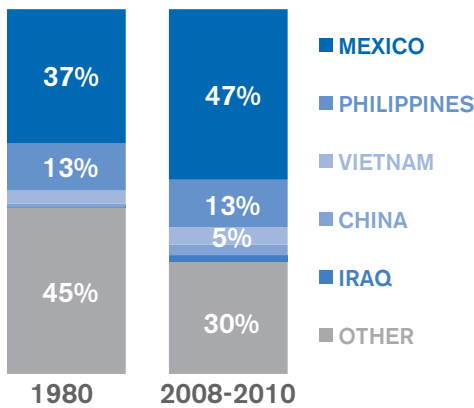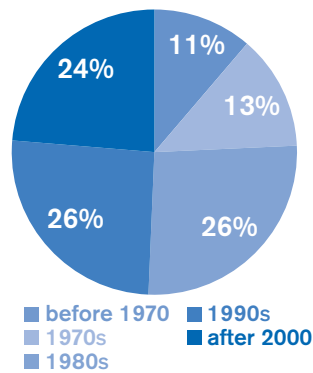# SAN DIEGO

The immigrant share of the population in San Diego County has grown since the 1970s, but despite the region's proximity to Mexico, the County has never been one of the state's magnets for immigrants. Approximately 698,000 immigrants currently live in San Diego County – comprising 23% of the total population. About 76% of all immigrants have arrived since 1980, with 24% arriving in the last decade. San Diego's immigrant population is largely comprised of Mexican immigrants (47%), a group that has grown in the past two decades. Immigrants from the Philippines are also well represented in this area, comprising a consistent 13% of the total immigrant population over time.

Immigrants are highly connected to the region's children and citizenry. While only one in 16 children is an immigrant, 44% have at least one immigrant parent, and 26% of households are headed by an immigrant. Further, our estimates suggest that 75% of unauthorized residents (which we can only estimate for adult Latinos) are living with citizens, and 39% are living with their own citizen children. Perhaps because of this mix, linguistic isolation – the proportion of immigrant-headed households in which no person over 13 speaks English only, or very well – is relatively low (27%).
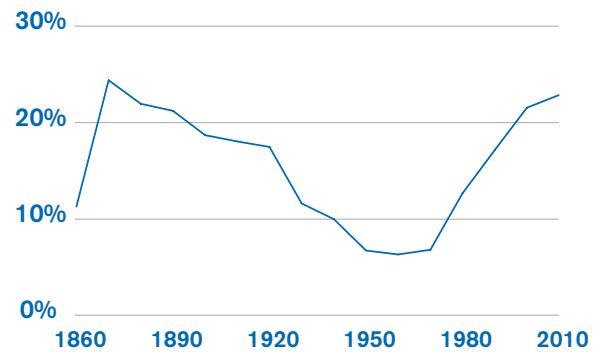
IMMIGRANTS BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

- **MEXICO**
- **PHILIPPINES**
- **VIETNAM**
- **CHINA**
- **IRAQ**
- **OTHER**

1980
- 37%
- 13%
- 45%

2008-2010
- 47%
- 13%
- 5%
- 30%

IMMIGRANTS BY RECENCY OF ARRIVAL, 2008-2010

- 11%
- 13%
- 24%
- 26%
- 26%

- ■ before 1970
- ■ 1970s
- ■ 1980s
- ■ 1990s
- ■ after 2000

IMMIGRANTS AS A PROPORTION OF THE TOTAL POPULATION BY DECADE, 1860-2010
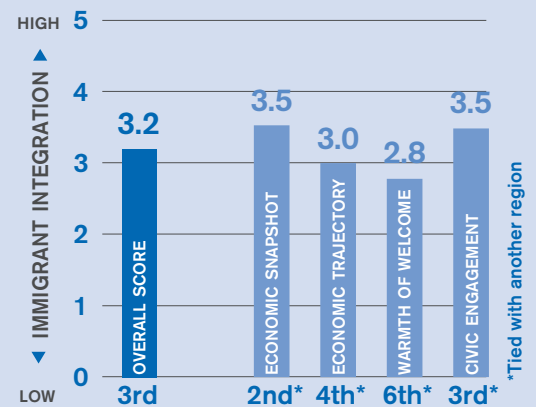

OVERALL SCORE

3.2

San Diego County scores a 3.2 overall, ranking third among the 10 regions. The County performed particularly well in Economic Snapshot – having a well-integrated and educated immigrant workforce with moderate incomes. The region also did well in civic engagement – particularly due to its high rates of linguistic integration among the immigrant population. Its poorest performance is in warmth of welcome.

