

## Presentations at the Population Association of America Annual Meeting based on the “New Immigrant Survey” Datasets

Detroit, Michigan  
April 30 –May 2, 2009

**"The New Immigrant Survey."**  
Ontario Exhibit Hall, Level 3, Booth No. 215  
Exhibit hours:  
Wednesday, April 29, 12:30 PM – 5:00 PM  
Thursday, April 30, 7:30 AM – 5:00 PM  
Friday, May 1, 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM  
Saturday, May 2, 9:00 AM – 12:00 noon

Akresh, Richard. and Ilana Redstone Akresh (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), "[Using Achievement Tests to Measure Language Assimilation and Language Bias among Immigrant Children.](#)"

Session 100: Population Studies and experimental Design.

Friday, May 1: 10:30AM – 12:20 PM, Cadillac A.

Abstract:

We exploit the test language randomization (Spanish or English) in Woodcock Johnson achievement tests administered to children of adults interviewed in the New Immigrant Survey to estimate the causal impact of language on test scores. Randomization allows measurement of the degree and speed of language assimilation and the costs of taking tests in one's non-dominant language. Foreign-born children receive higher scores when tests are in Spanish; U.S.-born children show higher scores in English. However, foreign-born children arriving at an early age or having spent several years in the U.S. do not benefit from taking tests in Spanish.

Batalova, Jeanne, and Michael Fix (Migration Policy Institute). "[Assessing and Addressing Brain Waste in the United States.](#)"

Session 80: The Consequences of Immigration for Receiving Countries.

Friday, May 1: 8:30AM – 10:20AM, Marquette B.

Abstract:

Taking advantage of the unique features of the 2003 New Immigrant Survey and 2005-2006 American Community Survey, we examined employment and occupational trajectories of highly skilled immigrants in the United States. We found that more than 1.3 million or one in five skilled immigrants were either unemployed or working in unskilled jobs such as dish washers, security guards, or taxi drivers. We find that lack of English skills, nonrecognition of foreign credentials and work experience, non-European origin, shorter tenure in the United States and non-employment admission categories are the main factors behind the brain waste. Skill underutilization documented in our paper can be addressed by both immigrant admission and immigrant integration policies.

Bradatan, Cristina (Texas Tech University), and Laszlo Kulcsar (Kansas State University). "[When Race is Not the Issue: Education and Labor Market Outcomes of European Educated Immigrants in the U.S.](#)"

Session 93: Assimilation and Social Mobility.

Friday, May 1: 10:30AM – 12:20PM, Ambassador Ballroom 3.

Abstract:

In this paper we study the effects of the education level on the labor force participation and income of European immigrants in the U.S.. Although there are seven million European born currently living in the U.S., they are a rather understudied group, most probably because of the assumption of an unproblematic assimilation in the mainstream U.S. society. Using secondary data from the Current Population Survey and New Immigrants Survey and in-depth interviews with educated immigrants, we compare here the labor market outcomes of the native whites and immigrant European population, focusing on the differences that education makes in the lives of these immigrants.

Frank, Reanne (Ohio State University), Ilana Redstone Akresh (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), and Bo Lu (Ohio State University), "[Latino Immigrants and the U.S. Racial Order: How and Where Do They Fit In?](#)"

Session 123: Measurement of Race and Ethnicity.

Friday, May 1: 12:30PM – 2:20PM, Richard A.

Abstract:

According to recent population projections, the non-Hispanic white population will no longer constitute the majority of Americans in the near future. These forecasts have touched off a series of debates over the future of the U.S. color line. We address a two-part question regarding racial boundaries and the place of the Latino immigrant population therein. First, we investigate where Latino immigrants place themselves along the U.S. color line in terms of racial self-identification. Second, we evaluate the way the U.S. color line affects outcomes of Latino immigrants. Using data from the New Immigrant Survey, we find that while Latinos do not conceptualize racial categories in terms of skin color alone, they suffer an earnings penalty for darker skin. These findings suggest that even if Latino immigrants are challenging the supremacy of racial phenotype, the prevailing U.S. racial order based on skin color is still exerting powerful effects on their outcomes.

