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# **Profile of Immigrants in Maryland and Implications for TANF**

**Engaging TANF and Immigrant Populations into  
Work Activities that Create Pathways to Self-  
Sufficiency**

**Baltimore, MD, November 3, 2009**

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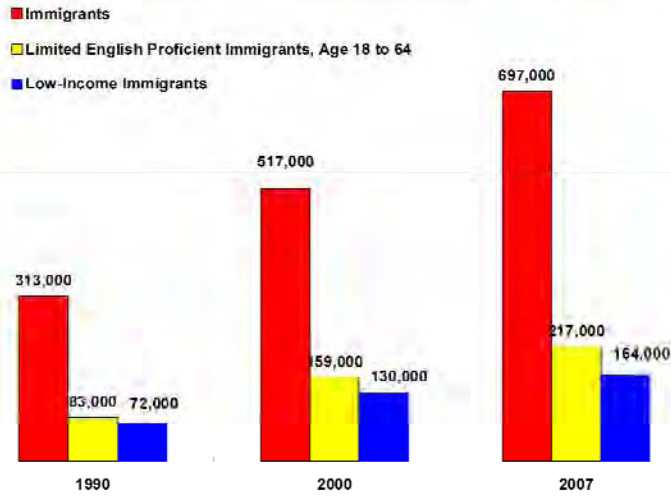
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## Today's Presentation

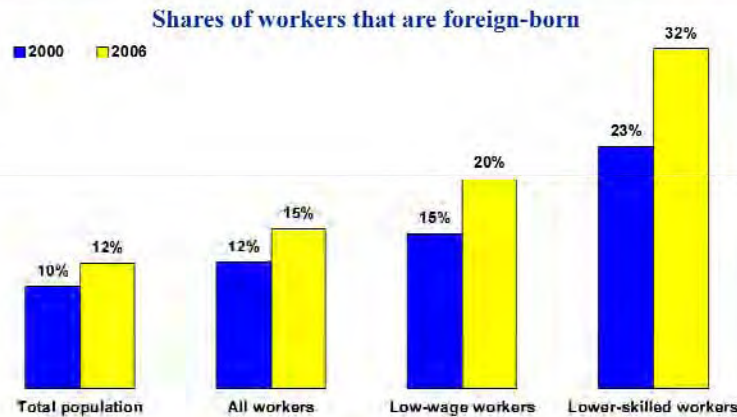
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- Profile of immigrants in Maryland in 2005-2006
  - Help provide context for roundtable themes
  - Focuses on workers and their families
  - Important because national picture does not suffice as large variations across states
- Identifying needs and barriers to employment
- Policy implications and recommendations

## Rapid Growth in Immigrant Populations in Need of Work and Family Supports



## Immigrant Shares of Low-Wage and Lower-Skilled Workers Has Grown the Fastest



Note: a. Low-wage workers earned less than twice the minimum wage in 1999 or in 2005. Self-employed workers are excluded from this tabulation. b. Lower-skilled workers have less than a high school education.

Note: Workers are people age 18 to 64 who are in the civilian workforce, report positive wage and salary earnings or self-employment earnings if self-employed for the prior 12 months, and have worked at least 25 weeks or 700 hours (i.e., the full-time equivalent for 20 weeks).

One of three workers in Montgomery is immigrant (36%)

One of four workers in Prince George's (24%)

## Large Diversity among Immigrant Workers in Maryland

- 29% of immigrant workers are Hispanic in Maryland versus 49% nationally
- Asian (28%) and Black (25%) shares are higher than nationally
- No country accounts for more than 10% of workers in Maryland
  - Only 5% from Mexico versus 32% nationally
  - Asia represented: East Asia and Pacific (15%), Middle East and South Asia (12%) and Southeast Asia (4%)
  - Africa and West Indies with 24% versus 9% nationally