RANK ACROSS 10 REGIONS

HIGH 5
IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION
LOW 0

	OVERALL SCORE	ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT	ECONOMIC TRAJECTORY	WARMTH OF WELCOME	CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
Score	3.2	3.5	3.0	2.8	3.5
Rank	3rd	2nd*	4th*	6th*	3rd*

*Tied with another region

IMPLICATIONS

San Diego County has created a path to civic engagement for immigrants and economic opportunity afforded by the region's economy. Along with Orange County, it is a rare place where immigrants are largely of Mexican origin, and integration has proceeded (in contrast with Fresno and the Inland Empire). Monolithic impressions of immigrants usually slow integration.

The region most clearly needs to improve its reception of immigrants, which could include improving the learning environment for English language learners and working with local media.
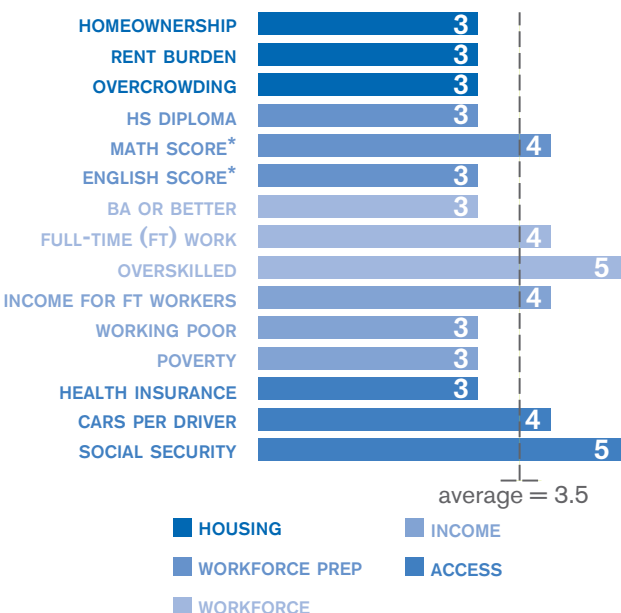
San Diego excels in matching skilled immigrants with appropriate work and may have important best practices for other border regions, nationally.

THE ECONOMY

The largest sector in San Diego County is defense/military; the United States Navy is the largest employer in the County and the Marines and Coast Guard also have a strong presence in the region. Additionally, the County has a bustling tourism sector driven by its famous beaches and festivals, a vibrant international trade sector, and is a leader in research and manufacturing – particularly in biotech – with a large presence of public and private universities. The distribution of workers reflects this with 55% of all employed workers (ages 25-64) found in professional services (31%), retail trade (14%) and manufacturing (10%). Immigrants follow a similar trend with the majority being employed in professional services (24%), retail trade (16%) and manufacturing (13%). Approximately 13% of San Diego's immigrant population is self-employed and 18% are classified as overskilled workers – that is, workers with a bachelor's degree or higher in unskilled jobs – which is the second-lowest rate of the ten regions, with Santa Clara first.

ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT

3.5

Indicator	Score
HOMEOWNERSHIP	3
RENT BURDEN	3
OVERCROWDING	3
HS DIPLOMA	3
MATH SCORE*	4
ENGLISH SCORE*	3
BA OR BETTER	3
FULL-TIME (FT) WORK	4
OVERSKILLED	5
INCOME FOR FT WORKERS	4
WORKING POOR	3
POVERTY	3
HEALTH INSURANCE	3
CARS PER DRIVER	4
SOCIAL SECURITY	5

