



# Helping Immigrants Become New Americans: Communities Discuss the Issues



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services





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September 2004

**Office of Citizenship**



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## Message from the Office of Citizenship

The United States of America is a nation of immigrants, people who have come from a variety of cultural and religious backgrounds, speaking many languages and bringing diverse talents to the United States. Despite these differences in background, all Americans are bound together by a set of enduring civic principles as relevant today as they were the day our Constitution was signed more than two centuries ago. Americans embrace the ideals of freedom and opportunity, equality before the law, respect and tolerance for differences, and the primacy of individual citizens and their rights in governing our nation. We strive to enact these ideals in our laws and demonstrate them in our everyday civic life. We welcome immigrants who want to make the U.S. their home and join us in honoring these principles.

Immigration to the United States is growing and the demographics are changing, presenting the nation with both challenges and opportunities. According to the U.S. Census, in 2000 there were 31 million foreign-born in the U.S., or 11 percent of the population.<sup>1</sup> Today, one in nine U.S. residents is foreign-born.<sup>2</sup> America's immigrants are choosing to settle in new areas of the country, including the Southeast, Midwest, and Rocky Mountain regions, outside the traditional gateways for newcomers, such as California and New York. Between 1990 and 2000, the foreign-born population grew by as much as 200 percent in some states.<sup>3</sup>

The growth in immigration, coupled with shifts in settlement, creates civic integration challenges in both new and traditional immigrant destinations. The newer immigrant destinations have less experience with immigrant residents and may have fewer resources to help immigrants integrate into their communities, such as English language instruction or citizenship preparation courses.

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<sup>1</sup>Although the number of immigrants is at the highest level in U.S. history, the share of the immigrant population still remains below the record level of 15 percent in 1900.

<sup>2</sup>Fix, Michael, and Jeffrey S. Passel (2003). *U.S. Immigration: Trends and Implications for Schools*. Presentation to the National Association for Bilingual Education. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute. [Accessed on July 23, 2004 [http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/410654\\_NABEPresentation.pdf](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/410654_NABEPresentation.pdf)].

<sup>3</sup>These states include North Carolina (274 percent), Georgia (253 percent), and Nevada (202 percent). See Capps, R., M. Fix, and J.S. Passel (2002). *The Dispersal of Immigrants in the 1990s*. Immigrant Families and Workers, Brief No. 2, Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute.

The Homeland Security Act of 2002 created the Office of Citizenship within U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), establishing a new federal leadership role in preparing immigrants for citizenship and fostering a deeper understanding of what it means to be an American. Recognizing that immigrant integration takes place at the local level, the Office of Citizenship turned to local communities to learn more about what they perceive to be their strengths and needs in that effort. To do this, the Office conducted focus groups in seven communities across the country in spring 2004. Participants in these groups were drawn from three key sectors: community- and faith-based organizations; state and local government; and adult education providers. The results of this research will inform our initiatives as we develop our strategic plan.

We thank the communities and participants who supported us in this important work. We look forward to learning from more communities as we move forward with our agenda.

Alfonso Aguilar  
Chief, Office of Citizenship



**U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services**



# Helping Immigrants Become New Americans: Communities Discuss the Issues

## (I) Introduction

The Office of Citizenship was created by the Homeland Security Act of 2002 with the mandate of promoting instruction and training on citizenship rights and responsibilities. The Office of Citizenship (OoC) will focus its resources on providing information to immigrants at two key points in their journey towards civic integration: when they first become Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs) and later when they are ready and eligible to begin the formal naturalization process. Although some of the activities under our mandate are new for the U.S. government, the OoC is well aware that many local communities across the country have considerable expertise in helping immigrants integrate into U.S. civic society. Community- and faith-based organizations, state and local governments, and adult education providers all play a role in welcoming new immigrants and helping them become part of the civic fabric of this nation. The OoC plans to build on this community expertise by aligning its initiatives with local and state efforts already underway.

