BUILDING RESILIENT REGIONS
A MACARTHUR FOUNDATION RESEARCH NETWORK

[working paper]

Struggling over Strangers or Receiving with Resilience?
The Metropolitics of Immigrant Integration

John Mollenkopf
CUNY Graduate Center

Manuel Pastor
University of Southern California

May 31, 2013

Introduction

With Congress gearing up for comprehensive immigration reform, many hope that the era of growing localization of immigration policy will become a thing of the past. After all, one of the reasons given for the April 2010 legislation in Arizona – the infamous Senate Bill 1070 that required local law enforcement and public agency officials to determine the immigration status of individuals about whom they had "reasonable suspicion" that they might be undocumented immigrants – was that local officials felt that the state needed to protect itself against a surge of "illegals" that an ineffective federal government had failed to hold back. In Alabama, Georgia, and elsewhere, political leaders were inspired to follow suit with their own attempts at what some have called "enforcement through attrition" – the notion that local authorities should make life so difficult for undocumented residents that they will willingly "self-deport."

Such localization has not been limited to those advocating restrictionist policies. In New Haven, Connecticut, rather than seeking to chase away the undocumented, city authorities took steps to incorporate them, developing a new approach to granting municipal ID cards to undocumented residents, among others. In Illinois, immigrant advocates persuaded both state and city leaders to promote "immigrant integration," including the development of new immigrant-services and campaign to encourage naturalization. And late 2010 saw the emergence of the Utah Compact, an agreement between business, civic, religious and immigrant leaders in that conservative state to conduct a civil conversation about immigration and "oppose policies that unnecessarily separate families" – a clear dig at the enforcement-happy approach of Arizona and its Southern copycats).[1]

The geographic diversity in attitudes toward immigrants hints at a key point: even if the federal government now reconsiders and changes national immigration policy, something made more likely by the 2012 elections and the overwhelming rejection of anti-immigrant rhetoric by Asian and Latino voters, local jurisdictions will still play a central and crucial role in implementing reforms and determining what it

---

[1] See http://www.theutahcompact.com/.

will mean for the daily lives of immigrants and their neighbors. After all, while the federal government has the formal responsibility for determining how many immigrants come into the country and for preventing those who lack permission from entering, it falls to local and regional jurisdictions to frame the living experience of immigrants and local and regional coalitions of civil leaders often set the political tone for either welcoming or resisting their presence.

This paper summarizes the findings of the book we are preparing, with colleagues, on the relationship between immigrant integration and metropolitan "resilience" as part of the larger Building Resilient Regions project. We view international migration one of the key "shocks" affecting America's urban and metropolitan areas. Like any other shock, it can produce benefits: immigrants add to the labor force, contribute taxes, and start new businesses. However, when the immigrant "shock" is large and fast and/or consists mainly of low-income and poorly educated individuals, particularly those without authorization, cities, metropolitan regions, and states generally have good reason to worry. And because there is geographic variation in immigrant presence, there will necessarily be geographic variation in local response.

After all, local jurisdictions may be called upon to provide immediate public services (such as law enforcement, primary education, or health services) to new and different groups who may not speak English or be familiar with local standards and programs. The long-term imperative of promoting intergenerational upward mobility in the labor and housing markets can involve significant costs in terms of job training and higher education. Aside from costs, rapid recent immigration can also have disconcerting effects on the mainstream population's sense of cultural integrity and erode social solidarity (Putnam 2007). Finally, immigrant workers may compete with vulnerable native-born minority groups in labor markets and neighborhood housing markets, creating various racial and other tensions (Catanzarite 2004; Pastor and Marcelli 2003).