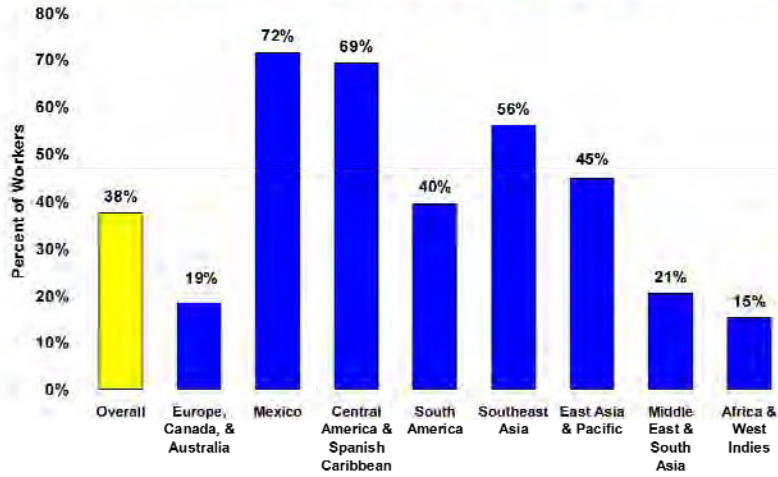
Nationally: Asians, 24%, Black, 8%, White, 19%

## **Large Shares of Immigrant Workers Have Not Completed High School**

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- 17% of immigrant workers do not have high school educations
  - 28% of immigrants nationally
  - 7% of native-born workers in Maryland
- About half of Mexican and Central American immigrants without high school educations
  - Central America and Spanish-speaking Caribbean (53%)
  - Mexico (47%)

## Majority of Immigrant Workers from Mexico, Central America, and Southeast Asia Are Limited English Proficient



## **Immigrants Are Over-Represented in Lower-Skilled Occupations**

- Immigrants are larger shares of lower-skilled workers than their share of all workers (15%)
  - One of three building and maintenance workers (32%)
  - One of four construction workers (25%)
  - One of five food preparers and servers (23%)

Immigrants are larger shares of high-skilled workers than their share of all workers (15%)

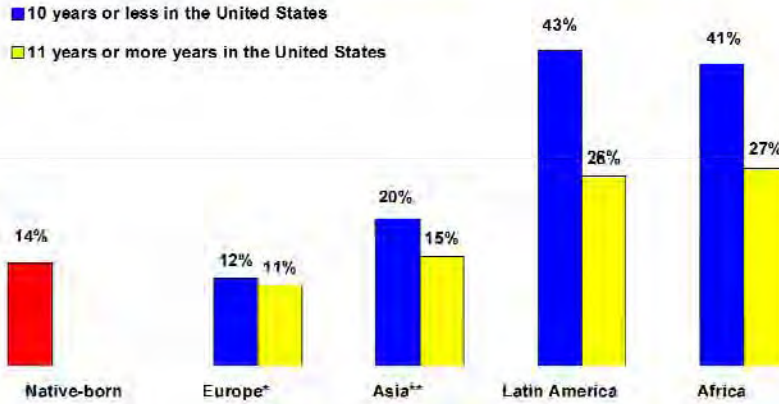
More than one of four scientists (27%) is an immigrant

One of five health care professionals (21%)

One of five mathematicians and computer specialists (19%)



## Large Shares of Foreign-Educated Immigrants from Latin America and Africa Employed in Unskilled Occupations



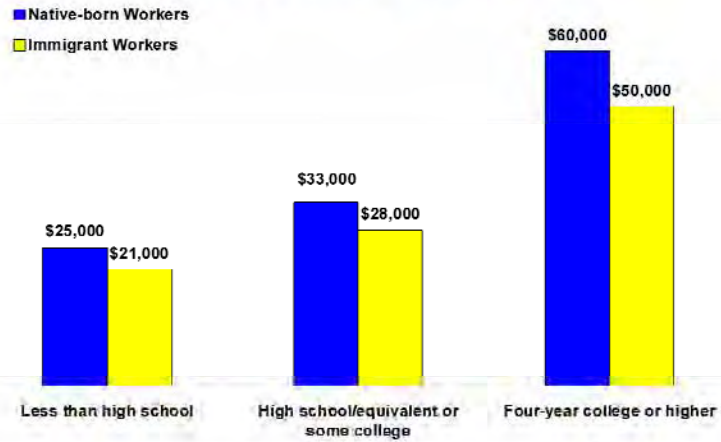
Source: Migration Policy Institute analysis of 2005 and 2006 American Community Survey.

