and the March 2003 CPS are the Census Bureau's [intercensal population estimates for the 2000s](#); these population estimates use demographic components of population change for 2000-2010 and are consistent with both the 2000 and 2010 censuses. Similarly, the population estimates used to reweight the CPS for March 1995, 1998 and 2000 are the intercensal population estimates for the 1990s (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013), which are consistent with the 1990 and 2000 censuses. The ACS data for 2010-2015 do not require reweighting as they are weighted to recent population estimates based on the 2010 census. The original 2005 ACS covered the household population, but not the population living in group quarters (about 8 million people). For Pew Research Center analyses, we augmented the 2005 ACS with group quarters records from the 2006 ACS but weighted to agree with the 2005 population estimates. The reweighting methodology for both the ACS and CPS follows, to the extent possible, the methods used by the Census Bureau in producing the sample weights that equal the population totals. See [Passel, Cohn and Gonzalez-Barrera, 2013](#) for more details on weighting and adjustments for survey undercoverage.

Because of the much, much larger sample size in the ACS (3.1 million sample cases in 2011 including more than 360,000 foreign-born cases) than the March CPS (200,000 sample cases in 2015 with about 26,000 foreign-born), the ACS-based estimates should be considered more accurate than the CPS-based estimates. In this publication, we have replaced the previously published CPS-based estimates for years from 2005 onward with the new ACS-based estimates.

Other methodological issues

Adjustment for undercount

Adjustments for omissions from the surveys (also referred to as adjustments for undercount) are introduced into the estimation process at several points. The initial comparisons with the survey

(based on the equation shown above) take the difference between the immigrants in the survey and the estimated lawful immigrant population. Since the comparison is people appearing in the survey, the estimated lawful immigrant population must be discounted slightly because some lawful immigrants are missed by the survey. This initial estimate represents unauthorized immigrants included in the survey. To estimate the total number of unauthorized immigrants in the country, it must be adjusted for those left out. Similarly, the estimated number of lawful immigrants appearing in the survey must also be adjusted for undercount to arrive at the total foreign-born population.

These various coverage adjustments are done separately for groups based on age, sex, country of birth and year of arrival. The patterns and levels of adjustments are based on Census Bureau studies of overall census coverage (see [U.S. Census Bureau, 2012](#) for links to evaluation studies of the 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2010 censuses; also [Passel, 2001](#)) that are adjusted up or down to reflect the results of a number of specialized studies that focus on immigrants. Census Bureau undercount estimates have generally been subdivided by race/Hispanic origin, age, and sex. So the adjustments to the Pew Research Center data use rates for countries of birth based on the predominant race of immigrants from the country – Hispanic and non-Hispanic races for white, black and Asian. Undercount rates for children do not differ by gender, but for younger adults (ages 18-29 and 30-49) the undercount rates for males tend to be higher, and for some groups much higher, than those for females. At older ages, the undercount rates are lower than for younger adults with no strong patterns of gender differences (and with some estimated overcounts).

The basic information on specific coverage patterns of immigrants is drawn principally from comparisons with Mexican data, U.S. mortality data and specialized surveys conducted at the time of the 2000 census ([Van Hook et al., 2014](#); Bean et al., 1998; [Capps et al., 2002](#); Marcelli and Ong, 2002). In these studies, unauthorized immigrants generally have significantly higher undercount rates than lawful immigrants who, in turn, tend to have higher undercounts than the U.S.-born population. More recent immigrants are more likely than longer-term residents to be missed. The most recent study ([Van Hook et al., 2014](#)) finds marked improvements in coverage of Mexicans in the ACS and CPS between the late 1990s and the 2000s. This and earlier work suggest very serious coverage problems with immigrants in the data collected before the 2000 census but fewer issues in the 2000 census and subsequent datasets. This whole pattern of assumptions leads to adjustments of 10% to 20% for the estimates of unauthorized immigrants in the 1995-2000 CPS, with slightly larger adjustments for unauthorized Mexicans in those years. (Note that this means even larger coverage adjustments, sometimes exceeding 30% for adult men younger than age 40.)

