1 Report Highlights, Overview of Chapters, And Data Sources

The Newest New Yorkers: Characteristics of the City's Foreign-born Population (2013 edition) provides a comprehensive portrait of immigrants in New York City. It examines where the city's foreign-born come from, their patterns of settlement, the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the city's immigrants, the role of the foreign-born in the New York region, changes in the legal paths of entry of newly admitted immigrants, and concludes by examining the impact of immigrants on the city. This is the latest volume in The Newest New Yorker series, which began in 1992 with the publication of *The Newest New Yorkers: An Analysis of Immigration to New York City in the 1980s*, and continued with *The Newest New Yorkers, 1990–1994, The Newest New Yorkers, 1995–1996,* and *The Newest New Yorkers, 2000*, which was released in 2005. The 2013 edition of *The Newest New Yorkers* builds on the preceding volume and provides detailed analyses of the latest available data. It continues a tradition of providing comprehensive information on the foreign-born to policy makers, program planners, and service providers, to help them gain perspective on a population that continues to reshape the city. And for the first time, this edition includes interactive web content, at **www.nyc.gov/population**.

New York City's demography is dynamic, defined by the ebb and flow of people. These demographic changes result in a unique level of diversity: over one-third of the city's 3 million foreign-born residents arrived in the U.S. in 2000 or later; 49 percent of the population speaks a language other than English at home; and in just 30 years, what was a city with a population of primarily European origins has now become a place with no dominant race/ethnic or nationality group. Indeed, New York's unmatched diversity epitomizes the world city.

Most U.S. cities in the Northeast and Midwest saw their population peak in 1950, after which many experienced large declines associated with suburbanization and economic changes that led to central city job losses. While New York also initially experienced declines as a result of these forces, the city's population was replenished by the flow of new immigrants. After a loss of 10 percent of its population in the 1970s, the city rebounded on the heels of a big economic transformation from manufacturing to service industries that, in turn, acted as a magnet for further immigration. The relative youth and economic activity of immigrants brought the city into an era of renewal and growth, which propelled the population above the 8 million mark in 2000, and to a new peak population of 8.34 million in 2012.

In addition to stabilizing New York City's population, immigration has had a huge impact on the city's racial and ethnic composition. With the passage of the 1965 amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act and the abolition of quotas, the countries from which immigrants originated shifted from southern and eastern Europe to Latin America, Asia, and the Caribbean. New York City's foreign-born population is now at an all-time high and reflects immigrant streams from every corner of the world.

The next section highlights the main findings of this report. It is followed by an overview of each chapter, and an explanation of data sources used and the conceptual issues that arise when analyzing multiple sources of data on the immigrant population.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REPORT

Overall

1. *Since the passage of the landmark Immigration and Nationality Amendments of 1965, New York's foreign-born population has more than doubled to 3 million—a population that would comprise the third largest city in the U.S., bested by just New York City and Los Angeles.*

   The surge in the foreign-born has been accompanied by a decline in the share of immigrants from Europe, from 64 percent in 1970 to just 16 percent in 2011. Latin America is now the largest area of origin, comprising nearly one-third of the city's foreign-born, followed by Asia (28 percent), and the nonhispanic Caribbean (19 percent). Africa accounts for 4 percent. New York arguably boasts the most diverse population of any major city in the world because of the flow of immigrants from across the globe.

2. *The immigrant share of the population has also doubled since 1965, to 37 percent.*

   With foreign-born mothers accounting for 51 percent of all births, approximately 6-in-10 New Yorkers are either immigrants or the children of immigrants.

3. *Although New York's foreign-born population increased only modestly since 2000, from 2.9 million to just over 3 million in 2011, it marked a new peak.*

   The Dominican Republic was the largest source of the foreign-born in 2011, with 380,200 residents, followed by China (350,200) in second place. While these rankings have held since 1990, Dominican population growth in the last decade was 3 percent, compared with 34 percent for China. If these growth rates hold, the Chinese would likely be the city's largest immigrant group in the next few years.

4. *Immigrants from Mexico moved into 3rd place in 2011, with a 52 percent increase over 2000.*

   The Mexican population, which numbered 186,300, was followed by Jamaica (169,200) and Guyana (139,900). Ecuador, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago, India, and Russia rounded out the top 10 groups. Thus the foreign-born in 2011 had very diverse origins, in contrast to the overwhelmingly European origin of the foreign-born in earlier decades. Russia was the only European country to make the top 10 in 2011.