average = 3.5

Legend:
- HOUSING
- INCOME
- WORKFORCE PREP
- ACCESS
- WORKFORCE

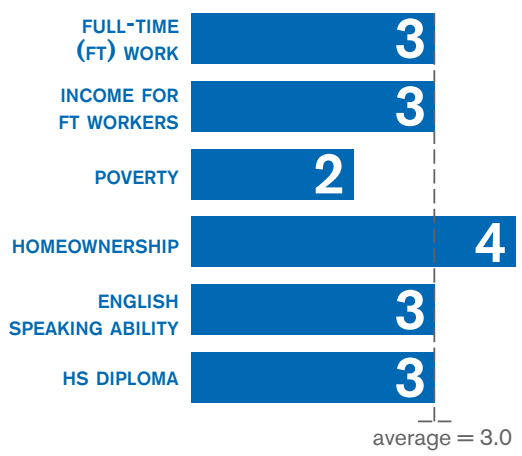*Score based on English language learners (ELLs) relative to non-Hispanic white students.*

The **Economic Snapshot** indicates the economic well-being of immigrants, now, as compared to U.S.-born non-Hispanic whites; it reveals their socio-economic standing by measuring the fundamentals – housing, education, work, income and access.

San Diego County performs well in the Economic Snapshot category, ranking second with a score of 3.5. The County scores 3 or higher on all indicators, performing exceptionally well in access to work and social security, income for full-time workers, and matching accomplished immigrant workers with high-skilled jobs.

San Diego can grow in the areas of housing, workforce preparation (increasing high school equivalency rates), and income (wages for working poor and poverty rates). Improvement is also needed for math and English scores; while the region scores well enough relatively speaking, the absolute pass rates are low.

ECONOMIC TRAJECTORY

3.0

Indicator	Score
FULL-TIME (FT) WORK	3
INCOME FOR FT WORKERS	3
POVERTY	2
HOMEOWNERSHIP	4
ENGLISH SPEAKING ABILITY	3
HS DIPLOMA	3

average = 3.0

Debunking the image of immigrants as static newcomers, **Economic Trajectory** measures how immigrants have fared, economically, over time. This score was generated by tracking immigrants' outcomes over time, starting in 1980.

San Diego County performed moderately well in the economic trajectory category. Among the indicators considered, immigrants made the most progress in their homeownership rates, tying for second with Fresno in terms of improvement over time. The region seems to enable steady progress in most other areas for its immigrant population, including full-time work, wages, English language acquisition, and attainment of high school degrees.

Less progress has been made in terms of poverty. Over time, poverty rates have improved at a slower rate than in all but two of the regions examined. As in Sacramento, the relative economic health of immigrants in San Diego makes for a higher baseline, and that means upward economic mobility may be more difficult than elsewhere.

To generate snapshot and trajectory scores, immigrants are compared against U.S.-born non-Hispanic whites, who – it could be argued – are the most "integrated" population in the U.S.
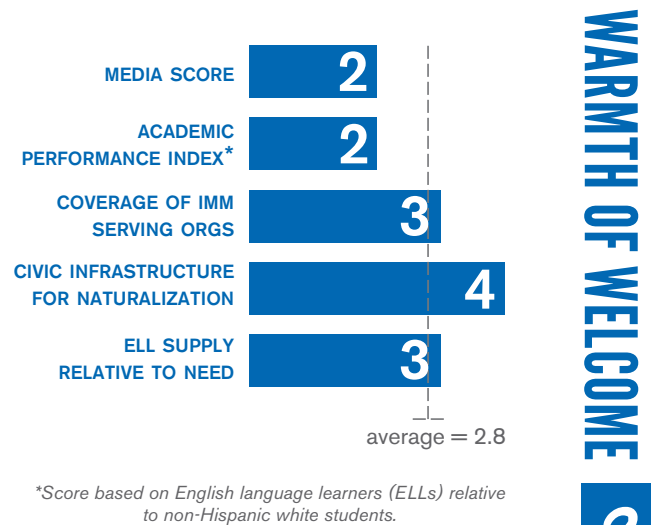
San Diego County shares its border with Tijuana and together they make up the San Diego-Tijuana metropolitan region. With about 5 million people, it is the largest bi-national region in the United States. Given its unique proximity to the border, the region has often been tossed into political debates around immigration. While the region maintains a large share of immigrants, many have moved to other areas across the state or returned to their home countries – particularly leading up to the 1970s. And while the region's ties to Mexico are deep and have influenced its culture profoundly, its close proximity to the border has also made San Diego a hostile region towards immigrants. Immigrants have come under attack both by anti-immigrant groups like the Minutemen Project, as well as conservative leaders in the area pushing for strict anti-immigrant legislation and local ordinances. This has chilled the warmth of welcome for immigrants in the region.