Since its creation, OoC staff have traveled throughout the nation informally speaking with community leaders, educators, and immigrants to learn about what services are already being provided by communities



Portland, Oregon



Houston, Texas

to promote immigrant integration as well as the needs of communities to expand or enhance services. To learn more about current local practices and needs, the OoC invited seven communities representing a variety of small and large cities and geographic regions to participate in focus groups. Some participating communities have long histories of receiving and serving immigrants, while others are newly emerging immigrant centers. Each community is also a pilot site for Immigration Refugee Services of America's (IRSA) Citizenship AmeriCorps initiative.<sup>4</sup> With the exceptions of Lowell and Lincoln, the communities all have a local OoC Community Liaison Officer (CLO). These seven communities are:

- Arlington, Virginia
- Dearborn, Michigan
- Houston, Texas
- Lincoln, Nebraska
- Lowell, Massachusetts
- Oakland, California
- Portland, Oregon

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<sup>4</sup>This initiative will place AmeriCorps members in various communities across the U.S. to support community involvement with immigrants as they pursue and achieve American citizenship.

## (II) Conducting the Focus Group

Each focus group consisted of approximately 12 people representing organizations that work with newly arrived immigrants and/or those preparing to naturalize. In each group, three representatives came from state or local government, three from adult education, and six from community- and faith-based organizations. Each group had at least one representative of a community-based organization accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA).

The groups addressed two major topics: their communities' strengths and gaps in helping newly arrived LPRs integrate into daily civic life and their strengths and gaps in helping LPRs eligible for naturalization to prepare for citizenship. The groups were also asked to discuss other challenges related to assisting immigrants, how they coordinate efforts and form partnerships, and how they access information useful to their work. Each focus group lasted three hours, with the same professional facilitator moderating all groups. The meetings were recorded for transcription, and the transcripts were analyzed by OoC staff to compare results across groups and identify important issues and trends.

This report summarizes strengths and gaps identified during informal discussions with constituents throughout the nation. This report relies solely on the views expressed by the participants. No effort was made to verify the factual information provided by the participants, except where footnotes are included. The views of the focus groups were very consistent with views expressed by leaders in other community meetings during the past year, and the findings help define and inform a set of themes and issues shared by many U.S. communities in their efforts to promote the civic integration of new residents.



The Focus Groups offered the Office of Citizenship an opportunity to:

- ▶ Hear directly from a range of professionals working on immigrant integration
- ▶ Understand differences in experiences and views across various organizational sectors and geographic regions
- ▶ Collect local-level information to inform the design of OoC programs and initiatives
- ▶ Learn how limited resources are leveraged within communities to enhance services
- ▶ Demonstrate the OoC's commitment to working in partnership with service providers

### (III) Helping New Immigrants Join Their Communities: The Strengths, Gaps, and Challenges

#### Immigrant-Serving Organizations

There are a variety of organizations in cities and towns across the United States devoted to serving the needs of immigrants, from governmental organizations to English education programs, to community- and faith-based organizations. These organizations understand the communities they serve and try very hard, often with limited resources, to provide services to improve the lives of their clients.

For immigrants, access to the services these community organizations provide is often the difference between feeling like part of a community and feeling isolated. Focus group members in all seven communities reported that the presence of community-based organizations (CBOs) was a definite strength of their communities; however, consistent with what the OoC has been hearing across the nation, the availability of the services provided by CBOs varied greatly from community to community. For example, participants said that Oakland has many nonprofit organizations serving immigrants, while Portland has many services for refugees, but not as many for non-refugee immigrants. In some communities, immigrants receive services and assistance mainly from immigrant organizations based on their countries of origin or native language.

#### Availability of English Language Instruction

According to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, there are more than 1,400 sites throughout the United States that provide English instruction (English as a Second Language) to people for whom English is not their native language. This figure does not include the thousands more community- and faith-based organizations, volunteer agencies, colleges and universities, workplace education programs, and for-profit organizations that offer additional classes for immigrants. These programs—federally funded, other non-profits, and for-profits—offer a variety of educational services from one-on-one tutoring to comprehensive English programs consisting of multi-level classes with standardized curricula.

All seven communities reported that one of their strengths in helping new immigrants integrate within their communities was the availability of English language instruction. Participants noted that these classes also served a social integration purpose, bringing together immigrants from various backgrounds. The adult educators participating in the focus groups said they often used curricula emphasizing how immigrants could become more involved in the community, as well as teaching about the United States and its history and government. Furthermore, the adult educators agreed that they often serve as “front line” contacts for many immigrants and are important sources of referrals for them.