Our study of regional resilience in the face of immigrant "shocks" seeks to better understand the key factors and strategies behind it and promote a new metropolitics of immigrant integration. (In this respect, it is a companion to the paper by Lester and Nguyen in this session.) We believe that positive responses to new immigrants will generate better long-term regional results in economic growth (Benner

and Pastor 2012:48) and we can point to many small declining mill towns that have been helped to rebound by new immigration. We also believe that deliberate actions to reduce social fragmentation and promote of civil society by encouraging receptivity and reducing rigidity in the face of demographic change produce positive gains for regions and for America. And all of this is increasingly not decreasingly relevant as the federal government seems poised to launch a brand new experiment in immigrant integration: the legalization of a very large share of more than 11 million undocumented immigrants.

About the Study

We focus on the factors and forces that lead to positive or negative responses to rapid recent immigration within and across metropolitan areas. Scholars who have examined this question in the United States and Western Europe have often focused on individual attitudes (which, when aggregated, presumably drive local political responses) and how local political opportunity structures and other contextual factors shape those individual responses (Hochschild and Mollenkopf 2009; Hopkins 2010; Ramakrishnan and Wong 2010). Some scholars have suggested that even when the larger political atmosphere is heated, public agencies may practice receptivity by flying "under the radar" to assist immigrants, especially the undocumented, in ways that local public opinion might not accept were these practices to become visible (Jones-Correa 2008). Local political entrepreneurs, on the other hand, may wish to mobilize anti-immigrant sentiment as a way to shift the political balance in their favor, with considerable anecdotal evidence suggesting that conservative grassroots activists and Republican political strategists believe that taking positions against providing services to immigrants and in favor of national and local enforcement can stir up their base for other issues and electoral campaigns (although that calculus seems to be shifting for the Republican Party on a national level).

A recent rapid rise in immigration certainly predisposes members of the local native born population toward these sort of anti-immigrant and opportunistic responses; lacking past experience with immigrants, many places in the South or suburban locations within metropolitan areas were not equipped with institutional shock absorbers or the means to forge new political alliances. Locations with a long history of large immigrant populations, elected officials who are Democrats, and a denser network of immigrant-serving social service organizations immigrant advocacy organizations also has an impact on

tempering the debate (De Graauw, Gleeson, and Bloemraad 2010). But the rapidity of demographic change does not, by itself, preordain a less favorable outcome for immigrants –the Silicon Valley has seen an especially rapid increase in the share of the foreign-born and the reception has been quite positive for both high- and low-skilled immigrants, belying a simple relationship between scale of change and local politics.

Our study tries to go beyond the impact of the scale of new immigrant arrivals to look at the importance of their composition, the local political structure, and the role of business and civic leaders. We examine seven metropolitan areas, with the basic logic being to compare responses to the arrival of new immigrants both *across* older and newer receiving destinations and *within* them—looking both at the central cities where immigrants initially concentrate but also the suburban and exurban areas where they are a newer phenomenon. We measure urban and regional receptivity primarily in terms of the adoption of new programs to promote immigrant integration, the redesign of existing programs to take account of new immigrant client groups, the enforcement approach taken by local governments toward undocumented immigrants, and the degree of cooperation between local governments, nonprofit service delivery organizations, and immigrant advocacy groups. We measure negative receptivity or "rigidity" in terms of the presence of anti-immigrant mobilization, the adoption of strong enforcement measures, and the failure to adopt measures like the provision of translation services in everyday transactions with local government.

In general, we find that: (1) the basic insight about the challenges of change is correct: it is harder to be resilient when the shock is sharper and large – that is, when areas receive a large influx in the context of little past experience with immigrant populations; (2) resilience is also harder when the mainstream tends to racialize lower-skilled immigrants – that is, when old-timers perceive newcomers to be outside the mainstream and more likely to generate service demands than contribute to the local tax base; (3) resilience and receptivity are more likely when earlier waves of immigrants have "mainstreamed" and become a constituency base (i.e., voters) who support a more positive attitude; (4) resilience and receptivity are more challenging when political entrepreneurs find it advantageous to exploit resentments about the fiscal costs and social stress associated with newcomers; and (5) resilience

and receptivity may be more likely when regional actors – for example, a regional business leadership group – believe that promoting a sense of welcome is good for the region and thus act as a counterweight to anti-immigrant political entrepreneurs.

