

Hopes and Dreams:

A Statistical Profile of The Non-Citizen Population
of Metropolitan Chicago

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The Latino Institute is a not-for-profit organization that conducts research and advocacy on issues affecting the metropolitan Chicago Latino community, and provides training and management assistance to individuals and groups serving this community.

The Latino Institute is a United Way member agency.

Executive Summary

Nearly half a million "non-citizen" immigrants (immigrants who are not naturalized U.S. citizens) live in the metro Chicago area. This publication provides a detailed socioeconomic profile of the Chicago-area's non-citizens that is intended to increase the public's awareness of the characteristics of this population.

The following are general findings that are drawn from the data in this study.

- *Slightly more than half of metro Chicago immigrants are non-citizens.* There are approximately 878,397 immigrants in the metro Chicago area. Approximately 491,211, or 55.9%, are non-citizens.
- *The number of non-citizens who naturalize increases significantly with time.* While 66.5% of 1975-1984 immigrants are not citizens, only 20.0% of pre-1965 immigrants have not naturalized.
- *Most non-citizens are recent immigrants.* Some 57.5% of the non-citizen population arrived in the U.S. in the 1980s.
- *Overall, non-citizens are more likely to be men.* While the percent of particular groups that are comprised of more males varies substantially (58.9% of Mexican non-citizens are men compared to 43.5% of Filipino non-citizens), overall some 53.6% of non-citizens in metro Chicago are men.
- *Overall, non-citizens in metro Chicago are likely to be between the ages of 20 and 39 years of age.* More than half of all non-citizens (50.6%) fall into this age category.
- *The majority of non-citizens -- 62.8% speak English well, in contrast to the stereotype regarding immigrants' supposed reluctance to learn English.*
- *Non-citizens have generally high rates of labor force participation.* Overall, 72.5% of the non-citizen population aged 16 years or older was employed or seeking employment in 1990.
- *Poverty rates are highest for non-citizens from refugee-sending nations.* By far the highest poverty rates of the groups in this study are found among non-citizens from the former U.S.S.R. (40.2%) and Vietnam (38.1%).
- *More than half (51.2%) of non-citizens hold jobs as laborer/operators or in service occupations.* Examples of jobs within these categories include private household occupations, protective service occupations, machine operators, fabricators, motor vehicle operators, assemblers, and freight stock and material handlers.
- *About one-third (33.6%) of non-citizens are employed in manufacturing.* More than 97,000 non-citizens are part of the Chicago-area manufacturing labor force.

This study provides insight into non-citizens' salient socioeconomic characteristics. This study does not address the characteristics of all immigrants in metro Chicago, who number nearly 900,000. Upcoming Latino Institute publications will address the nature and contributions of all immigrants in the Chicago area and in Illinois.

Introduction

Immigrants to the United States must undergo a process of naturalization to change their status from that of "legal permanent resident" to U.S. citizen. The act of becoming a U.S. citizen is voluntary. This publication analyzes the characteristics of those immigrants who have not become citizens. These persons are referred to in this publication as "non-citizen" immigrants.

Relatively little is known about the characteristics of non-citizens in the Chicago area. These characteristics -- such as the non-citizens' educational levels, poverty levels, labor force participation, etc. -- can have a significant impact on the types of programs that community organizations develop to assist non-citizens. Educational programs directed at non-citizens from a particular country of origin, for example, could benefit from statistics addressing the educational attainment and English language ability of that population. Data on the distribution of non-citizens by census tracts could help community organizations to target areas of high need.

This publication provides such baseline data for 12 groups of non-citizens in metro Chicago. The source of the data is the Public Use Microdata Samples from the 1990 census, which provide detailed information derived from a sample of approximately 5% of all households.

The Chicago metropolitan area is home to approximately 878,397 immigrants from around the world¹. Of these immigrants, 387,186 (44.1%) have become naturalized U.S. citizens while 491,211 (55.9%) are non-citizen immigrants. The Chicago area received the third largest (37,435) number of immigrants among metropolitan areas in the U.S. in 1992².