Although participants noted that their communities provided English language instruction in a variety of ways, most felt that the demand outweighed their capacity to supply this service. For example, one adult education provider in Portland serves about 17,000 learners a year—but has a waiting list of at least 9,000. Adult educators in Houston estimate that about one million people in their area need English language instruction; however, only about 35,000 can be served each year.

The growing gap between the demand for English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and the availability of such classes presents a challenge for many communities throughout the United States. Acquiring a functional command of the English language is the basis for many other integration opportunities. Lack of adequate funding is cited as the major reason communities are unable to meet the demand; however, often compounding the problem is a lack of facilities to hold classes, especially in rural areas, and a lack of available and





trained instructors to teach the classes. Many focus group participants also stated that when programs were confronted with low-literacy immigrants, those who have no literacy skills in their native language, and/or those with a physical or learning disability, the issues of finding trained teachers becomes even more problematic.

### Partnerships and Coalitions

No single federal, state, or local organization can serve the multifaceted needs of new immigrants. It takes a number of agencies at all levels working together to achieve a community and nation where immigrants are integrated and able to participate fully in all aspects of American society.

Participants in the focus groups voiced a need for strong partnerships to improve or expand services to immigrants. In a field with high demand and limited resources, they understand that cooperating with other organizations is essential to providing good services. They observed that funders seek, and in some cases require, collaboration among organizations, which provides an incentive to create such partnerships. Participants also agreed about what makes partnerships successful:

- Sharing a common goal.
- Sharing information and resources.
- Building on the complementary strengths of the different partners.

- Communicating and coordinating work to avoid duplicating services.
- Defining the roles and responsibilities of each partner.
- Cooperating instead of competing.

Some participants gave examples of local coalitions or networks that they considered instrumental in accomplishing their work. Lowell, for example, has the One Lowell Coalition, an alliance of organizations serving immigrants, as well as another alliance of about 45 non-profits that provides information, training, and networking opportunities. The Greater Lowell Interfaith Alliance also plays a significant role in the community because it counts among its members many faith-based groups that serve immigrants.

For more than ten years, Lincoln has had a New Americans Task Force, staffed by the city of Lincoln and the county human services department. The Task Force consists of 35 organizations, including CBOs, government agencies, law enforcement, and others dedicated to helping immigrants and refugees become part of their community. The Task Force meets monthly to discuss services and programs. It also makes referrals and implements special projects, such as the production of a video, “The New Nebraskans,” in cooperation with Nebraska Public Television.

Although immigrant-serving coalitions were strong in some communities, others stated that despite recognizing the value of such a coordinating body, there was no such mechanism in their communities. As several participants mentioned, forming and maintaining coalitions is not easy and requires time and ongoing effort. This competes with resources needed to serve the day-to-day needs of their clients. Most agreed, however, that it is time and energy well spent.

### Centralized Information

Even in this age of technology where millions of pieces of information are available with the push of a button, trying to sift through that information can be daunting. Participants uniformly emphasized the need for a source of centralized information for immigrants themselves as well as the organizations that serve them. Some cited a lack of information on services in the community, life in the United States, what LPR status

means and requires, and the benefits of U.S. citizenship, as well as about more practical, day-to-day issues. Others said that organizations serving immigrants needed more centralized information to help with referrals and other aspects of their work. They also observed that it was difficult to get updates on changes to immigration laws or to learn about innovations and best practices from other communities.

### Outreach to New Immigrants

Participants observed that, in the absence of a standardized approach to introducing new immigrants to their communities and life in the U.S., linking them to services and assistance can be “catch-as-catch can.” One participant suggested that when LPRs receive their Permanent Resident Cards, they should also be given an information packet outlining their eligibility for services, their rights and responsibilities, and the benefits of U.S. citizenship, among other topics.

Participants agreed that outreach to new immigrants is vital and that communities should not wait for immigrants themselves to find services and connections to the community. Communities varied in the extent to which they actively sought out new immigrants in order to provide the assistance and orientation services they needed. Some participants noted that their city governments provided considerable outreach, whereas others said that their city governments provided little to no outreach to immigrants at all. Most participants agreed that many immigrants were not being reached at all.

