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Introduction

This report seeks to illuminate the status of immigrants in one of the great centers for international migration to the United States: the metropolitan Chicago area. This area's legacy as a home to immigrants stretches far back in time. Already in 1910 metro Chicago was home to more than 900,000 immigrants, while some 878,000 immigrants reside here today.

Contrary to popular misconceptions, immigrants in metro Chicago show clear trends toward economic and social integration with the passage of time. Immigrants' poverty rates and use of welfare decline the longer that they reside here, while their English ability, incomes and occupational status improve.

This publication uses data from the U.S. Census Bureau and from the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service to address these and other fundamental issues regarding immigrants. These questions address the historical context for immigration and the current socioeconomic status of immigrants.

The main body of this report focuses on aggregate statistics for all immigrants, without providing data for specific groups. An appendix provides data on immigrants according to their country of origin.

This publication compares all immigrants living in Chicago with all immigrants living in the suburbs, and it compares immigrants who have naturalized with immigrants who have not naturalized. The city/suburban comparison highlights the fact that 43.7 percent of immigrants in Illinois reside in the metro Chicago suburbs, and that their characteristics are different from those of immigrants in the city of Chicago. A map accompanying this report delineates the residential patterns of the foreign born in metro Chicago and in Chicago community areas.

Immigrants in this study are broadly classified as naturalized or non-citizen immigrants. Naturalized immigrants have voluntarily chosen to become U.S. citizens. Non-citizen immigrants include legal immigrants who have not naturalized and a small, undetermined number of undocumented immigrants. (Persons who enter the U.S. as refugees adjust to non-citizen immigrant status after a year; persons in refugee status at the time of the 1990 census are counted as non-citizen immigrants in this study.)

As of spring 1995 U.S. Congress is currently considering legislation to deny non-citizen immigrants access to federal programs including Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, and food stamps. Under the proposed legislation, immigrants who have become naturalized U.S. citizens would remain eligible for these programs. Most of the legal permanent resident immigrants who have not naturalized would lose their eligibility.

This legislation would affect large numbers of legal immigrants. Nationally, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that 1.7 million legal immigrants would lose Medicaid coverage; 1.1 million would be denied food stamps. Given the large numbers of legal resident, non-citizen immigrants in metro Chicago—almost 500,000 persons—this publication provides a profile of their characteristics.

Metro Chicago, a nine-county area including the counties of Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will, is the focus of this report. National- and state-level information supplement the metropolitan area data where appropriate.

A note on the data in this report:

All data in this report are derived from the U.S. Census Bureau, except where otherwise specified. The population (or "universe") included in tables and graphs equals all individuals, unless otherwise noted.

Selected highlights of *Indicators for Understanding*

Unless otherwise noted, data are for nine-county metro Chicago area in 1990.

Demography

Metro Chicago's immigrant population was 878,397 in 1990, or 11.9 percent of the population.

More than 25 countries-of-origin have 6,500+ immigrants in Illinois.

Nationally, nine of ten immigrants at the turn of the century were from Europe. In the 1980s, eight out of ten were from Asia and Latin America.

Of the 13 censuses since the Civil War, nine showed a higher percentage of immigrants in the metro Chicago population than the 1990 census.

On average, about 45,000 immigrants per year came to Illinois during the last ten years (1984-1993).

Half (50.8 percent) of Illinois immigrants live outside of Chicago.

Immigrants are significantly less likely to be of school age than the native born. Immigrants are more likely to be of working age: 18-64 years.

Social Characteristics

Nearly three-quarters—73.3 percent—of metro Chicago's immigrant population speaks English well.

Overall, immigrants are less likely than the native born to have either a high school or a college degree. Some immigrant groups are far more likely than the native born to be college educated.

Economic Characteristics

Immigrants are equally as likely as natives to be "in the labor force."

Median household income in 1989:

Metro immigrants:	\$31,351
Metro natives:	\$36,000
Suburban immigrants:	\$39,671

Immigrants are more likely to be in poverty than natives, 13.1 percent vs. 10.9 percent.