After 2000, the coverage adjustments build in steady improvements in overall coverage and improvements specifically for Mexican immigrants. The improvements are even greater than noted in the research comparing Mexico and U.S. sources because the reweighted ACS and CPS data imply even greater improvements in reducing undercounts, since [they incorporate results of the 2010 census](#). With all of these factors, coverage adjustments increase the estimate of the unauthorized immigrant population by 8% to 13% for 2000-2009 and by 5% to 7% for 2010-2014. For the overall immigrant population, coverage adjustments hovered slightly below 5% during the 1990s and trended downward to around 2% to 3% by 2014. Since the population estimates used in weighting the ACS and the CPS come from the same sources, the coverage adjustments tend to be similar.

Countries and regions of birth

Some modifications in the original CPS countries of birth were introduced to ensure that all foreign-born respondents could be assigned to a specific country or region of birth. See [Passel and Cohn \(2008\)](#) for a detailed treatment of how persons with unknown country of birth were assigned to specific countries.

Defining regions of the world and, in some cases, specific countries using the various data sources requires grouping areas into identifiable units and “drawing lines” on the world map. In the historical data used to construct the lawful foreign-born population, it is not possible to differentiate the individual republics within the former Soviet Union. In both the CPS and ACS microdata, not all the individual republics can be identified; some are identified in some years but not others. However, a code is assigned for USSR in all years, even when the USSR no longer existed. Thus, for analytic purposes in this report, the former republics are grouped together and considered to be part of Europe, except for former USSR Central Asian republics, which are considered to be part of Asia.

For this report, Asia includes Afghanistan, Pakistan and countries to their east, as well as Oceania. The Middle East includes Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, the Palestinian territories, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. Cyprus is considered part of Europe. Africa includes both Sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa (except for Egypt). The rest of the countries in North America and from a residual “other” category shown in ACS data are combined into an “other” category for the analysis in this report. The countries in Asia, Europe and the “other” category are included in the overall national estimates but are not shown separately in any tables or figures.

Naturalization rate

To estimate the naturalization rate of lawful immigrants, we divide the estimated number of foreign-born U.S. citizens in a given year by the estimated total number of immigrants who could have become U.S. citizens in that year, and are either U.S. citizens already or continue to be lawful permanent residents.

$$\text{Naturalization Rate (NR)} = \frac{\text{Foreign-Born U.S. Citizens (Cit)}}{\left[\text{Lawful Permanent Residents Eligible (Elig)} + \text{Foreign-Born U.S. Citizens (Cit)} \right]}$$

Eligibility to naturalize is assigned following two main requirements:

- Age: lawful permanent residents who are 18 years of age or older.
- Length of stay: lawful permanent residents who have been in the U.S. for five years or longer (estimated using the year of arrival variable in ACS and CPS) or lawful permanent residents who are married to a U.S. citizen and have been in the U.S. for three years or longer.

2015 National Survey of Latinos

Results for this study are based on telephone interviews conducted by SSRS, an independent research company, for the Pew Research Center among a nationally representative sample of 1,500 Latino respondents ages 18 and older. It was conducted on cellular and landline telephones from October 21 through November 30, 2015.

For the full sample, a total of 705 respondents were U.S. born (including Puerto Rico), and 795 were foreign born (excluding Puerto Rico). For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling is plus or minus 3.3 percentage points.

2015 National Survey of Latinos details

	Sample size	Margin of error 95% confidence level
Total Latinos	1,500	+/- 3.3% points
Foreign-born (excl. PR)	795	+/-4.4% points
Mexican	439	+/-5.8% points
Non-Mexican	356	+/-6.7% points
U.S. citizens	336	+/-6.8% points
Lawful permanent residents	240	+/-7.9% points

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For this survey, SSRS used a staff of bilingual English- and Spanish-speaking interviewers who, when contacting a household, were able to offer respondents the option of completing the survey in Spanish or English. A total of 679 respondents (45%) were surveyed in Spanish, and 821 respondents (55%) were interviewed in English. Any person ages 18 or older who said they were of Latino origin or descent was eligible to complete the survey.