5. *The top sources of the foreign-born population for the U.S. differed markedly from those for New York City.*

   Mexicans dominated the U.S. immigrant population, accounting for nearly 3-in-10 of the nation's 40 million foreign-born. China was the second largest source country for the U.S., followed by India, the Philippines, El Salvador, Vietnam, Cuba, Korea, the Dominican Republic, and Guatemala. In contrast, the city's immigrant population was more diverse, with Dominicans, the largest immigrant group in the city, accounting for only 12 percent of the foreign-born. Six countries on the nation's top 10 list—Philippines, El Salvador, Korea, Vietnam, Cuba, and Guatemala—were not among the city's top 10 groups, and the last 3 were not even among the city's top 20 groups.

6. *In a national context, most of New York's top 20 immigrant groups were disproportionately concentrated in the city.*

   The Guyanese had the highest proclivity to settle in New York, with over one-half of Guyanese immigrants in the U.S. making their home in the city. Other countries that were disproportionately represented in the city included the Dominican Republic, Bangladesh, and Trinidad and Tobago—around 4-in-10 immigrants in the U.S. from these countries settled in New York.

7. *A majority of the foreign-born are now naturalized citizens.*

Partly as a result, the entry of immigrants with family ties to legal permanent residents ("green card" holders) has fallen, while visas to immediate relatives of U.S. citizens have increased dramatically. Visas to those with ties to permanent residents are numerically limited and entail long waiting periods, as opposed to visas for immediate relatives, which are exempt from any limit. The increase in naturalization has allowed for greater use of immediate relative visas, which paves the way for quicker immigrant entry. In light of the increase in naturalized citizens, and the quicker pathways to family reunification that it provides, the gate to immigration could open even further in the years to come.

8. *The ceiling on the annual allotment for asylees was lifted in 2005 to clear a large backlog, resulting in a big increase in the number of asylees admitted, especially from China.*

Asylees now comprise over 40 percent of the flow from China. The growth in asylees made China the top source of *newly admitted* immigrants to the city.

9. *A number of large source countries have seen increases due to the use of particular pathways to entry.*

Besides China (increase in asylees), this group includes Bangladesh (family preferences, immediate relatives, and diversity visas), Ecuador (immediate relatives) and Mexico (employment preferences). Bangladesh is now in the number three spot, behind China and the Dominican Republic, in the *flow* data. Diversity visas have allowed immigrants from Ghana and Nigeria to establish a notable presence in the city, and flows from these sources are likely to burgeon in the next decade as diversity entrants reunify with their kin. Flows from Ukraine and Russia declined due to a fall in refugee admissions.

SETTLEMENT PATTERNS

1. *While immigrants were dispersed throughout the city, 1.09 million lived in Queens, and another 946,500 lived in Brooklyn, together accounting for two-thirds of the city's immigrants.*

The Bronx and Manhattan were home to 471,100 (15 percent) and 461,300 (15 percent) immigrants, respectively, while 98,400 (3 percent) lived in Staten Island.

2. *In terms of immigrants as a percentage of the population, Queens was the most immigrant borough, with nearly one-half of residents foreign-born in 2011.*

Much of this immigrant population was clustered along the "International Express"—the number 7 subway line that runs across northwest Queens. Elmhurst, which sits astride this route, had one of the highest concentrations of immigrants in the city. Queens had a remarkably diverse immigrant population and was the only borough where Asians comprised a plurality among the foreign-born. Top immigrant groups included the Chinese (who settled across northern Queens), the Guyanese (concentrated in South Ozone Park and Richmond Hill), Ecuadorians, and Mexicans (both of whom tended to settle in northwest Queens).

3. *Brooklyn's immigrants also exhibited a remarkable diversity, rivaling that of Queens.*

These diverse origins were arrayed in a chain of neighborhoods, forming a horseshoe pattern along the B-Q and N subway lines. Immigrants constituted almost one-half of the population in neighborhoods along these routes, encompassing nearly half of the borough's foreign-born population. The Chinese were concentrated in the western portion of the area, along with Dominicans, Mexicans, and Ecuadorians. Jamaican, Haitian, and other nonhispanic Caribbean immigrants settled primarily in central Brooklyn, while Russians and Ukrainians were concentrated in southern Brooklyn.