### Funding

Participants from every community cited funding issues as a constraint to providing services to immigrants. The challenges of finding sufficient funding to meet the vast needs of the immigrant population has, in many communities, been the catalyst for stronger and more efficient collaborative efforts. Some communities, in order to form more holistic networks, have gone beyond the traditional social service and education providers to include local government and the private sector as well. No community agency or organization that touches the lives of immigrants should be left out. As one community member said, “The only thing that should be left out is ego and turfism.”

## (IV) Naturalization: Helping Immigrants Become U.S. Citizens

### Assistance to Immigrants Seeking to Naturalize

In many communities across the United States, there are at least some services available to immigrants ready and eligible to naturalize. All focus group participants indicated that such services were available within their communities, including citizenship classes, counseling, pro bono legal advice, and/or legal clinics. In addition, some participants stated that immigrant organizations based on ethnicity, language, country of origin, or religious affiliation often help immigrants with the naturalization process. In Dearborn, some organizations assist immigrants with limited income to pay the fee for naturalization. In Portland, citizenship classes are available in a variety of locations, such as churches with large immigrant congregations and apartment complexes with immigrant residents. In Oakland, one organization offers one-on-one citizenship preparation to elderly immigrants in accessible settings, such as senior centers.

Some organizations rely heavily on volunteers for these services. In Houston, trained volunteers often staff citizenship preparation workshops. In Northern Virginia, many residents have had international experience with the military, Peace Corps, or Department of State and eagerly volunteer to help. Others noted that staff members often provide assistance on their own time, and without funding, to those seeking help with naturalization.

Although all communities had some services to help immigrants naturalize, the services available varied widely in type and availability. Participants noted that a standard curriculum for citizenship classes, especially one with the imprimatur of USCIS, would be especially useful. Others felt that there were not enough BIA-accredited organizations, counselors, or attorneys in their communities who could provide free or low-cost legal advice to those seeking to naturalize and even fewer who could provide assistance in immigrants’ native languages.



### Early Outreach

Participants noted that preparation for naturalization should not begin with the immigrant's submission of a formal application to USCIS. There is a wealth of information needed by the immigrant well before the application process begins, both about the naturalization process and citizenship itself.

Several participants cited efforts to reach immigrants early with information about the benefits of U.S. citizenship and about the process of naturalization. In Lowell, for example, a CBO that serves teens is joining forces with a local university to seek funding to promote citizenship among teens and help them educate their parents about citizenship.

Again, although several communities are seeking to find and serve immigrants in their communities who are eligible and ready to naturalize, there remain wide gaps between outreach services available and outreach services needed.

### Centralized Information

Just as a source of centralized information is needed by newly arrived immigrants and the organizations that serve them, those immigrants ready and eligible to naturalize need a centralized source of information about available resources and issues that concern them. Participants said that there was currently no centralized comprehensive source of information on naturalization issues, changes in laws or policies, or services for those seeking naturalization.

### Coalitions

Some participants said that coalitions that coordinate efforts for those immigrants ready and eligible to naturalize do not exist within their communities. They felt that, in the absence of such coordinating networks, organizations did not do a good job of sharing information about programs and services. This sometimes leads to duplication of services and/or lost opportunities for immigrants. Those communities that have developed a good working relationship among agencies felt that coordinated efforts for those immigrants preparing to naturalize were less prevalent than coordination for new permanent residents.

## (V) Challenges in Serving Immigrants

Participants noted several common challenges in working with immigrant communities. These do not necessarily represent gaps in services, but rather are some of the inherent difficulties of serving this population. These include:

### Economic Challenges

Immigrants are often faced with multiple challenges. Finding a source of income to secure housing and transportation, pay for childcare, and buy food and clothes for their families may require all eligible family members to work one or more jobs. Those immigrants who try to balance long hours with other family responsibilities often find no time to devote to attending classes or participating in civic integration activities. This is a real challenge to service providers and has required many to consider new ways and schedules for delivering services.

### Literacy Challenges

Many immigrants are not literate in their native language, making their transition to English and their integration into the community more difficult. English programs with such students often find it difficult to find teachers trained in techniques for teaching non-literate immigrants, adequate instructional resources, and the time and funds necessary to provide the intensive services necessary to help non-literate immigrants acquire English skills.