To ensure the highest possible coverage of the eligible population, the study employed a dual-frame landline/cellular telephone design. The sample consisted of a landline sampling frame (yielding 449 completed interviews) and a cell phone sampling frame (1,051 interviews).¹¹ Both the landline and cell phone sampling frames used a stratified sampling design, oversampling areas with higher densities of Latino residents. Overall the study employed six strata. Landline and cellphone samples were provided by Marketing Systems Group (MSG).

¹¹ According to calculations by the National Center for Health Statistics National Health Interview Survey (NHIS), from January to June 2015, 59% of Hispanic adults were living in wireless-only households and 15% were in wireless-mostly households ([Blumberg and Luke, 2015](#)).

For the landline sampling frame, the sample was compared with InfoUSA and Experian landline household databases, and phone numbers associated with households that included persons with known Latino surnames were subdivided into a surname stratum. The remaining, unmatched and unlisted landline sample was used to generate a stratum with a high incidence of Latinos, based upon the share of Latinos in the sample telephone exchange.

It is important to note that the existence of a surname stratum does not mean the survey was exclusively a surname sample design. The sample is RDD (random-digit-dial), with the randomly selected telephone numbers divided by whether or not they were found to be associated with a Spanish surname. This was done to ease administration by allowing for more effective assignment of interviewers and labor hours, as well as increase the efficiency of the sample.

MSG's GENESYS sample generation system was used to generate cell phone sample, which was divided into High and Medium strata, based upon the share of Latinos in the sample telephone area code.

Samples for the low-incidence landline and low-incidence cell strata were drawn from previously interviewed respondents in SSRS's weekly dual-frame Excel omnibus survey. Respondents who indicated they were Latino on the omnibus survey were eligible to be re-contacted for the present survey. Altogether, a total of 293 previously-interviewed respondents were included in this sample.

Interviews by Strata

	Landline		Cellphone	
	Total Interviews	Estimated % among U.S. Latino population	Total Interviews	Estimated % among U.S. Latino population
Surname	224 (50%)	27%		
High	90 (20%)	30%	630 (60%)	33%
Medium			263 (25%)	33%
Low	135 (30%)	43%	158 (15%)	33%
Total	449		1,051	

Note: "Total Interviews" include the prescreened omnibus interviews that were not subject to geographic stratification. The estimated population breakdown is based on counts from the 2013 American Community Survey. The over- or under-sampling of strata was corrected in weighting.

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A multi-stage weighting procedure was used to ensure an accurate representation of the national Hispanic population.

- An adjustment was made for all persons found to possess both a landline and a cell phone, as they were more likely to be sampled than were respondents who possessed only one phone type. This adjustment also took into account the different sampling rate in the landline and cellphone samples.
- The sample was corrected for a potential bias associated with re-contacting previously interviewed respondents in low-incidence strata.
- The sample was corrected for within-household selection in landline interviews, which depended upon the number of Latino adults living in the household.
- The sample was corrected for the oversampling of telephone number exchanges known to have higher densities of Latinos and the corresponding undersampling of exchanges known to have lower densities of Latinos.
- Finally, the data were put through a post-stratification sample balancing routine. The post-stratification weighting utilized estimates of the U.S. adult Hispanic population based on the 2013 U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, on gender, age, education, Census region, heritage and years in the U.S.. Phone status of the U.S. adult Hispanic population (i.e., cell phone only, dual/landline only) is based on estimates from the January-June 2015 Centers for Disease Control's National Health Interview Survey and density of the Latino population is from the 2010 Census.
- Weights are then trimmed to avoid any particular case having too much influence on the overall estimates.

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Appendix B: Topline

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER
TOPLINE
October 21 – November 30, 2015
N=1,500**

Note: All numbers are percentages. The percentages greater than zero but less than 0.5% are replaced by an asterisk (*). Columns/rows may not total 100% due to rounding.