4. *Washington Heights in Manhattan was the neighborhood with the largest number of immigrants (80,200), followed by Bensonhurst (77,700), and Elmhurst (77,100).*

Together, these three neighborhoods had more immigrants than the city of Philadelphia. Neighborhoods that rounded out the top 10 were Corona, Jackson Heights, Sunset Park, Flushing, Flatbush, Crown Heights, and Bushwick.

5. *Of the major immigrant neighborhoods, Bushwick saw the highest growth, with its immigrant population increasing by over one-fifth between 2000 and 2007–2011.*

Areas in southwest Brooklyn, eastern Brooklyn, and eastern Queens also experienced substantial gains, reflected in neighborhoods such as East New York and Sunset Park, both in Brooklyn, and South Ozone Park in Queens. East and Central Harlem in Manhattan and Concourse-Concourse Village in the South Bronx also experienced high growth among the foreign-born.

6. *The counties surrounding the city are now primary destinations of settlement, as many newly arrived immigrants bypass the city and settle directly in other parts of the region.*

In earlier decades, counties adjacent to the city were secondary destinations of settlement, as many post-1965 immigrants left the city to make their home in the suburbs. While New York City was still home to a majority of the region's foreign-born population, the inner suburban counties accounted for 38 percent, while the outer counties settled over 11 percent. Counties closest to New York City were disproportionately foreign-born. Hudson County, across the river from New York City, was 40 percent foreign-born—higher than any county in the region, except for Queens. The inner ring counties of Middlesex, Bergen, Passaic, and Union were around 30 percent or more foreign-born, while in the outer ring, Mercer (20 percent) and Suffolk (14 percent) counties had the highest percentage of immigrants.

7. *Most immigrant groups generally begin their American experience on the lower rungs of the socioeconomic ladder and this is reflected in their initial neighborhoods of residence.*

As in New York City, immigrants in the inner and outer suburban counties tended to live in neighborhoods that had older, small multi-unit rental buildings, which produced high population densities. Since family networks tend to feed immigration and influence immigrant settlement, lower income neighborhoods were home to large foreign-born concentrations.

8. *While lower income areas, especially in urban settings, have historically been the destination of choice for immigrants, a new pattern has been emerging that shows substantial immigrant settlement in wealthier areas.*

In the region as a whole, these upper income areas were home to over one million immigrants, disproportionately from Europe and Asia.

IMPACTS

1 *Immigrants have played an important role in maintaining the city's population.*

In recent decades immigrant flows have mitigated what could have been catastrophic population losses (1970s), have stabilized the city's population (1980s), were a major impetus for growth that helped New York officially cross the 8 million mark in 2000, and have propelled the city to a new population peak of 8.34 million in 2012.

2. *With the native-born population in decline, immigrants have helped shore up the population of many counties and places in the region.*

Foreign-for-native replacement, which first took place in New York City, has been replicated in many of the inner suburban counties. The flow of immigrants from Latin America, Asia, and the Caribbean, coupled with white outflows, has

also altered the racial/Hispanic composition of the region.

3. *On the economic front, immigrants comprised 47 percent of all employed residents and could be found in all major industries.*

   Immigrants accounted for over a majority of residents employed in construction; accommodation, food, and other services; transportation, warehousing and utilities; and manufacturing. Immigrants were heavily represented among those who start new businesses, providing a continuous injection of economic vitality that serves the neighborhoods of New York. As workers in the large baby boom cohorts retire, they need to be replaced to ensure the continued prosperity of New York's economy. If history is any indication, the economic opportunities in New York will continue to sustain the flow of immigrants into the city's labor force.

4. *Immigrants also drive the demand for housing.*

   Close to one-half of all housing units occupied for the first time after 2000 had an immigrant householder; add the second generation and the share rises to more than 6-in-10.

5. *The large flow of immigrants from Latin America, Asia, and the Caribbean has reshaped the race/Hispanic composition of New York.*

   New York has changed from a city of largely European origins to a diverse mix where no one group is in the majority.

6. *Immigrants will become a larger portion of the older age cohorts, which are projected to increase by more than 400,000 persons by 2040.*

   The fact that the older foreign-born population is a product of the post-1965 immigration translates into a new phase of unprecedented diversity for the city's older population. Models that are currently used to provide services to older New Yorkers will need to be adjusted to accommodate the needs of people from a multitude of nations and variety of backgrounds. The continued flow of working age immigrants could help ameliorate the costs associated with increased services that will be needed by the burgeoning older population.