Connor, Phillip (Princeton University). "[Do Immigrants Religiously Assimilate? Evidence from Western Europe, the United States, and Canada.](#)"

Session 8: Migration and Neighborhood Effects.

Thursday, April 30: 8:30AM – 10:20AM, Marquette B.

Abstract:

Although a number of studies have examined immigrant assimilation among various life domains, religion has been less evaluated within an assimilation framework. Using immigrant survey data from Western Europe, the United States, and Canada, frequency of immigrant religious attendance is compared to religious attendance levels within the immigrant's host society. A consistent, positive relationship is found to exist among all data sets including longitudinal data from Canada. Therefore, the results confirm the religious assimilation hypothesis in that immigrants do religiously assimilate to the host society's religious attendance patterns.

Datta, Saheli (Syracuse University). "[Determinants of Transnationalism among New Legal Immigrants in the United States.](#)"

Poster Session 6, #13.

Friday, May 1: 2:00PM - 4:00PM, Ontario Exhibit Hall.

Abstract:

The transnational field is significant not only for immigrant sending countries but also for immigrant receiving countries like the United States, since it affects the ways immigrants incorporate themselves in the host society and interact with their home communities. This paper analyzes the determinants of transnational engagement among adult immigrants newly admitted to legal permanent residence in the United States. No one particular set of explanatory factors – demographic, incorporation or resource variables – is found to have a greater impact on explaining variance in transnationalism over the others. Yet, the results present a clear picture of which immigrants are most likely to engage in transnational practices: older male immigrants who are employed and proficient in English are most likely to own property abroad and file a petition to sponsor relatives to the United States.

Higashida, Hatsuki (State University of New York at Buffalo SUNY). "[Spouse Effects on Foreign-Born Immigrants' Employment Status.](#)"

Poster Session 4.

Friday, May 1: 8:00AM – 10:00AM, Ontario Exhibit Hall.

Abstract:

This study aims at analyzing impacts of marriage and spouse effects on employment status of foreign-born spouses. Studies on the relationship between spouse's resources and success at work have shown that spouse's education and employment status have significant effects on spouse's employment status. However little is known about impacts of marriage and spouse effects on employment status of immigrant spouses. Based on human capital theory and theory of status homogamy of married couples, this study raises a question that whether immigrants' human capital have impact on the other spouse's occupational attainment. Data used in this study is New Immigrant Survey-2003. Preliminary results are spouse's age and 6 to 8 years of education attained before migration was significant on spouse's employment status. Spouses with longer years of schooling have negative impact on partners' employment status.

Jasso, Guillermina (New York University). "[Immigration and STEM Talent in the United States: Estimating the Size of the Pre-LPR Population.](#)"

Session 26: Data and Methods of Migration Analysis.

Thursday, April 30<sup>th</sup>: 10:30AM – 12:20PM, Marquette B.

Abstract:

Highly skilled foreign-born persons make large, sometimes spectacular, contributions to the United States. However, although the United States warmly welcomes students and trainees and, less warmly, temporary workers such as H-1B workers, those who would like to make it their permanent home face an unwelcoming array of requirements, obstacles and delays, often resulting in ineligibility for legal permanent residence or discouragement with the visa process. Hence, there appears to be a large and increasing number of highly skilled persons at various stages of the visa process. This paper reports new estimates of the number of persons waiting in line in the United States for legal permanent residence via the main three employment-based categories. Estimates are also provided for those waiting abroad and for family members.

Kraus Rebecca, and Sara Speckhard (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services USCIS). [“Got Citizenship? An Exploratory Analysis of the Reasons for Naturalizing.”](#)

Poster Session 7.

Saturday, May 2: 9:00AM – 11:00AM, Ontario Exhibit Hall.