To consider these hypotheses, we initially chose six metropolitan areas in which to study processes of immigrant integration: Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, San Jose, Phoenix, and Charlotte. We eventually distinguished a seventh metro, the "Inland Empire" of Southern California (Riverside and San Bernardino Counties), from the rest of LA because it was a distinct exurban area of new immigration even though it adjoined a large and traditional receiving area. The researchers conducted historical background research and interviewed a mix of regional actors with a standard interview protocol and a common set of questions. John Mollenkopf, Els de Graauw, and Marta Pichardo analyzed New York, while Jaime Dominguez examined Chicago, Michael Jones-Correa studied Charlotte, Paul Lewis and Marie Provine covered Phoenix, and Manuel Pastor, Rachel Rosner, Jennifer Tran, and Juan de Lara investigated Los Angeles and San Jose and de Lara conducted the study of the Inland Empire.

New York and Los Angeles are obvious choices because they are the two biggest traditional gateways (with the former "continual" and the latter more recent). These metropolitan areas have a highly diverse set of new and "mature" immigrant communities (with three in ten immigrants in the United States living in one or the other, along with slightly more of their children). They provide a matched pair with complicated mixes of immigrants and natives but also have core cities with well-developed infrastructures for immigrant organizing, advocacy, and service that sometimes work outside the central cities but may also not fully stretch across the entire metropolitan area. Both have recently been the subject of major studies on the trajectories of second-generation youth (Kasinitz et al. 2004; Telles and Ortiz 2008). Finally, immigrants are moving straight into the suburbs of both regions, blurring the historical patterns of initial arrival in the central city followed by spillover into adjacent suburbs and allowing us to examine variation in response *within* a particular metropolitan area.

We chose the Chicago and San Jose metropolitan areas not only because they both have large and diverse immigrant populations but also because both have adopted successful immigrant integration policies. Chicago, a traditional gateway, has experienced new migration from Mexico and Eastern

Europe, which has spread away from the central city over the last decade. San Jose, the capital of Silicon Valley, is a relatively new immigrant destination that has attracted Asian immigrants to its sprawling primary city and northern suburbs (some of which are now cities in their own right) as well as Mexican immigrants to its southern and eastern agricultural areas.[2] Both regions also have nationally notable immigrant integration programs; learning why and how these programs evolved can provide a better understanding of what explains resilience as well as pointing to useful policy lessons for the future.

Charlotte and Phoenix are new destinations that have offered contrasting welcomes. While not without tensions and gaps in service delivery, Charlotte has been relatively welcoming, partly because its business and civic leadership want to present the city as a model for the "New South." Phoenix has offered a decidedly cooler reception, with its county sheriff, Joe Arpaio, providing a celebrated instance in which local law enforcement has taken up the enforcement of immigration law. The Inland Empire, which we also examined, sits beside, but at some distance from, a traditional gateway, Los Angeles, but its immigrant presence is much is newer than in LA and the rapid recent increase of its immigrant residents dramatically changed local political dynamics. (In this respect, it is an interesting comparison with the east end of Long Island, discussed in the New York chapter.)

An Introduction to the Cases

In comparing the cases, a number of demographic and political dimensions had evident analytic importance. Comparative demographic analysis highlights the importance of the mixes of immigrants, the timing of their introduction among native born populations, and their geographic position within in each metropolitan region, particularly their recency of arrival, socio-economic status, national origin, and likely undocumented status – and the political implications of the resulting "demographic distance" between the new immigrants and the native born populations. The presence or absence of relatively higher income and more educated immigrants, the size composition of different immigrant groups, the social position of immigrants compared to native born minority groups, and the presence or absence of an immigrant

---

[2] This may surprise some who think of San Jose as having long had a Mexican presence, but this is more historical than contemporary.

heritage among native born whites are all important factors. We argue that these general empirical factors shape how much immigrants can be "racialized" or considered as a distinctly separate population. The relative presence of undocumented immigrants and their spatial concentrations within central city or peripheral parts of metropolitan areas may also influence native responses.