7. *The role of domestic migration may be changing.*

   The inflow of domestic migrants has increased and the outflow from the city has declined, greatly reducing the *net* outflow of persons to the rest of the nation; there is still a net domestic loss of persons, but it is greatly attenuated. Moreover, two-thirds of all migrants coming to New York City now originate from other parts of the nation, compared with one-half in 2000.

8. *The most recent data suggest that we are potentially in the midst of yet another phase in the city's demographic history.*

   It is one where, as noted above, domestic migration plays a heightened role, as evidenced by more modest losses to the rest of the nation, but also where there are smaller gains through international migration. This relative balance of domestic losses and international gains, while present in just the last few years, may represent a reversal of a longstanding pattern of net losses through migration.

9. *Future immigration to New York City will be influenced by newly proposed federal legislation.*

   Local conditions, however, will continue to determine whether those who enter the nation settle in New York City. New York's historic receptivity to immigrants and local policies that enhance the incorporation of newcomers into the fabric of the city, coupled with a healthy and diverse economy, should ensure New York's continued status as a magnet for immigrants.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

Chapter 2, *Growth and Composition of the Immigrant Population*, presents information on the size and country composition of the foreign-born, with a special emphasis on change over the last 40 years.

Chapter 3, *Immigrant Settlement Patterns in New York City*, examines the spatial distribution of New York's foreign-born population, highlighting the top immigrant neighborhoods in the city. The chapter also examines leading immigrant groups in each borough and in major neighborhoods across the city. The top neighborhoods of residence are tabulated and mapped for major foreign-born groups.

Chapter 4, *Socio-demographic Profile of the Foreign-born*, provides a comprehensive look at measures of demographic (age and sex composition and family type); housing (tenure and overcrowding); social (educational attainment, year of entry, and English proficiency); economic (median household income, poverty status, and public assistance); and labor force (labor force participation, occupation, and class of worker) characteristics for New York City's top 20 foreign-born groups. These profiles provide perspective on the level of distress in a community and are crucial in formulating policies and programs that better fit the needs of specific groups.

Chapter 5, *Immigrant New York: A Regional Perspective*, offers an analysis of immigrants in the 31 county New York Metropolitan Region. In 2011, there were nearly 6 million foreign-born residents in the region, which encompasses the 5 counties of New York City, an inner ring of 12 counties that are closest to the city, and an outer ring of 14 counties.

Chapter 6, *Legal Pathways Used by Newly Admitted Immigrants*, examines those who obtained legal permanent residence or *green cards* that listed an address of intended residence in New York City. These data provide insight into the current *flow* of immigrants by country of birth and legal classes of admission. Detailed analyses of classes of admission for the

top 20 sending countries, as well as tables showing class of admission for every country over the past 3 decades, are available as a chapter supplement at **www.nyc.gov/population**.

Chapter 7, *The Impact of Immigration: Past, Present, and Future,* examines the effects of immigration on the city's population size and composition, labor force, and housing from a city planning perspective.

As with earlier reports in *The Newest New Yorkers* series, this report contains a detailed set of appendix tables that permit a closer examination of many points made in the main text. These tables provide information for countries that are not included in the analyses of top foreign-born groups. Included here are data on neighborhoods of residence for the top 40 immigrant groups in New York City, as well as demographic information for every county in the region.

Finally, interactive maps that provide a look at countries represented in each of the neighborhoods of New York, as well as maps detailing the settlement patterns of top source countries by neighborhood are available at **www.nyc.gov/population**.

DATA SOURCES AND CONCEPTS

The main objective of this volume is to describe the stock of immigrants in New York City. It is important to emphasize that the concept of immigrant *stock* refers to all residents of New York City who were foreign-born. Measurement of the foreign-born population of New York City has changed since the publication of *The Newest New Yorkers, 2000*. The source of data for the 2000 analysis—the decennial census long form—was replaced by the American Community Survey (ACS), which began full implementation in 2005. Like the census long form, the ACS provides data on the characteristics of all foreign-born residents using a sample of the population. This encompasses all persons who lived for at least two months in their current location at the point of response/time of interview, including persons who resided in the city on a temporary basis, such as students and those on temporary work assignments. Chapters 2 through 5 focus on the immigrant stock using data from the ACS.