In the city of Chicago immigrants comprised 16.9% percent of the population in 1990. Large numbers of immigrants also reside in cities and towns outside Chicago, such as Cicero (16,119), Elgin (9,909), and Aurora (11,944)³.

While immigrants enter the U.S. for many reasons, such as to be reunited with family, to seek employment or to find political asylum, most persons immigrate under the family reunification provisions of immigration law. Approximately 77.0% of non-legalization immigrants in the years 1985-1992 were either "family sponsored immigrants" or immediate relatives of U.S. citizens.

The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 created two legalization programs that allowed certain undocumented persons residing in the U.S. to become legal permanent residents and to eventually apply for U.S. citizenship. Nationally about 3 million individuals applied for immigration amnesty under IRCA, including approximately 170,000 in Illinois. The great majority of the applicants received legal permanent status, adding to the numbers of immigrants in the years 1989-1992.

Adult immigrants are eligible to apply for citizenship with the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) upon completing certain requirements. In general, the basic requirements include:

- lawful permanent residency status,
- residence in the U.S. for at least five years,
- a good moral character,
- conversational ability in English, and
- ability to pass a test of U.S. government and history⁴.

Increasing numbers of non-citizen immigrants are reported to be applying for citizenship in the Chicago area⁵. This is due in part to the fact that the IRCA amnesty immigrants are becoming eligible to apply to naturalize. Also, numerous community organizations and social service agencies, many of whom were active in assisting undocumented immigrants apply for amnesty, are beginning naturalization programs. Educational agencies are offering classes designed to prepare citizenship applicants for the English/civics/history test.

Metropolitan Chicago's Non-Citizens

Size of the Non-Citizen Population

The 491,211 non-citizens living in the Chicago metropolitan area in 1990 are widely distributed, as seen in Table 1. Significant populations of non-citizens are found in suburbs throughout the metropolitan area.

The heterogenous nature of the non-citizen population may be seen in Table 2, which shows that the three largest non-citizen groups -- Mexican, Polish and Filipino -- represent three different world regions. (Mexicans alone comprise 41.7% of metro Chicago non-citizens.) Table 2 also shows the percent of immigrants from the various groups who have naturalized⁶.

Table 1
Non-Citizens as a % of Population
Top 25 Metropolitan Chicago Areas

Area	Total Population	Non-Citizens	% Non-Citizen
Stone Park village	4,383	973	22.2%
Summit village	9,971	1,748	17.5%
Hodgkins village	1,944	339	17.4%
West Chicago city	14,796	2,535	17.1%
Highwood city	5,331	845	15.9%
Melrose Park village	20,859	3,247	15.6%
Bannockburn village	1,388	214	15.4%
Cicero town	67,436	10,285	15.3%
Rosemont village	3,995	603	15.1%
Franklin Park village	18,485	2,516	13.6%
Prospect Heights city	15,239	2,057	13.5%
Bensenville village	17,767	2,108	11.9%
Skokie village	59,432	6,953	11.7%
Schiller Park village	11,189	1,216	10.9%
Chicago city	2,783,726	291,743	10.5%
Northlake city	12,505	1,279	10.2%
Waukegan city	69,392	6,868	9.9%
Addison village	32,058	3,127	9.8%
Park City city	4,677	455	9.7%
Blue Island city	21,203	2,048	9.7%
Rolling Meadows city	22,591	2,155	9.5%
Harwood Heights village	7,680	722	9.4%
Elgin city	77,010	7,049	9.2%
Glendale Heights village	27,973	2,468	8.8%
Mount Prospect village	53,170	4,608	8.7%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing: 1990 STF3A
LATINO INSTITUTE RESEARCH, 1994

Naturalization Rates Over Time

Table 3 shows that the percent of immigrants who naturalize increases with time. This is true for each of the non-citizen groups. About two-thirds of immigrants who arrived in the period 1975-1984 were non-citizens at the time of the 1990 census. Less than half of 1965-

1974 immigrants were non-citizens, and only about one in five persons who had immigrated before 1965 was not a U.S. citizen. (Table 3 does not include immigrants who arrived after 1984 because the majority of these immigrants would not have completed five years of legal residence at the time of the 1990 census and would have been ineligible to have naturalized.)