	Sample size	Margin of error at 95% confidence level
Total foreign-born Hispanic respondents	795	+/-4.4% points
<i>Mexican</i>	439	+/-5.8% points
<i>Non-Mexican</i>	356	+/-6.7% points
<i>U.S. citizens</i>	336	+/-6.8% points
<i>Legal permanent residents</i>	240	+/-7.9% points
<i>Not citizens and not residents</i>	214	+/-8.4% points

QUESTIONS 1-8, 10-17, 19-20, 26-30, 32, 35, 38, 41, 43-49, 51, 54 AND SELECTED DEMOGRAPHICS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

NO QUESTIONS 18, 21-25, 31, 33-34, 36-37, 39-40, 42, 50, 52-53, 55-57

ASK IF BORN IN ANOTHER COUNTRY (Q.4=3, D, R AND Q.5 ≠ 24)

9. Are you a citizen of the United States?

<u>Total</u>		<u>Mexican</u>	<u>Non-Mexican</u>
36	Yes	31	44
63	No	67	56
*	Don't know (VOL.)	*	0
1	Refused (VOL.)	1	*
<i>n=795</i>		<i>n=439</i>	<i>n=356</i>

TRENDS:

	<u>Oct</u> <u>2014</u>	<u>Oct</u> <u>2012</u>	<u>Dec</u> <u>2011</u>	<u>Sep</u> <u>2010</u>	<u>Sep</u> <u>2009</u>	<u>Jul</u> <u>2008</u>	<u>Nov</u> <u>2007</u>	<u>Jul</u> <u>2006</u>
Yes	38	37	40	41	40	34	36	36
No	62	63	57	57	58	66	62	63
Don't know (VOL.)	*	*	0	*	0	*	1	1
Refused (VOL.)	1	*	3	2	2	*	1	1

ASK IF NOT A CITIZEN OF U.S. (Q.9 = 2)

58. Earlier you said you are not a citizen of the U.S. Do you have a green card or have you been approved for one?

(INTERVIEWER NOTE: If necessary for clarification, state that you are inquiring as to whether they are a 'legal permanent resident', or have been approved for 'legal permanent residency').

<u>Total</u>		<u>Mexican</u>	<u>Non-Mexican</u>
47	Yes	43	58
51	No	56	41
1	Don't know (VOL.)	*	1
1	Refused (VOL.)	1	1
<i>n=454</i>		<i>n=265</i>	<i>n=189</i>

QUESTION 58 CONTINUED...**TRENDS:**

	Oct <u>2014</u>	Oct <u>2012</u>	Dec <u>2011</u>	Sep <u>2010</u>
Yes	43	49	60	52
No	55	49	37	42
Don't know (VOL.)	*	1	1	2
Refused (VOL.)	2	1	3	4

ASK IF NOT A CITIZEN OF U.S. (Q.9 = 2)

59. If you could, would you naturalize and become a U.S. citizen, or not?

BASED ON LEGAL PERMANENT RESIDENTS (Q.58 = 1)

<u>Total</u>		<u>Mexican</u>	<u>Non-Mexican</u>
96	Yes	98	94
3	No	2	5
1	Don't know (VOL.)	0	2
0	Refused (VOL.)	0	0
<i>n=240</i>		<i>n=132</i>	<i>n=108</i>

BASED ON NOT CITIZENS AND NOT LEGAL PERMANENT RESIDENTS (Q.58 = 2, 8, 9)

<u>Total</u>		<u>Mexican</u>	<u>Non-Mexican</u>
91	Yes	92	---
7	No	7	---
1	Don't know (VOL.)	1	---
1	Refused (VOL.)	1	---
<i>n=214</i>		<i>n=133</i>	<i>n=81</i>

TREND:

	Oct <u>2012</u>
Yes	93
No	5
Don't know (VOL.)	1
Refused (VOL.)	1

ASK IF NOT A CITIZEN OF U.S. AND WOULD NATURALIZE IF COULD (Q.59 = 1)

60. Have you done any research about the steps that are necessary to become a U.S. citizen?

BASED ON LEGAL PERMANENT RESIDENTS (Q.58 = 1)