Immigrants are less likely to receive public assistance income (cash welfare) than natives. About 6.1 percent of immigrant households receive public assistance income, compared to 7.9 percent of native households, as reported by the 1990 census.

Impact of English-Language Abilities

Of immigrants who speak English well, about a third have managerial or professional specialty occupations. Less than four percent of immigrants who do not speak English well hold these occupations.

Impact of Length of Residence

Persons who immigrated before 1960 are twice as likely as post-1980 immigrants to hold managerial and professional specialty occupations. The likelihood of immigrant workers holding managerial and professional specialty occupations increases steadily with length of residence.

As length of residence increases, the English ability and economic status of immigrants generally improve.

Work Place Issues

More than one in four immigrants—26.1 percent—work as machine operators, fabricators and laborers, compared to 12.1 percent of the native born population.

Immigrants earn a significantly lower average hourly wage than the native born in most major occupational categories.

Immigrants comprise more than 40 percent of workers in certain specific occupations, such as textile machine operators and electrical equipment assemblers. Immigrants comprise 33.9 percent of metro Chicago's physicians.

More than 160,000 immigrants work in the metro Chicago manufacturing sector. Immigrants are nearly 23 percent of manufacturing workers, although they are only 14 percent of the entire labor force.

New Citizens

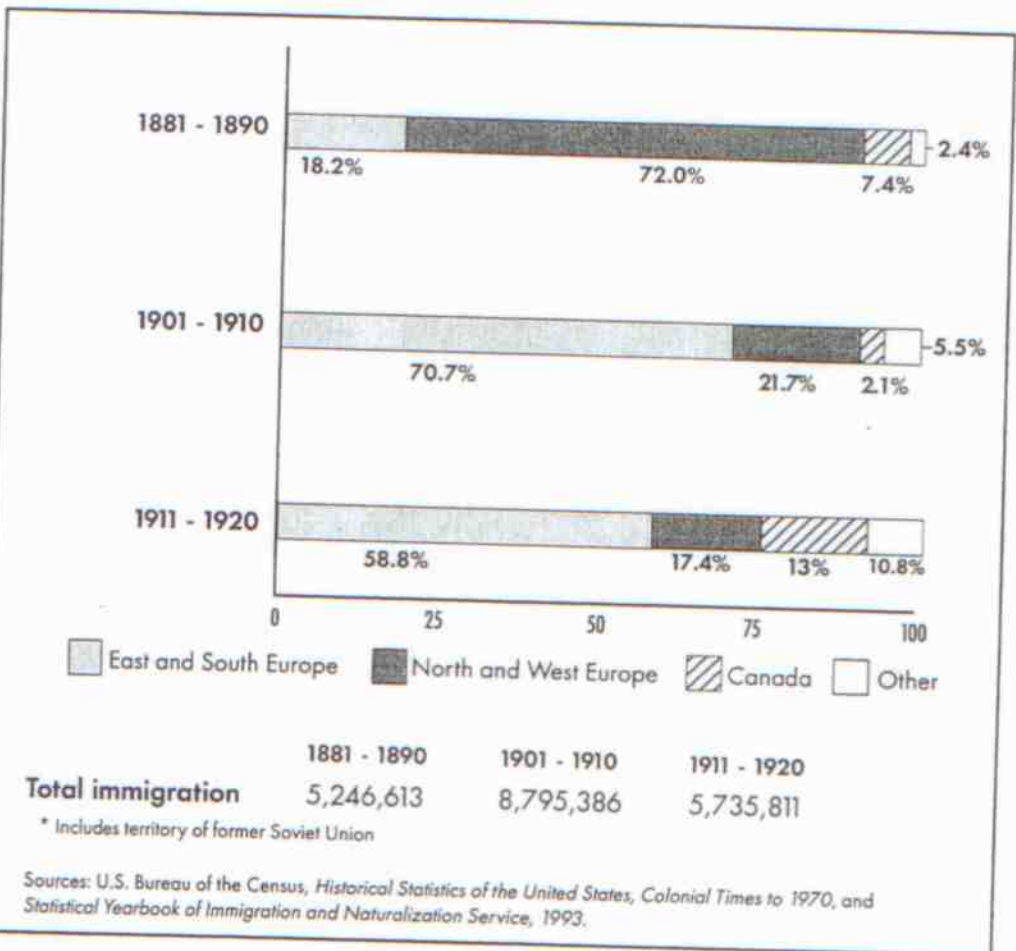
About 12,300 immigrants per year in Illinois became naturalized U.S. citizens in the ten-year period 1984-1993.