Table 2
Selected Non-Citizen Populations in Metropolitan Chicago
1990

Country	Immigrants	Non-Citizens	% Non-Citizens
TOTAL			
Mexico	878,397	491,211	55.9%
Poland	269,643	204,783	75.9%
Philippines	81,417	45,531	55.9%
Spanish-Speaking South America	45,999	18,117	39.4%
Korea	23,334	14,175	60.7%
India	26,919	14,907	55.4%
Guatemala	35,601	22,575	63.4%
China	10,836	8,079	74.6%
Spanish-Speaking Central America (except Guatemala)	14,913	8,052	54.0%
U.S.S.R.	10,566	7,314	69.2%
Cuba	17,307	6,180	35.7%
Vietnam	12,267	5,142	41.9%
	6,879	4,101	59.6%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing: 1990 Public Use Microdata Samples
LATINO INSTITUTE RESEARCH, 1994

Table 3
Non-Citizenship by Year of Immigration
Metropolitan Chicago

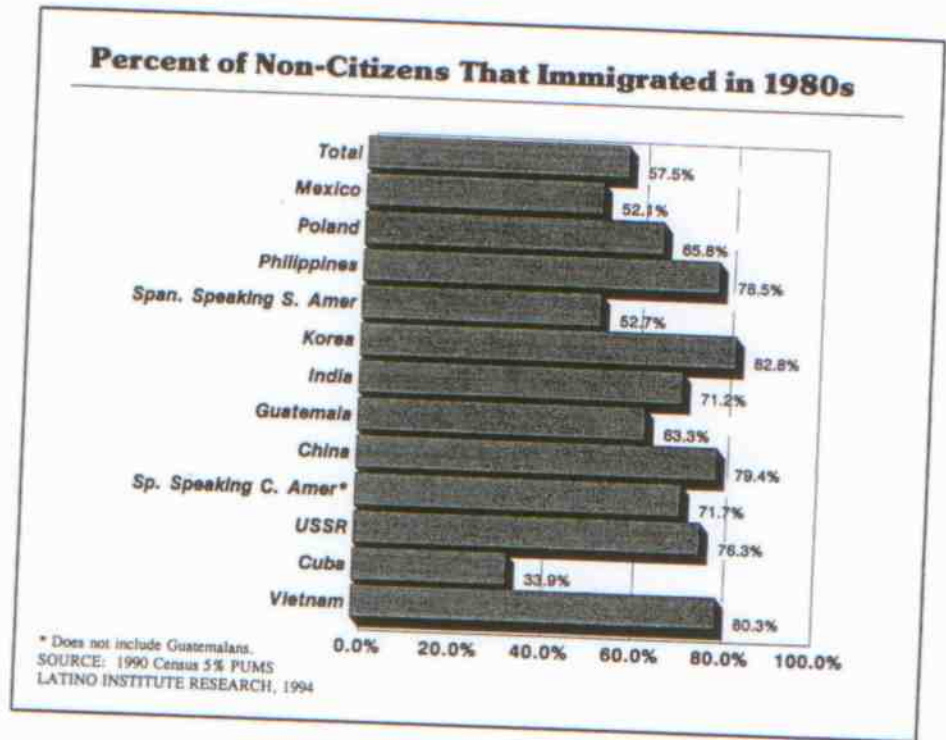
Group	Total # of Non-Citizens	% Non-Citizen of 1975-1984 Immigrants	% Non-Citizen of 1965-1974 Immigrants	% Non-Citizen of Pre-1965 Immigrants
Total				
Mexico	491,211	66.5%	45.6%	20.0%
Poland	204,783	77.5%	68.5%	48.4%
Philippines	45,531	71.1%	43.2%	19.0%
Spanish-Speaking South America	18,117	38.9%	11.4%	12.5%
Korea	14,175	72.0%	46.5%	26.2%
India	14,907	53.7%	10.9%	18.8%
Guatemala	22,575	61.2%	31.8%	30.5%
China	8,079	77.3%	53.2%	48.9%
Spanish-Speaking Central America (except Guatemala)	8,052	58.5%	24.5%	6.5%
U.S.S.R.	7,314	74.7%	49.3%	25.8%
Cuba	6,180	20.0%	24.8%	13.6%
Vietnam	5,142	70.1%	44.9%	11.8%
	4,101	46.0%	13.6%	0.0%