Warmth of Welcome takes seriously the understanding that immigrants contribute to the strength of their region – and so measures if the region views them favorably and *worth the investment.*

San Diego County's lowest performing category is Warmth of Welcome with a score of 2.8. The region has a well-built civic infrastructure for naturalization and a group of immigrant-serving organizations. Specifically, there are 31 immigrant-serving organizations for the region's roughly 358,000 non-citizen immigrants.

Practical areas for growth may include boosting the supply of English language learning classes, strengthening K-12 education for English language learners, and allowing for more unbiased reporting in the media on immigrant issues.

MEDIA SCORE	2
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE INDEX*	2
COVERAGE OF IMM SERVING ORGS	3
CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE FOR NATURALIZATION	4
ELL SUPPLY RELATIVE TO NEED	3

average = 2.8

*Score based on English language learners (ELLs) relative to non-Hispanic white students.

WARMTH OF WELCOME

2.8

Civic Engagement captures the extent to which immigrants are able to engage in government processes that affect both their personal and community-wide well-being.

San Diego County scores a 3.5 in Civic Engagement. It excels in linguistic integration (measured by the proportion of households where at least one person over the age of 13 speaks English very well or exclusively).

The region falls in the middle as compared to the other regions, in terms of naturalizing eligible immigrants, which indicates that the civic infrastructure for immigrants may need further strengthening.

LINGUISTIC INTEGRATION	4
NATURALIZATION RATE	3

average = 3.5

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

3.5
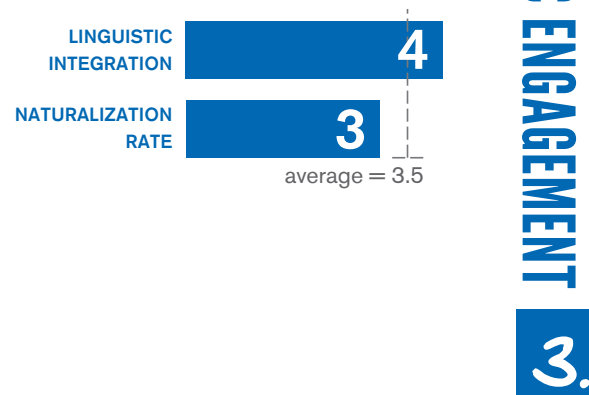
For a full explanation of the methodology used to score regions, see the technical report at: csii.usc.edu.

2008-2010 DATA PROFILE: SAN DIEGO

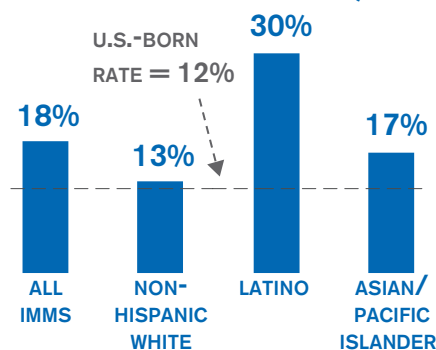|				Imm	U.S.-born
Total Population		3,054,733	**Income and Poverty (2010 $s)**		
Comparison Population for Scoring			Avg. Household Income	$50,000	$65,207
U.S.-born non-Hispanic white	1,399,184	46%	Avg. Income (Full-time Workers)	$36,338	$50,222
Immigrant	698,194	23%	Pop. Below 150% of poverty level	28%	19%
			Working Poor*	13%	3%
Language Skills Among Immigrants					
Linguistically Isolated Households		27%	**Labor Force Participation Rates §**		
Top Languages Spoken in Immigrant Households			In the Labor Force	78%	84%
Spanish		49%	Employed	91%	88%
English		13%	Unemployed	9%	12%
Tagalog		11%			
Vietnamese		4%	**Self Employment ±**		
Chinese		4%	Non-Hispanic white	21%	14%
			Non-Hispanic Black	N/A	6%
Household and Family Structure			Latino	13%	8%
Children			Asian/Pacific Islander	9%	6%
Immigrant		6%			
With an immigrant parent		44%	**Top 5 Industries by Immigrant Share ¥**		
Adults			Professional and Related Services	24%	33%
Immigrant		28%	Retail Trade	16%	13%
Naturalized Immigrant		14%	Manufacturing	13%	9%
Immigrant in the Household (Incl. Self)		38%	Construction	8%	7%
Households	**Imm.**	**U.S.-born**	Personal Services	8%	3%
Single, no kids	25%	42%			
Single, with kids	18%	12%	**Top 5 Countries by Share of LPRs & LPR Naturalization Rates +**		
Married, no kids	15%	22%	Mexico		35%
Married, with kids	42%	24%	Philippines		62%
			Vietnam		80%
Unauthorized Status (Latino Immigrant Adults Only)#			China		65%
Unauthorized		27%	Iran		80%
Of unauthorized, living with a citizen		75%			
Of unauthorized, living with own citizen child		39%	**LPRs and Voting Population**		
			Voting Eligible Population		1,981,970
Sanctuary City Present in Region		Yes	Adult LPRs Eligible for Naturalization		162,386