\* The shares of immigrants from Europe regardless of tenure are not statistically different from that of native workers. \*\* The share of immigrants from Asia, 11 years or more in the U.S., are also not statistically different from that of native workers.



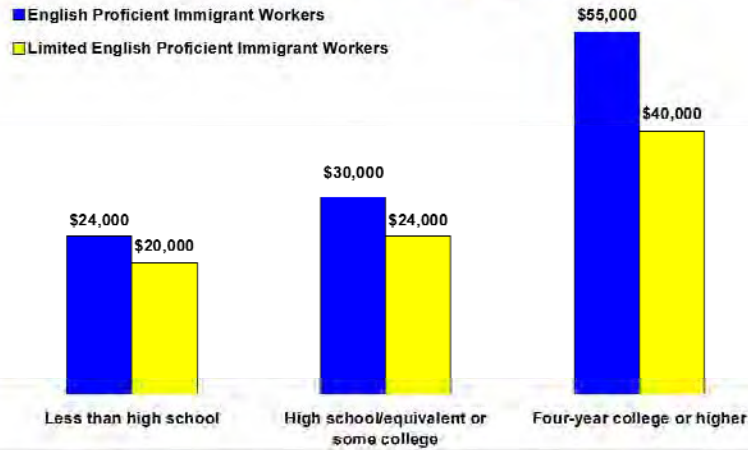
# Immigrant Earnings Increase with Education but Native-Foreign Gap Remains

Median personal earnings, 2005



# LEP Workers Earn Less than English Proficient Workers and Gap Increases with Education

Median personal earnings, 2005



## **Children of Immigrants in Maryland Growing Rapidly**

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- Number of children of immigrants doubled between 1990 and 2007
  - Slightly higher growth rate in Maryland versus nationally (130% versus 98%)
  - Below growth rates of other states: North Carolina (477%) and Georgia (424%)
- One of five children in Maryland has immigrant parents (19% versus 23% nationally)



## **Most Children of Immigrants Are U.S. Citizens but Many Have Noncitizen Parents**

- 84% of children are U.S. citizens
  - 80% born in the United States and eligible for all services
- But many children have noncitizen parents
  - 23% of citizen children have noncitizen parents
  - Larger shares of children with Mexican (55%) and Central American origin (46%) in mixed-status families



Nationally, 31% in mixed-status families

## **Children of Immigrants Less Likely to Be Poor but More Likely to Be Low-Income**

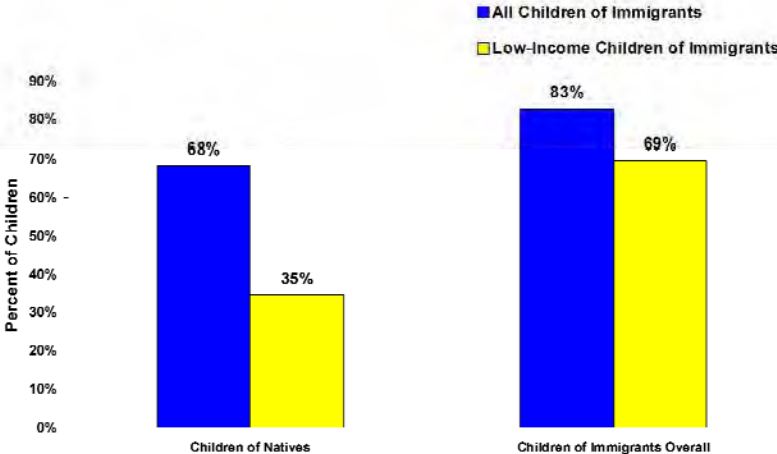
- Lower poverty rate for children of immigrants than children of natives in Maryland (7% versus 9%)
- But children of immigrants more likely to be in low-income families
  - 27% of children of immigrants with incomes below twice poverty level versus 24% of children of natives