For example, 66.5% of all immigrants who arrived in years 1975-1984 have not naturalized, while 45.6% of all immigrants who arrived in years 1965-1974 have not naturalized.
Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing: 1990 Public Use Microdata Samples
LATINO INSTITUTE RESEARCH, 1994

Figure 1

Period of Immigration of the Non-Citizens

Consistent with the fact that longer-term immigrants are more likely than recent immigrants to have naturalized, Figure 1 shows that most non-citizens in metro Chicago are recent arrivals. Many immigrants who entered the U.S. in the 1980s would have been ineligible to have naturalized by the time of the 1990 census.



Gender Distribution

A slight majority (53.6%) of non-citizens are males, as seen in Table 4. In contrast, less than half (48.6%) of the total Illinois population consisted of males in 1990⁷. Mexican and Vietnamese non-citizens are the groups most likely to be comprised of males. Filipino and Cuban non-citizens are the groups most likely to be comprised of females.

Country	Female	Male
TOTAL	46.4%	53.6%
Mexico	41.1%	58.9%
Poland	52.0%	48.0%
Philippines	56.5%	43.5%
Spanish-Speaking South America	49.2%	50.8%
Korea	54.4%	45.6%
India	48.9%	51.1%
Guatemala	48.5%	51.5%
China	50.0%	50.0%
Spanish-Speaking Central America (except Guatemala)	49.1%	50.9%
U.S.S.R.	52.0%	48.0%
Cuba	54.8%	45.2%
Vietnam	44.6%	55.4%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing: 1990 Public Use Microdata Samples
LATINO INSTITUTE RESEARCH, 1994

Age Distributions of the Non-Citizens

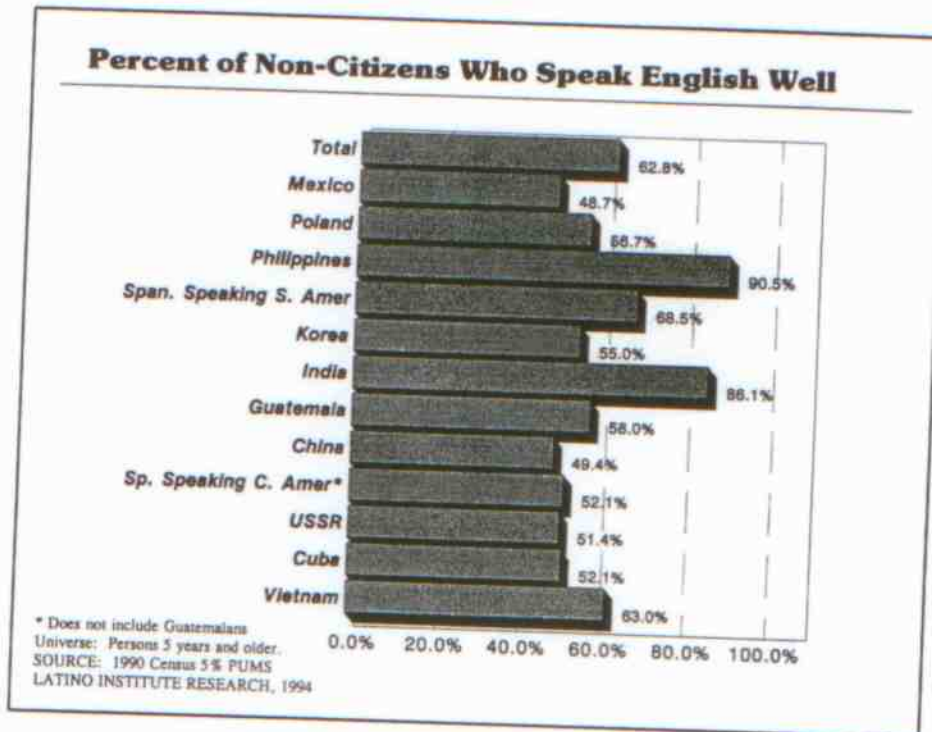
Overall, a slight majority (50.6%) of all non-citizens are between the ages of 20 and 39, as seen in Table 5. The non-citizens most likely to be 60 years and over are from the former USSR (30.5%) and Cuba (31.0%). Vietnamese non-citizens were the groups most likely to be less than 20 years of age (36.6%).