### Isolation

Participants expressed concern about immigrants who did not manage to find assistance or who were not part of a predominant immigrant group in their communities. Some noted that immigrants who were dispersed throughout the community could be harder to reach than those in well-established immigrant neighborhoods. They also noted that new immigrants could become isolated in these predominant communities, with little incentive to learn English.

### Diversity

In some communities, immigrants come from a fairly small number of countries, making it easier for the community to learn about them and provide culturally sensitive services. In other communities, the diversity of national and ethnic groups makes this difficult. One Portland participant noted that there were students speaking 67 native languages in his community's English language program.

## (VI) Accessing Immigration-Related Information

Participants draw on a variety of sources of information for their work, including:

- The District USCIS office and CLO.
- National Organizations.
- Professional Organizations.
- Coalitions and Networks.
- Personal Networks.
- Conferences and Workshops.
- Websites.
- Listservs.
- Publications, including community services directories and newsletters.

Although this list is extensive, participants said that they had difficulty obtaining useful information easily and making sense of it.

## (VII) What We Learned

### Facilitating the Integration of Newly-Arrived Immigrants

Focus group participants highlighted the need for a more standardized approach to introducing new immigrants to their communities and life in the U.S., including mechanisms to link them to services and information sources. When asked about gaps in assisting newly arrived immigrants integrate into daily life, focus group participants consistently said that they need a source of centralized information for immigrants, and that there are not enough services for newly arrived LPRs. Many participants also stated that there are long waiting lists for ESL classes in their communities. Some participants felt that access to services is limited for immigrants who are not supported by or part of their community's majority linguistic, ethnic, or religious groups.

Focus groups also highlighted several strengths shared by the communities—community- and faith-based organizations that provide services to immigrants, dedicated volunteers who commit their time to help new immigrants, and English language instruction opportunities.

### Issue for Action

To assist communities, the Office of Citizenship is developing a variety of outreach and educational materials for newly arrived immigrants. The first of these materials is a guide for LPRs entitled, "Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants." As the title implies, this guide is targeted toward immigrants who need quick access to practical information about daily life in the United States, as well as basic civics information that will introduce them to the U.S. system of government. It will also provide guidance on the rights and responsibilities associated with lawful permanent resident status.





### Preparing Those Who Are Ready and Eligible to Become Citizens

More citizenship preparation classes are needed, along with a good curriculum and teaching and learning tools. Focus group participants discussed the strengths of their communities in preparing immigrants to naturalize. They all indicated that there are citizenship preparation services available; however, many also added that these services are limited, provided informally, or conducted on staff's unpaid volunteer time. In addition, participants felt that greater outreach to immigrants on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship is needed.

#### Issue for Action

The development of a national citizenship curriculum with aligned assessments, learning tools, and a teacher-training framework is a high priority on the Office of Citizenship's agenda. Educational materials on the benefits, rights, and responsibilities of citizenship will be developed and made available to programs nationwide.

#### Access to Information

Immigrants and the organizations that serve them need a more structured method to access current information and learn about services available in their communities. Focus group participants identified a number of ways that they access information. However, many stated that there is a lack of centralized information—not only for immigrants, but also for the organizations that serve them. Practitioners, focusing on service delivery, often do not have the time to track down information and stay current on trends and best practices.

#### Issue for Action

To help facilitate community access to information on immigrant integration, the Office of Citizenship will update its website with a view towards building a clearinghouse of resources as well as an online library for researchers and academics. In addition, through its Community Liaison Officers, the Office will continue to seek innovative approaches to facilitate targeted, ongoing sharing of information in local communities.

#### Coordination and Partnership

Partnerships among all sectors are critical to communities' success in helping immigrants successfully integrate. This includes all levels of government, adult educators, community- and faith-based organizations and the private sector. It is clear from focus group comments that many organizations are engaged in meaningful partnerships to better serve immigrants within their communities. Many participants also stated, however, that there is a greater need for coordination among all provider organizations within communities. Those participants who had been part of a consortium of organizations in the past stated that such a group was an important way of keeping up-to-date with trends and resources—both local and national—and of building relationships that could potentially develop into partnerships.