Abstract:

Since the mid-1990s, the annual number of persons who naturalize in the United States has remained at or above half a million people, with over 660,000 naturalizing in 2007. What is lacking, however, is data on the motivations and reasons individuals have for naturalizing after receiving legal permanent resident status in the United States. This project represents a first step in understanding why people choose to naturalize. In this paper, we will review the requirements for naturalization and the available social science literature on naturalization, and we will present an exploratory analysis of data from the Office of Immigration Statistics in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the New Immigrant Survey to determine what factors might predict future decisions to naturalize. This information will set the stage for a survey of recently naturalized persons that is currently underway under the auspices of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

Lofstrom, Magnus, Laura Hill, and Joseph M. Hayes (Public Policy Institute of California PPIC). [“Earnings and Occupational Trajectories of Newly-Legalized Immigrants.”](#)

Session 80: The Consequences of Immigration for Receiving Countries.

Friday, May 1: 8:30AM – 10:20AM, Marquette B.

Abstract:

This paper contributes to the literature examining whether receiving legal status improves the earnings and/or occupations of illegal immigrants. We use data that are newer and different than that of existing research to analyze labor market outcomes of individuals who have received Legal Permanent Resident (LPR) status but previously worked without authorization. The New Immigrant Survey (NIS) gathered detailed employment and migration histories from a cohort of over 8,000 immigrants granted LPR status in 2003, affording a distinction between those who had been in the U.S. legally or illegally prior to earning their green cards. We use a difference-in-difference approach to identify possible labor market effects of receiving legal status. Importantly, the NIS data allow us to categorize different types of illegal immigration experience – e.g., crossing the border illegally or violating the terms of a visa – and to investigate whether there are different impacts of receiving legal status across these two groups.

Saperstein, Aliya (University of Oregon). [“Who Is at Risk of Racial Discrimination? Perceived Race and Health Disparities in the United States.”](#)

Session 24: Racial Discrimination.

Thursday, April 30: 10:30AM – 12:20PM, Joliet.

Abstract:

Recent scholarship argues that the experience of discrimination is an important cause of racial disparities in health. Yet standard methods of measuring race in surveys rely on the respondents’ racial identification – how they choose to describe themselves – rather than a measure (presumably) more directly connected to discrimination: how they are perceived racially by others. This study draws on data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System and explores whether adding perceived race to an analysis of health disparities provides more insight than self-identification alone. The results – that perceived race matters but not necessarily in the ways we might expect – raise important questions about how racial discrimination operates and what we are measuring (or want to measure) when we measure “race.”

Tucker, Catherine, and Jennifer Van Hook (Pennsylvania State University). "[A Portrait of Religiosity of U.S. Muslim immigrants.](#)"

Poster Session 6, #66.

Friday, May 1: 2:00PM – 4:00PM, Ontario Exhibit Hall.

Abstract:

In the wake of the attacks on the World Trade Center, intensive media coverage has been devoted to radical Islamic extremists. However, these extremists groups may comprise only a small minority of Muslims in the US. Muslims have been immigrating to the United States in ever greater numbers. Currently, approximately eight percent of immigrants to the United States report they are Muslim, yet little is known about the religiosity and religious involvement of this group as a whole. Prior to the collection and release of the New Immigrant Survey (NIS) dataset, data about immigrants, much less about their religious preferences and practices, has been difficult to acquire. However, the NIS makes it possible to examine Muslim immigrants who were previously unidentifiable by other means. In this research, we use data from the first full cohort of the NIS to examine the differences in religiosity between Muslims and other immigrant groups.

Xie, Yu, and Margaret, Gough (University of Michigan). "[Ethnic Enclaves and the Earnings of Immigrants.](#)"

Session 8: Migration and Neighborhood Effects.

Thursday, April 30: 8:30AM – 10:20AM, Marquette B.

Abstract:

There is a large literature in sociology concerning the implications of immigrants' participation in ethnic enclaves for their economic and social well-being. In this paper, we examine the economic outcomes of immigrants working in ethnic enclaves as compared to those working in the mainstream economy. The study utilizes the newly available data from the New Immigrant Survey (NIS) to provide empirical answers to some of the most pressing questions in the literature on ethnic enclaves. The NIS is particularly attractive for our research aims. First, it provides adequate coverage of even smaller immigrant groups. Second, it offers a wide range of variables, including characteristics of respondents' employers, job characteristics, educational attainment and language ability. Third, it provides detailed geographic locations for the immigrants themselves.