Table 5
Non-Citizens by Age Categories
(**Bold Typeface Denotes Age Category With Most Persons**)
Metropolitan Chicago, 1990

Country	Total Non-Citizens	% 0-19 years	% 20-29 years	% 30-39 years	% 40-49 years	% 50-59 years	% 60 years and over
Total	491,211	16.6%	25.4%	25.2%	15.1%	8.5%	9.2%
Mexico	204,783	19.7%	33.4%	24.6%	12.9%	5.4%	4.2%
Poland	45,531	10.3%	15.0%	28.9%	17.3%	14.2%	14.3%
Philippines	18,117	13.8%	19.6%	28.2%	16.4%	6.7%	15.3%
Spanish-Speaking South America	14,175	16.0%	23.5%	26.5%	16.2%	10.4%	7.3%
Korea	14,907	20.0%	18.6%	22.5%	14.7%	8.9%	15.2%
India	22,575	18.3%	19.0%	28.1%	19.5%	7.7%	7.4%
Guatemala	8,079	19.9%	29.3%	22.5%	12.7%	8.9%	6.8%
China	8,052	12.6%	17.5%	22.5%	15.5%	9.9%	22.0%
Spanish-Speaking Central America (except Guatemala)	7,314	21.9%	23.1%	31.6%	14.4%	4.9%	4.2%
U.S.S.R.	6,180	19.3%	10.3%	16.6%	13.8%	9.5%	30.5%
Cuba	5,142	4.0%	18.6%	13.0%	15.6%	17.9%	31.0%
Vietnam	4,101	36.6%	24.4%	17.6%	12.5%	3.1%	5.8%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing: 1990 Public Use Microdata Samples
LATINO INSTITUTE RESEARCH, 1994