Unlike the decennial census long form, however, data collection in the ACS occurs on a continuous basis; each month some 295,000 households in the nation receive an ACS questionnaire. Each year, sample cases for the preceding 12 months are combined to create tabulations of characteristics for New York City and its five boroughs. Most of the analyses in this volume utilize data for 2011 as the latest time point. Much of the data come from the ACS Summary File tabulations via American FactFinder (AFF), the Census Bureau's web-based data dissemination system. Data are for one year of the ACS, which works out to a little more than 1 percent of the foreign-born population or about 30,000 persons in the New York City sample.

While one year of data are sufficient to create tabulations for the city and boroughs overall, the sample is not large enough to provide reliable information for smaller geographic areas such as neighborhoods (or for small places in the metropolitan region). Detailed information for neighborhoods requires multiple years of sample to create tabulations. Moreover, geographic areas must be large enough in terms of population to achieve sufficient sample. In this analysis, we employ Neighborhood Tabulation Areas (NTAs) as building blocks to depict the residential settlement patterns of immigrants in neighborhoods across the five boroughs. NTAs are aggregates of the city's 2,167 census tracts and are subsets of New York City's 55 Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs). Primarily due to these constraints, NTA boundaries and their associated names may not definitively represent neighborhoods.

NTAs are meant to provide broad reference points to analyze the residential settlement of immigrants. In the few instances where two NTAs constituted a split neighborhood, they are combined for this analysis. For example, the original "Sunset Park East" and "Sunset Park West" NTAs are combined and appear as "Sunset Park."

NTA tabulations are based on five years of sample, for the period 2007–2011. Tabulations, maps and charts for 2007–2011 essentially represent an average for a characteristic over that period. For example, an NTA may be said to contain a number of residents born in a specific country more or less averaged over the period 2007-2011. While the broad time interval for this reference period is less than ideal, this disadvantage is more than offset by the larger sample obtained for a five year period, improving the reliability of estimates. Typically, the five-year NTA tabulations are based on a sample of about 6 percent. It is important to recognize that numbers created for 2011 from a single year of sample will differ from those created for 2007–2011, based on a sample of data collected over five-years. Sometimes these differences can be sizable; nevertheless, each analysis still provides us with useful descriptions of characteristics and settlement patterns that can be melded into an overall portrait of immigrant New York.

When it comes to detailed demographic and socio-economic characteristics of foreign-born groups, custom cross-tabulations were required. These were primarily constructed from the ACS Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) file for 2011, but also from the 2009-2011 file when a larger sample size was required. The PUMS files contain records that have the attributes of residents, including their nativity and birthplace, as reported in the ACS questionnaire, with steps taken to preserve the confidentiality of individual respondents. The 2011 PUMS file contains a 1 percent sample of the city's population, or records for approximately 30,000 foreign-born persons, while the 2009–2011 PUMS file has a 1 percent sample from each of the 3 years or about 90,000 respondents. The advantage of the PUMS file is that it is possible to derive custom tabulations for the foreign-born that are not available in the Summary File series (e.g. those in Chapter 4). Since overlapping samples and time periods yield slightly different estimates of characteristics, figures that were based on the one- and five- year Summary Files, and estimates derived from the one- and three-year PUMS, will all differ slightly.

It is important to note that ACS data are subject to sampling error, which refers to variability in estimates due to the use of a sample. In general, when comparisons are made, highlighted differences have all been deemed to be statistically significant.

Unlike the analyses of the immigrant *stock* in Chapters 2 to 5, Chapter 6 focuses on the *flow* of newly-admitted immigrants to New York City, their origins, paths to admission, characteristics, and residential settlement patterns. This analysis is based on data from the administrative records of the Office of Immigration Statistics (OIS) at the Department of Homeland Security. These data include the annual immigrant tape files for federal fiscal years 1982 to 2001 and special tabulations for New York City for 2002 to 2011. These data show how newly admitted immigrants navigate immigration law, detailing the legal paths of entry they employ. Administrative data on newly admitted immigrants are the only source of such information and allow us to understand the effect of U.S. immigration law on the size and character of legal immigration to the city. All persons who listed their address of intended residence as within the five boroughs of New York City were included in this analysis.

The final chapter used a number of data sources to highlight the impact of immigration on New York City. To explain the dynamic nature of the city's population, data on births and deaths going back to 1970 from the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene were used, along with adjusted decennial census counts from 1970 to 2010, 2012 population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, and data on changes of address of income tax filers from the Internal Revenue Service. To examine the immigrant component of the 65 and over population and the city's labor force, several ACS files were used (2011 and 2007–2011 five-year averages). In addition, the 2011 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey was employed to analyze the role immigrants play in the city's housing market.