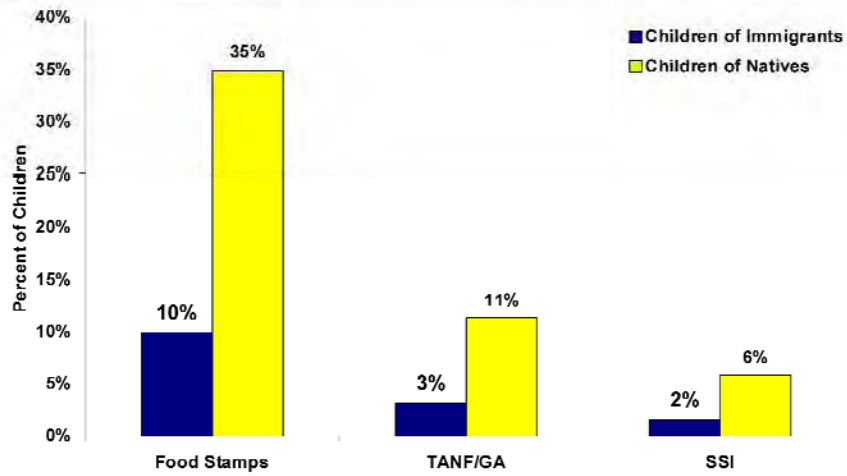
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Maryland ranks third in lowest poverty rate after North Dakota and Vermont; Nationally 22% of children of immigrants are poor vs. 16% of children of natives. Low-income: 51% versus 35%

# Most Children of Immigrants Live in Two-Parent Families



## Low-Income Children of Immigrants Are Less Likely to Receive TANF and Other Public Benefits



Supplemental Security Income



## **Immigrant Families Have Very High Work Effort**

- 95% of children of immigrants in working families versus 91% of children of natives
- Immigrant-versus-native difference larger among low-income families
  - 87% of children of immigrants in working families versus 68% of children of natives
  - Almost all children with Mexican (99%) and South American (96%) parents in working families



Combined 1800 hours the prior year

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## **Policy Implications and Recommendations**

## Policy Implications

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- Impact of immigration mostly limited to Maryland counties in Washington, D.C. Metro
  - Montgomery, Prince George's, and Howard Counties
  - But other jurisdictions likely to be impacted in the future
- Immigrant population in need of services is likely to continue to grow
  - High employment but many in lower-skilled and lower-paying jobs
  - Some under-employment of higher-skilled immigrants

## Policy Implications (continued)

- Earnings appear to go up with education, English, citizenship, and time in the United States
- Lower-skilled immigrants: both ESL and adult education are needed
- Foreign-educated immigrants: job readiness, work experience, and assistance with obtaining U.S. credentials
- Low-income working families need other family support services
  - Child care, transportation, financial education
- Growing numbers of citizen children in low-income immigrant families in need of services

## Policy Implications (continued)

- Deficit Reduction Act might impact income-eligible immigrants to a larger extent than non-immigrants
  - LEP and/or lower-skilled, lack of work history, two-parent families, mental and physical disabilities (refugees)
  - Unlikely to have “chilling effect” as PRWORA
- Language is a major barrier to self-sufficient employment
  - LEP immigrants more likely to time off of assistance while working full-time (Zimmerman & Tumlin, 2003)
  - Job-training programs are inaccessible when English is required
  - Difficult to assess need for mental health, domestic violence, and other services

## Policy Implications (continued)

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- Combining education and skills training
  - Could be an effective strategy towards self-sufficiency
- Integrating ESL with education and/or employment
  - It takes 110 hours of instruction per year up to 6 years for an LEP adult to become proficient in English (McHugh, et al., 2007)
  - ESL learning outside the classroom for working parents
  - English skills needed for continued education and social integration
- Providing continued education and training post-employment



## Policy Implications (continued)

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- Solely state-funded program
  - Expanding program to serve more immigrants with multiple barriers to employment
- Reauthorization of TANF and WIA
  - Expanding education and training opportunities