#### Issue for Action

The Office of Citizenship will seek to establish working groups at the national level, and actively engage state and local governments to share information, identify barriers to serving immigrants, and leverage limited resources. Such collaboration already exists in some communities, and the Office will assist them in strengthening existing networks or developing new working groups where needed. The Office of Citizenship's Community Liaison Officers will play an important role in this effort.







### Funding

Limited resources are often a barrier to providing the variety of services an immigrant requires to fully integrate into the civic life of the community. Partnerships help, but even that takes resources. Focus group participants agreed that partnering was one way to make limited dollars go farther and suggested that partnerships should be expanded to include more of the private sector. However, they also stated that partnering requires staff time, which requires funding in order not to diminish the ability to provide basic services.

### Issue for Action

To assist programs in their struggle to both obtain and leverage funds to achieve their important mission, the Office of Citizenship will continue to raise awareness within both public and private sectors of the benefits of civic integration for immigrants and the shared responsibilities among all sectors of society in addressing these funding issues.

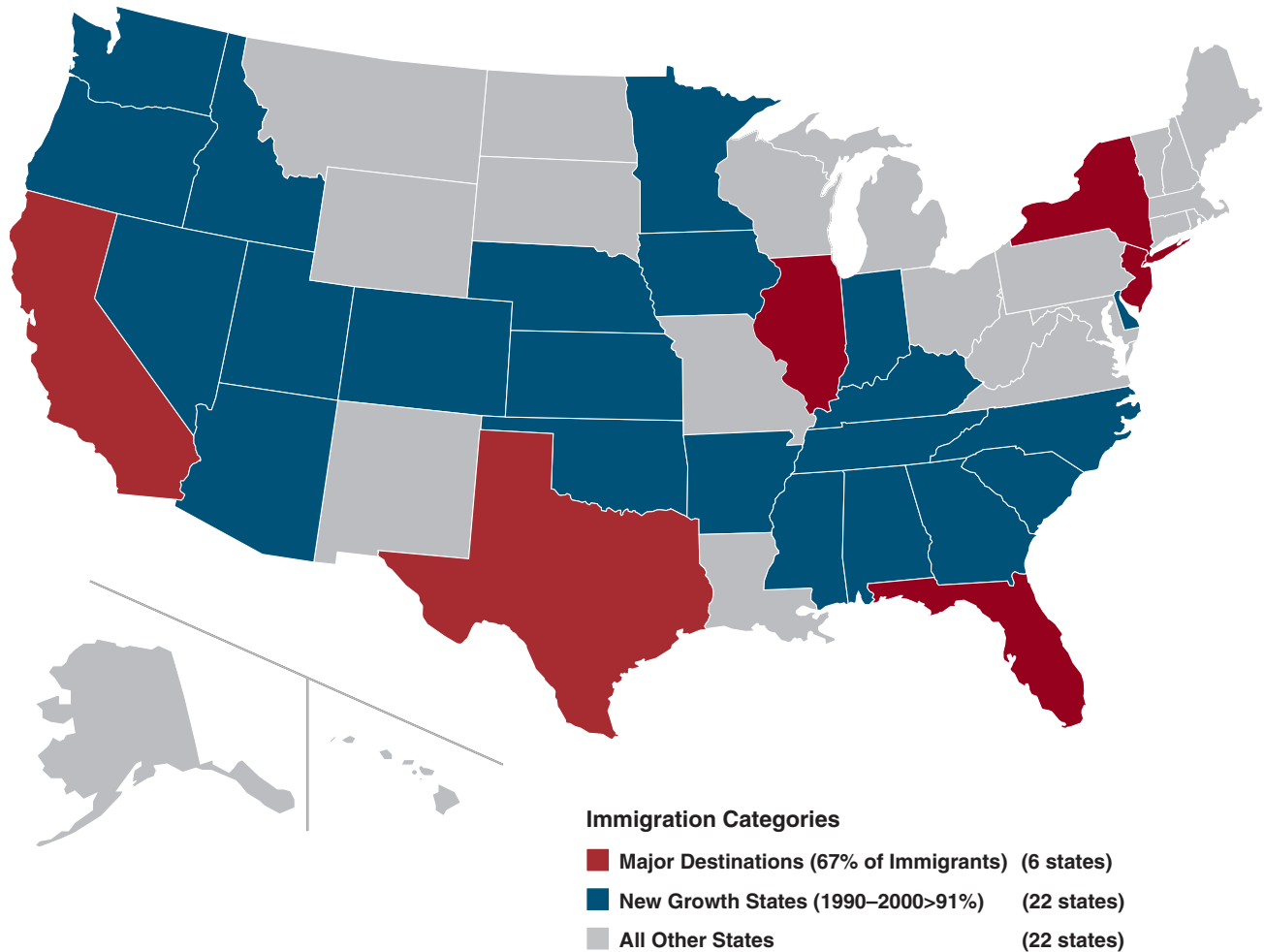
## (VIII) Conclusion

The United States has been and continues to be a nation of immigrants, with newcomers to America both enriching the tapestry of our nation and presenting new challenges in the 21st century. The Office of Citizenship is committed to encouraging the civic integration of immigrants and their eventual naturalization. The community discussions described here were intended to help the Office of Citizenship understand how communities presently assist new immigrants and to identify gaps in services that local providers consider urgent. Although some communities have long been accustomed to welcoming immigrants, others are just beginning to have sizable immigrant communities and are learning how to assist them. The seven communities that participated in the focus groups are strongly committed to improving their assistance to immigrants, and although they bring many strengths to this task, they consistently cited insufficient resources to meet the demand as one of their greatest challenges.

The information provided by these communities is invaluable to the Office of Citizenship as it moves ahead in its work. The Office of Citizenship carefully analyzed all comments and recommendations by participants and is very appreciative of the time and enthusiasm participants devoted to this effort. Their advice and suggestions will be used to inform the future priorities of the Office of Citizenship in order to make the lives of all immigrants and the communities in which they reside much richer through civic integration.