The number of immigrants who naturalize increases steadily with length of residence in the U.S.



Which world regions have been major sources of U.S. immigration?

Percent of Immigrants from Specific World Regions to the United States: 1881-1920



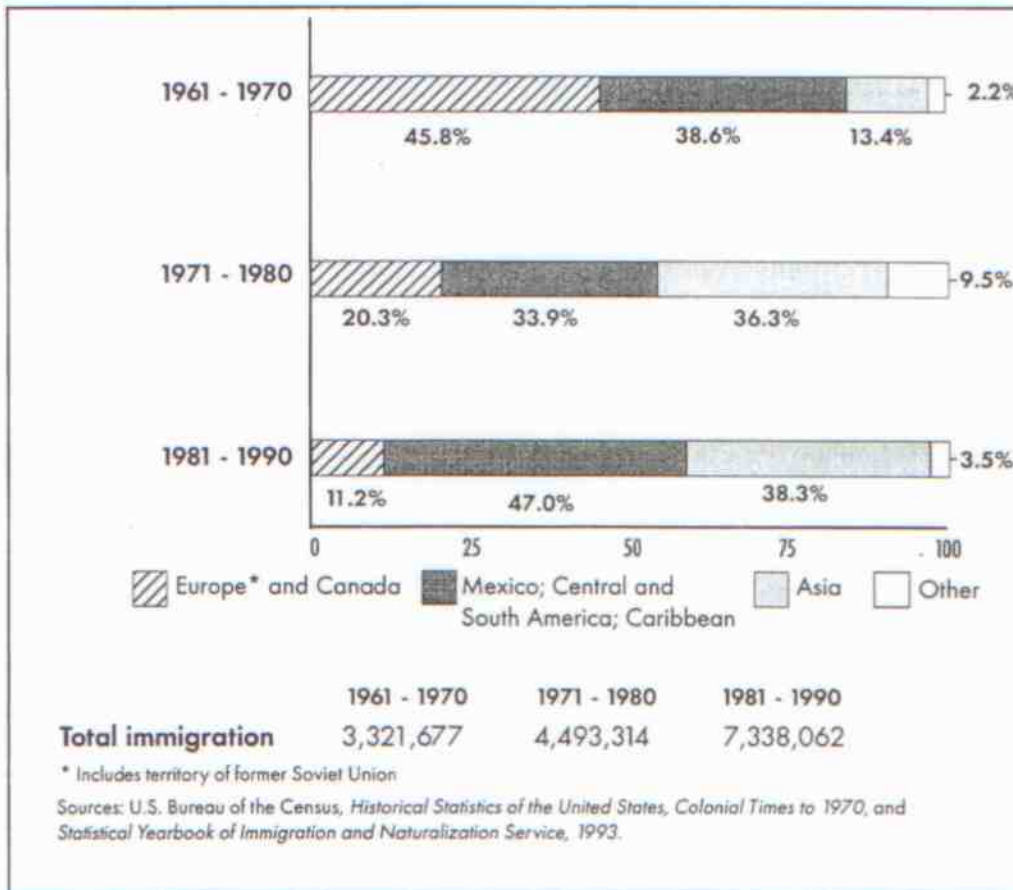
The national origins of relatively recent immigrants differ significantly from the national origins of immigrants at the turn of the century. The bar graphs on this and the next page demonstrate the changed composition of the immigrant population.