Note: All racial/ethnic groups other than Latino are "non-Hispanic" groups. "API" refers to Asian/Pacific Islanders. "N/A" indicates the sample size was too small to report.
Unauthorized status could only be estimated for Latino adults. In this table, "living with" means residing in the same household.
* Share of labor force, ages 25-64, who worked full-time last year (at least 50 weeks and 35 hours per week) and had income below 150% of the Federal poverty level.
§ Universe is all people ages 25-64, not in group quarters.
± Rates represent the percent of all employed people ages 25-64 in the racial/ethnic/nativity group that are self-employed.
¥ Share of all employed people ages 25-64, not in group quarters, that are in each specified industry.
+ LPRs are Legal Permanent Residents. Rates are estimates as of 2010, based on CSII analysis of data on the Office of Immigration Statistics (OIS) on all LPRs attaining status between 1985 and 2005. List of top countries of origin is based on a set of 30 countries detailed in the OIS data (the top 30 countries for the U.S. overall) and thus may not be entirely consistent with the top five countries of origin for the region.

RACE, ETHNICITY, AND NATIVITY
(TOTAL POPULATION)

- WHITE (USB) 46%
- LATINO (USB) 20%
- LATINO (IMM) 12%
- API (IMM) 7%
- BLACK (USB) 4%
- API (USB) 4%
- WHITE (IMM) 4%
- OTHER 3%
- BLACK (IMM) 0%

IMM = IMMIGRANT
USB = U.S.-BORN
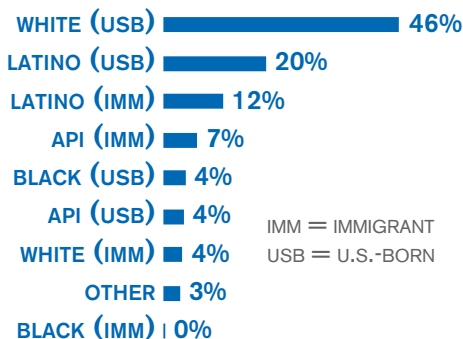
OVERSKILLED IMMIGRANT WORKERS
(OF WORKERS WITH BA OR BETTER, THOSE IN AN UNSKILLED JOB)

U.S.-BORN RATE = 12%

- ALL IMMS: 18%
- NON-HISPANIC WHITE: 13%
- LATINO: 30%
- ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER: 17%

Note: Only immigrant racial/ethnic groups with sufficient sample size are included.

IMMIGRANT ENGLISH SKILLS
BY RECENCY OF ARRIVAL

% SPEAKING ENGLISH
- VERY WELL OR ONLY ENGLISH
- WELL
- NOT WELL OR NONE

ARRIVED IN THE U.S.	Very well or only English	Well	Not well or none
since 2000	38%	26%	36%
1990s	46%	23%	31%
1980s	45%	25%	30%
before 1980	62%	20%	19%