# Appendix A: New Immigrant Growth Centers



Source: Capps, Randolph, Fix, Michael E., and Jeffrey S. Passel (2002). *The Dispersal of Immigrants in the 1990s*. Immigrant Families and Workers, Brief No. 2. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute.



# Appendix B: A Snapshot of the U.S. Immigrant and Foreign-Born Populations

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## Size and Growth

Total U.S. population, 2000	281,421,906
Foreign-born population, <sup>1</sup> 2000	31,107,889
Percent who were foreign-born, 2000	11
Percent of foreign-born population who arrived 1990–2000	43

## Countries and Regions of Origin

Percent of foreign-born population in 2000 from top five countries of origin	
Mexico	30
China	5
Philippines	4
India	3
Vietnam	3

## Percent of foreign-born in 2000, by regions of origin

Latin America <sup>2</sup>	52
Asia	26
Europe	16
Africa	3
North America	3

## English Proficiency

Percent of the total U.S. population ages 5 or older with limited English proficiency: <sup>3</sup>	8
Percent of foreign-born population ages 5 or older with limited English proficiency: <sup>3</sup>	51

## Poverty

Percent of residents living at or below the federal poverty level in 2000: <sup>4</sup>	
Foreign-born	18
Native-born	12
Naturalized citizens	11
Noncitizens	23

## A Snapshot of the U.S. Immigrant and Foreign-Born Populations—continued

### Naturalized Citizens

Percent naturalized, by period of entry<sup>5</sup>

Before 1970	82
1970–1979	66
1980–1989	45
1990–2000	13

Legal Permanent Resident (LPR) population in 2002<sup>6</sup> 11.4 million

Population eligible to naturalize in 2002<sup>7</sup> 7.8 million

Number of persons naturalized in fiscal year 2002<sup>8</sup> 573,708

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Unless otherwise noted, the source for these estimates is: U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, U.S. Census Bureau Census 2000.

<sup>1</sup>As defined by U.S. immigration law, immigrants are persons lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States. The number of *foreign-born* reflected in the Census 2000 data is the population residing in the U.S. born in a different country to parents who were not U.S. citizens. The Census 2000 foreign-born population includes non-immigrants, such as temporary workers, foreign students, and undocumented immigrants, as well as naturalized citizens.

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Census 2000 includes Mexico in Latin America rather than North America.