During three decades near the turn of the century — 1881-1890, 1901-1910 and 1911-1920—nearly all immigrants to the United States came from Canada or Europe. For example, 97.6 percent of immigrants in the period 1881-1890 were from these areas.

Even within these decades a shift occurred. While 72.0 percent of 1881-1890 immigrants were from countries in western and northern Europe, only 17.4 percent of 1911-1920 immigrants came from these countries.

In contrast, the countries in southern and eastern Europe accounted for only 18.2 percent of 1881-1890 immigrants, but 58.8 percent of the immigrants during the 1911-1920 period.

Percent of Immigrants from Specific World Regions to the United States: 1961-1990



In recent decades European and Canadian immigrants account for a smaller portion of immigrants to the U.S. than in decades of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Immigrants since 1961 have increasingly come from Latin America and Asia.

Europeans and Canadians declined from 45.8 percent of all immigrants in the 1960s to 11.2 percent in the 1980s. Latin American and Asian Immigrants were 38.6 and 13.4 percent, respectively, of 1960s immigrants, but 47.0 and 38.3 percent, respectively, of 1980s immigrants.²

²The shift in the 1960s toward immigration from Latin America and Asia was largely a result of the 1965 amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act. These amendments abolished the national origins quota system, and eliminated national origin, race, or ancestry as a basis for immigration to the U.S. This change increased the number of Latin Americans and Asians who could immigrate.

Which are the leading countries of origin of Illinois immigrants?

Top 25 Countries of Origin of Illinois Immigrants: 1990

Mexico	278,640	Ireland	13,845
Poland	83,130	Cuba	12,501
Philippines	48,330	Guatemala	11,037
Germany	41,409	Japan	9,774
India	39,357	Romania	9,771
Italy	33,540	Vietnam	8,757
Korea	29,724	Pakistan	8,082
United Kingdom	21,765	Taiwan	7,884
Yugoslavia	20,172	Iraq	7,788
Greece	19,836	Colombia	7,767
USSR	17,790	Czechoslovakia	6,675
Canada	16,965	Lithuania	6,669
China (Mainland)	16,893		

The state of Illinois includes substantial populations (more than 6,500 persons) of immigrants from 25 different countries of origin.¹ The top three countries of origin represent three distinct world regions: Mexico (Latin America), Poland (Europe) and the Philippines (Asia).

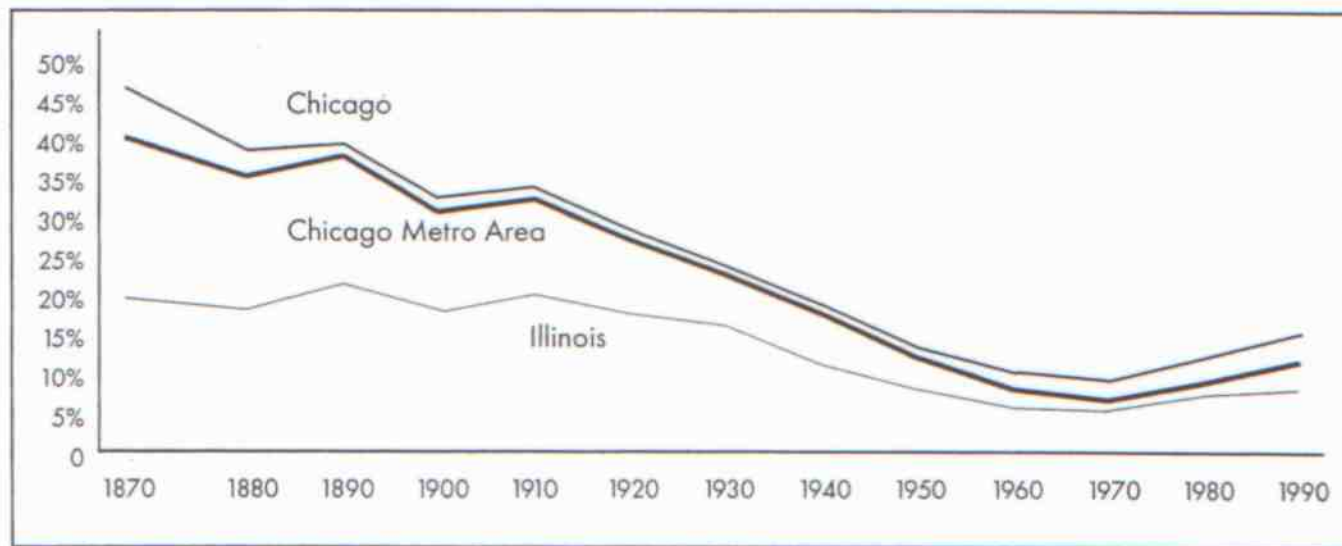
Of the largest 25 immigrant groups in Illinois, 11 are from Europe, nine are from Asia and four are from Latin America. Only four of these 25 groups are from Latin America, but the large number of Mexican immigrants—278,640 persons—makes Latin America the largest source of immigrants.

The 25 countries listed on this page account for about 80 percent of the state's 950,000 immigrants. Nine out of ten immigrants in Illinois live in metro Chicago, which is the focus of this report. Metro Chicago includes the counties of Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will.

¹The countries listed here are based on nations existing at the time of the 1990 Census.

How has the size of the immigrant population changed?

Percent of Population that is Foreign Born: Illinois, Chicago Metro Area, and Chicago



	Chicago Metro Area		
	Total Pop.	Foreign Born	FB%
1870	544,043	218,526	40.2
1880	827,743	297,260	35.9
1890	1,451,786	558,577	38.5
1900	2,153,109	703,093	32.7
1910	2,770,861	927,976	33.5
1920	3,454,789	962,159	27.9
1930	4,511,523	1,100,699	24.4
1940	4,633,534	833,155	18.0
1950	5,249,981	672,956	12.8
1960	6,312,528	603,987	9.6
1970	7,098,986	564,698	8.0
1980	7,246,032	749,557	10.3
1990	7,381,476	878,397	11.9

In sheer numbers, the 1990 population of immigrants in metro Chicago was the fourth largest counted in a census. Well over 900,000 immigrants lived in metro Chicago in 1910 and 1920, and the number peaked in 1930 at 1.1 million immigrants. In contrast, about 878,000 immigrants resided in metro Chicago in 1990.

Immigrants make up a lower percent of metro Chicago's total population than they did in most earlier decades. Of the 13 censuses since the Civil War, nine showed a higher percentage of immigrants than the 1990 count.

Immigrants comprise 11.9 percent of the current (1990) population in metro Chicago, a lower proportion than in each of the nine censuses between 1870 and 1950. In 1870, immigrants were more than 40 percent of metro Chicago's population.

The most recent enumerations of immigrants show an increase over the 1970s historic low point, when 8.0 percent of the population was born in a foreign country. The size of the foreign-born population grew by 314,000 between 1970 and 1990. This 20-year growth is smaller than the 1880-1900 period, when the immigrant population grew by 406,000, and the 1890-1910 period, which showed an increase of 570,000 immigrants.

Another way to assess the impact of immigration is to compare the number of new immigrants arriving in a decade to the total population at the end of that decade. In the decade ending in 1910, the new immigrant population equaled 81.1 persons for every 1,000 members of the total population. In the decade ending in 1990, there were 16.5 new immigrants for every 1,000 persons in the total population.

Immigration has slowed a significant loss of population in the city of Chicago. While the foreign-born population increased by 95,268 persons between 1970 and 1990, the native-born population declined by 674,489. (Data not shown.)

Of the 878,397 immigrants in metro Chicago in 1990, 39.1 percent arrived in the U.S. in the 1980-1990 period, 28.1 percent in the 1970s, 13.7 percent in the 1960s, and 19.1 percent before 1960.

How many immigrants have come to Illinois in recent years?

Immigrants Admitted to U.S. and Intending to Reside in Illinois: 1984-1993

1984	26,617
1985	26,624
1986	26,093
1987	25,995
1988	27,726
1989	69,263*
1990	83,853*
1991	73,383*
1992	43,532
1993	46,744
Total	449,840

* Statistics for 1989-1992 reflect the large numbers of immigrants admitted under the legalization programs of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986.

Source: Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Years 1984-1993.

The accompanying table shows the number of immigrants admitted to Illinois in the years between 1984 and 1993. The average number of immigrants was about 45,000 per year, although there was considerable year-to-year variation. Between 1984 and 1988 the number of immigrants coming into Illinois never reached 28,000 per year. The volume increased sharply during the 1989-1991 period, and then dropped again in 1992 and 1993. The large numbers in the 1989-91 years show the impact of the legalization programs of the Immigration Reform and Control Act.³

Where do they live?

Distribution of Immigrants in Illinois by Place/Region: 1990

Place/Region	Immigrants	Percent of State's Immigrants
Chicago	465,267	49.2%
Suburban Chicago	413,130	43.7%
Rest of State	67,275	7.1%
Total	945,672	

A minority of the immigrants in Illinois reside in Chicago. Slightly more than half—50.8 percent—of the foreign-born population lives in the Chicago suburbs or in other areas of the state. The Chicago suburbs have a foreign-born population of more than 413,000.

³The Immigration Reform and Control Act was a congressional act that allowed certain undocumented residents to acquire legal permanent residency. In Illinois, approximately 160,000 persons applied for immigration amnesty, with the great majority eventually receiving legal permanent resident status. Nationally, 55.7 percent of all 1989-1991 immigrants were participants in IRCA legalization programs. These legalization programs are no longer in effect.

In which suburbs do immigrants live?

Top 26 Metro Chicago Places in Percentage of Population Comprised of Immigrants

	Total Population	Immigrants	Immigrants as % of Total Population
1. Stone Park Village	4,383	1,619	36.9
2. Highwood City	5,331	1,548	29.0
3. Skokie Village	59,432	16,609	27.9
4. Lincolnwood Village	11,365	3,141	27.6
5. Summit Village	9,971	2,524	25.3
6. Harwood Heights Village	7,680	1,837	23.9
7. Cicero Town	67,436	16,119	23.9
8. Melrose Park Village	20,859	4,956	23.8
9. Hodgkins Village	1,944	450	23.1
10. Morton Grove Village	22,405	5,090	22.7
11. Niles Village	28,284	6,161	21.8
12. Rosemont Village	3,995	842	21.1
13. West Chicago City	14,796	3,112	21.0
14. Franklin Park Village	18,485	3,795	20.5
15. Norridge Village	14,459	2,910	20.1
16. Prospect Heights City	15,239	3,049	20.0
17. Addison Village	32,058	6,240	19.5
18. Bensenville Village	17,767	3,413	19.2
19. Schiller Park Village	11,189	2,099	18.8
20. Oak Brook Village	9,178	1,706	18.6
21. Bannockburn Village	1,388	241	17.4
22. Northlake City	12,505	2,116	16.9
23. Chicago City	2,783,726	469,187	16.9
24. River Grove Village	9,961	1,650	16.6
25. Mount Prospect Village	53,170	8,630	16.2
26. Waukegan City	69,329	10,730	15.5

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, Census of Population and Housing: 1990 STF3A

Numerous suburban areas in metro Chicago have substantial immigrant populations as seen in the table above, which includes 25 suburbs and the city of Chicago. Immigrants are more than a quarter of the population in the suburbs of Stone Park, Highwood, Skokie, Lincolnwood and Summit. More than 10,000 immigrants are found in Skokie and Cicero.

Socioeconomic Data

