

Demographic Profile

OF MEXICANS IN THE UNITED STATES

THE POPULATION

- Of the 45.5 million Latinos in the U.S., 64% are of Mexican origin (40% of which are first generation Mexican immigrants).^{1,2}
- Over half of all recent* Mexican immigrants are between the ages 18-34.⁴
- Mexican immigrants enter the U.S. at an average age of 21.⁵
- 44% of Mexican immigrants are homeowners.³
- One-fifth of Mexican immigrants are naturalized citizens.³

ECONOMIC STATUS

- Over 25% of recent Mexican immigrant families live with annual incomes below the federal poverty level (\$10,488 for a single adult and \$20,444 for a couple with two children in 2006).⁴
- 41% of Mexican-born children under the age of 18 and 21.9% of working-age adults between the ages of 18 and 64 live in poverty.²
- The average earning of Mexican immigrants ages 18-64 in jobs that are heavily reliant on Mexican immigrant labor is \$19,200 annually, and \$13,900 for women.⁴
- On average, Mexican immigrant men working full-time earn 45% less than native-born men; Mexican immigrant women earn 40% less than native-born women.⁴
- An average Mexican immigrant family with both parents working in jobs that are heavily reliant on Mexican immigrants will be unable to meet the minimal standard of living for a family of four in California (\$50,000 annually).⁴

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

- Fourteen states have 100,000 or more residents who are Mexican immigrants.⁴
- 60% of all Mexican immigrants live in either California or Texas.⁴

LABOR-FORCE PARTICIPATION

Men

- Low-wage industries are heavily reliant on the labor of Mexican immigrant men (which comprise about 20% of all employed men ages 18-64 in California).⁴

- Nationally, Mexican immigrant men make up
 - 50.3% of sewing machine operators
 - 43.4% of agriculture workers
 - 41.6% of fence erectors
 - 41.4% of drywall installers and plasterers
 - 39.1% of dishwashers.⁴
- Mexican immigrants account for over 80% of male agriculture workers in California.⁴

Women

- 43.2% of recent* Mexican immigrant women ages 18-64 participate in the U.S. labor force.⁴
- Nationally, Mexican immigrant women make up
 - 34.2% of farm workers, graders, and sorters
 - 26.3% of meat processing workers
 - 25.9% of hand packers and packagers
 - 25.4% of packaging machine operators
 - 24.9% of dishwashers.⁴
 - 310,000 Mexican immigrant women work as housekeepers, more than any other occupation. 64,000 work in child-care.⁴

HEALTH STATUS

Children (Under Age 18)

- **Health Status:** 64.8% of children born to Mexican immigrants are in excellent or very good health during their first year, compared to 88.4% of the total U.S. population.⁷
- **Mortality:** The top three causes of death for all Latino children ages 1-17 are unintentional injuries, cancer, and homicide.⁹
 - **For ages 1-12:** accidental injuries, cancer, and birth defects.
 - **For ages 13-17:** accidental injuries, homicide, and suicide.

Adults (Age 18-64)

- **Health Status:** 9% of Mexican immigrant adults report being in fair or poor health.¹⁰
- **Chronic Disease:** The most common chronic conditions Mexican immigrant adults report are hypertension (9%) and diabetes (4%).¹⁰
- **Mortality:** Cancer, accidental injuries, and heart disease are the three leading causes of death for all Latino adults.⁹

Older Adults (Ages 65 and Over)

- **Health Status:** 44% of older Mexican immigrants report being in fair or poor health.¹⁰
- **Chronic Disease:** The top three chronic conditions of Mexican immigrant older adults have are hypertension (48%), diabetes (30%), and heart problems (11%).¹⁰
- **Mortality:** Heart disease, cancer, cerebrovascular disease, and diabetes are the four leading causes of death for all older Latino adults.⁹

HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

- Over two-thirds of Mexican immigrants working in jobs that are heavily reliant on Mexican immigrants have no medical insurance coverage.⁴
- About two-thirds of Mexican immigrant women in jobs that are heavily reliant on Mexican immigrants do not have work-based health insurance.⁴
- Only 5% of employed Mexican immigrants are covered by Medicaid and other public insurance.⁴

POLICY OPPORTUNITIES

- The lack of health insurance and a usual source of care are key obstacles to health care for Mexican immigrants of all ages. Public health insurance programs should be expanded to include those Mexican immigrants who are not insured, with an emphasis on coverage for children.
- Mexican immigrants' health must be recognized as a bi-national responsibility. Any strategy seeking to address the health needs of Mexican immigrants in the U.S. can be strengthened by considering their social, cultural, political, and economic ties to Mexico. To be effective, programs have to reinforce health promotion efforts in both countries.

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* Recent immigrants are defined by a stay of less than 10 years; those more than 10 years are defined as long stay.

Author Information

1. Steven P. Wallace, PhD, is Associate Director of the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research and Professor at the UCLA School of Public Health.
2. Xóchitl Castañeda, Director, Health Initiative of the Americas at the UC Berkeley School of Public Health

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