<sup>3</sup>As defined by the U.S. Census, persons with limited English proficiency are those who speak a language other than English and speak English “well,” “not well,” or “not at all.”

<sup>4</sup>According to Census 2000, the federal poverty level in 2000 was an annual income of \$17,050 for a family of four.

<sup>5</sup>To be eligible for citizenship, a foreign-born resident must be a legal permanent resident and have resided in the U.S. for at least five years or at least three years if married to a U.S. citizen. For data tables, see Malone, Nolan, Baluja, Kaari F., Costanzo, Joseph M., and Cynthia J. Davis (2003). *The Foreign-born Population: 2000*. Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau.

<sup>6</sup>For an explanation of the data on LPRs and the population eligible to naturalize, see Rytina, Nancy (2004). *Estimates of the Legal Permanent Resident Population and Proportion Eligible to Naturalize in 2002*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics.

<sup>7</sup>Rytina (2004).

<sup>8</sup>U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics: 2000*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

# Appendix C:

## Focus Group Participant List

Location	Name of Organization
Arlington, VA	Arlington County Department of Human Services Boat People S.O.S. Catholic Charities Immigration Legal Services Center for Multicultural Human Services Central American Resource Center (CARECEN) City of Alexandria Department of Human Services Fairfax County Public Schools Adult & Community Education Hispanic Committee of Virginia Newcomer Community Service Center Northern Virginia Community College Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP)–Adult ESL Program Virginia Office of Newcomer Services, Department of Social Services
Dearborn, MI	Arab American and Chaldean Council Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services Dearborn Schools Adult Education Michigan Family Independence Agency Henry Ford Community College–English Language Institute International Institute of Metropolitan Detroit Islamic Center Of America Women’s Society Italian American Cultural Center Latin Americans for Social and Economic Development, Inc. Michigan Commission on Spanish Speaking Affairs Michigan State Office of Adult Education National Association of Yemeni Americans Office of the Mayor of Dearborn
Houston, TX	Jewish Community Center Catholic Charities, Cabrina Center for Immigrant Legal Assistance Harris County Clerk’s Office, Office of Beverly Kaufman, County Clerk Houston Community College–Community and Adult Education Mayor’s Office on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (MOIRA) Mexican Institute of Greater Houston National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO)–Houston North Harris County Community College–Adult Education/EL Civics Cy-Fair College–Project GREAT Center Boat People S.O.S., Houston Branch Office Texas Learns–Harris County Department of Education The Alliance for Multicultural Community Services YMCA International Services

Lincoln, NE	Nebraska Appleseed Center for Law and Public Interest Asian Community and Cultural Center Catholic Social Services (Catholic Charities) Lancaster County, City of Lincoln Health and Human Services State of Nebraska Health and Human Services, Economic and Family Support System Lincoln Action Program Lincoln Literacy Center Lincoln Public Schools–Federal Programs, Migrant Education Nebraska Equal Opportunities Commission Southeast Community College–ESL Program State of Nebraska Mexican American Commission
Lowell, MA	African Assistance Center of Greater Lowell Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association Eliot Presbyterian Church Enterprise Community, City of Lowell International Institute of Lowell Lao Family Mutual Association Lowell Adult Education Center Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers Massachusetts Office for Refugees and Immigrants Middlesex Community College Refugee and Immigrant Health Program, Massachusetts Department of Public Health Saint Julie Asian Center
Oakland, CA	Asians for Job Opportunities in the Bay Area (AJOB) Berkeley Adult School, Berkeley Unified School District Catholic Charities of the East Bay Childcare and Refugees Program Branch, State of California Department of Social Services East Bay Refugee Forum Family Bridges Jewish Family and Children Services of the East Bay Neighborhood Centers Adult School, Oakland Unified School District Spanish Speaking Citizens Foundation Supervisor Alice Lai-Bitker’s Office, Alameda County Board of Supervisors
Portland, OR	Asian Health and Service Center City of Eugene, Human Rights Program, City Manager's Office Clackamas Community College–ESL Program Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization Lutheran Community Services N.W. Mt. Hood Community College–Adult Basic Skills Department Office of the Governor Oregon Department of Human Resources, Refugee Program Unit Portland Community College–Adult Basic Skills Program Russian Oregon Social Services Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees