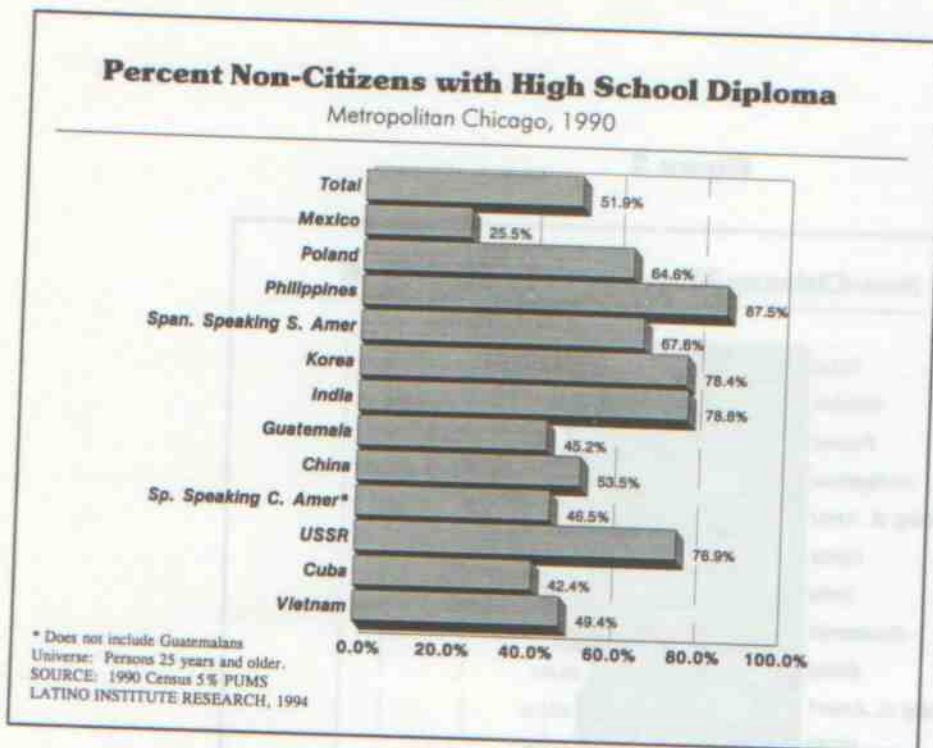
Figure 2



English Ability of the Non-Citizens

More than 60% of metro Chicago's non-citizen population speaks English well, as seen in Figure 2. This statistic contrasts with popular stereotypes suggesting few immigrants are learning English. Approximately nine of ten Filipino and Indian non-citizens speak English well. Of the remaining non-citizen groups in Figure 2, approximately half or more of the number of each group speaks English well.

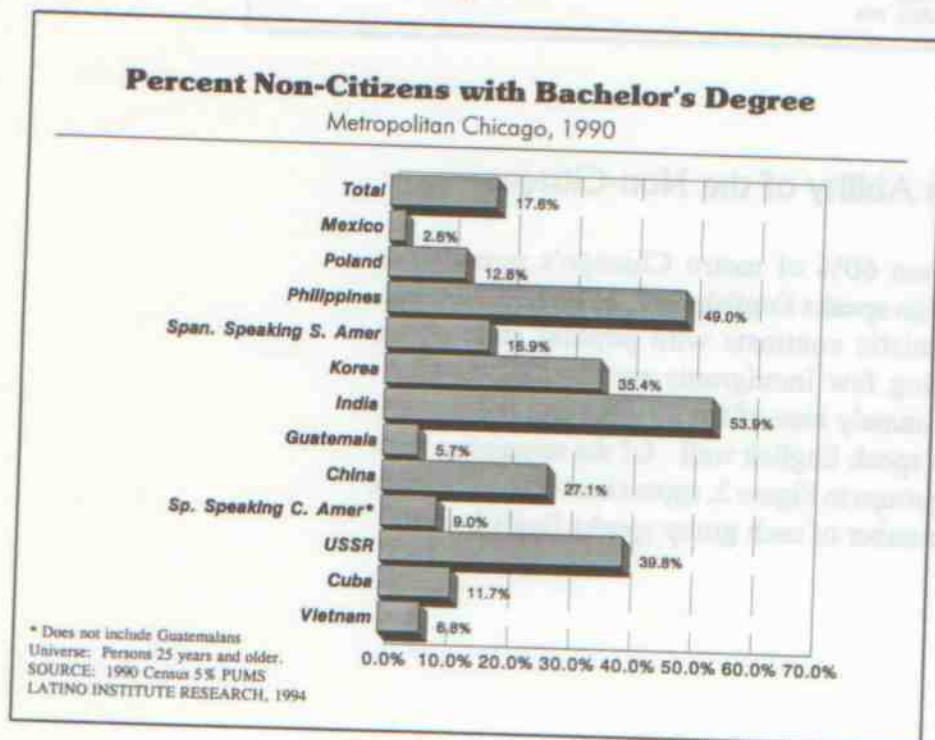
Figure 3



Non-Citizens with High School Diplomas, College Degrees

In terms of educational attainment, the non-citizen populations include groups with relatively low levels of formal education and groups with educational levels that exceed those of the general population. Only about 26% of Mexican non-citizens have a high school education, as seen in Figure 3, while nearly 88% of Filipino non-citizens possess a high school diploma. By way of comparison, 76.2% of all Illinois residents are high school graduates⁸. (These statistics are for persons aged 25 years or more.)

Figure 4



Almost 54% of Indian non-citizens have at least a bachelor's degree, making them the non-citizen group with the highest level of education, as seen in Figure 4. Less than 10% of non-citizens from Vietnam, Mexico and Spanish-speaking Central American countries (including Guatemala) have the equivalent of a bachelor's degree. About 21.0% of the total Illinois population had at least a bachelor's degree in 1990⁹.