<u>Total</u>		<u>Mexican</u>	<u>Non-Mexican</u>
72	Yes	67	80
28	No	33	20
0	Don't know (VOL.)	0	0
0	Refused (VOL.)	0	0
<i>n</i> =232		<i>n</i> =128	<i>n</i> =104

BASED ON NOT CITIZENS AND NOT LEGAL PERMANENT RESIDENTS (Q.58 = 2, 8, 9)

<u>Total</u>		<u>Mexican</u>	<u>Non-Mexican</u>
35	Yes	32	---
64	No	67	---
1	Don't know (VOL.)	1	---
0	Refused (VOL.)	0	---
<i>n</i> =195		<i>n</i> =121	<i>n</i> =74

NO QUESTION 61**ASK IF NOT A CITIZEN OF U.S. AND WOULD NATURALIZE IF COULD (Q.59 = 1)**

62. Do you know how many tests you have to take to become a U.S. citizen?

BASED ON LEGAL PERMANENT RESIDENTS (Q.58 = 1)

<u>Total</u>		<u>Mexican</u>	<u>Non-Mexican</u>
18	Yes, 2 tests	16	21
22	Yes, gave number different from 2	25	18
48	No	48	49
10	Don't know (VOL.)	9	12
1	Refused (VOL.)	2	0
<i>n</i> =232		<i>n</i> =128	<i>n</i> =104

BASED ON NOT CITIZENS AND NOT LEGAL PERMANENT RESIDENTS (Q.58 = 2, 8, 9)

<u>Total</u>		<u>Mexican</u>	<u>Non-Mexican</u>
5	Yes, 2 tests	5	---
10	Yes, gave number different from 2	6	---
79	No	83	---
6	Don't know (VOL.)	6	---
0	Refused (VOL.)	0	---
<i>n</i> =195		<i>n</i> =121	<i>n</i> =74

ASK IF LEGAL PERMANENT RESIDENT (Q.58 = 1)

63. What is the main reason why you have not naturalized and become a U.S. citizen?

<u>Total</u>		<u>Mexican</u>	<u>Non-Mexican</u>
31	Language and other personal barriers (NET)	35	23
25	Needs to learn English	27	21
3	Test difficulty/afraid of taking it	5	*
2	Have tried but have not been successful	3	1
15	Financial and administrative barriers (NET)	13	19
11	Cost to naturalize is too high/needs to save money	8	14
1	Process is too complicated	1	0
4	Do not know how/need info	4	4
25	Have not tried yet/no interest (NET)	31	16
15	Have not had time to do it	18	12
4	Have not made the effort/procrastination	5	1
3	No interest/would not even if could	4	3
3	Have never applied	4	0
8	Currently applying/will do it soon (NET)	8	8
4	Currently applying	4	4
4	Will apply soon (next year)	4	5
10	Not eligible yet/waiting for green card	3	22
8	Other reasons	6	12
1	Don't know (VOL.)	2	*
1	Refused (VOL.)	2	*
<i>n=240</i>		<i>n=132</i>	<i>n=108</i>

TREND:

	<u>Oct 2012</u>
Language and other personal barriers (NET)	26
Needs to learn English	17
Test difficulty/afraid of taking it	6
Have tried but have not been successful	3
Financial and administrative barriers (NET)	18
Cost to naturalize is too high/needs to save money	17
Process is too complicated	1
Do not know how/need info	1
Have not tried yet/no interest (NET)	26
Have not had time to do it	11
Have not made the effort/procrastination	4
No interest/would not even if could*	9
Have never applied	2
Currently applying/will do it soon (NET)	4
Currently applying	3
Will apply soon (next year)	1
Not eligible yet/waiting for green card	13
Other reasons	7
Don't know (VOL.)	3
Refused (VOL.)	3

ASK IF LEGAL PERMANENT RESIDENT (Q.58 = 1)

64. Do you intend to go back to your home country and live there later in life, or not?

<u>Total</u>		<u>Mexican</u>	<u>Non-Mexican</u>
23	Yes	22	25
69	No	70	66
8	Don't know (VOL.)	8	9
0	Refused (VOL.)	0	0
<i>n=240</i>		<i>n=132</i>	<i>n=108</i>