To truly understand the variations in local responses to these presenting demographic trends, however, each set of case study analysts delve into but has a much more receptive atmosphere – one much get to the institutional structures, political cultures, and community nuances of the various metro regions. The first three case studies take up traditional gateways, while the next four address the newer locations. Els de Graauw, Marta Pichardo, and John Mollenkopf take up the case of New York, contrasting the relatively welcoming actions of the New York City government with the conflicts and hostilities that have arisen in a nearby suburb. Jaime Dominguez considers immigrant integration in Chicago, a political landscape characterized by a strong party machine, traditional Black-white cleavages, and intense neighborhood identification and competition. These factors have both created constraints and an opening for Latino immigrants to insert themselves as political actors. Dominguez also finds that the legacy of Eastern European immigration leads political actors to "deracialize" the contemporary immigrant integration debate. Manuel Pastor, Juan de Lara, and Rachel Rosner consider the City and County of Los Angeles, a place characterized by a strong set of immigrant (and other) social movements. They argue that while these actors have been able to create a set of political penalties to anti-immigrant attitudes and policies, they have not achieved as much as New York or Chicago in terms of real policy or institutional change.

Michael Jones Correa begins our examinations of new destinations with a study of Charlotte, North Carolina. This case points both the advantages and the limits of business leadership. He argues that Charlotte has long had a business elite concerned about position Charlotte as a financial center of the New South; as such, it took a leadership role on school desegregation, downtown development, and regional economic strategies. This served to contain immigration controversies which nonetheless heated up as a more apparent immigrant presence (in the wake of protest marches) and opportunistic political entrepreneurs combined to shift the ground.

This theme is followed up in Doris Marie Provine and Paul Lewis's examination of Phoenix, a place made famous by Sheriff Arpaio's energetic crack down on undocumented immigrants as well as by the adoption of SB 1070. While his anti-immigrant populations constitutes a response to the rapid growth of immigrants, the significant presence of unauthorized immigrants, and the overwhelmingly Mexican national origin of Phoenix's immigration, it also reflects the vacuum created by a long-stranding metropolitan fragmentation and lack of regional business leadership.

This contrasts with the examination of the San Jose / Silicon Valley metro by Manuel Pastor, Rachel Rosner, and Jennifer Tran. It's a hopeful case because the local response has been quite positive despite the rapid recent growth of the immigrant population – indeed faster and larger than in any other case. The welcoming response reflects not only a diversity in the composition of the immigrant population which "deracializes" the issue, but the importance of a business constituency committed to the high-skill immigrants, with positive spillovers to less skilled immigrants and refugees. The high degree of regional business collaboration in the Silicon Valley on other elements of economic policy has a positive spill-over effect on immigration policy.

Juan de Lara provides the last of our new destination case studies with an examination of the exurban counties of San Bernardino and Riverside, known as the Inland Empire. Once a very white and Republican, the Inland Empire has been transformed by an influx both of African Americans and Latino immigrants and non-immigrants seeking cheaper housing. The sudden changes – and the political mismatch between current leadership and current demographics – has produced a wave of anti-immigrant activism that has not been countered by the social movement that exists in, say, Los Angeles.

The Case Studies

New York

In New York, Els de Graauw, Marta Pichardo, and John Mollenkopf analyzed the contrasting dynamics in the region's central city and easternmost end, Suffolk County on the east end of Long Island. Reflecting New York City's long history as a major entry point for migration to the United States, it has become politically obligatory in New York City to celebrate virtually every aspect of the immigrant experience. The City itself may well have the deepest and widest array of immigrant service and

advocacy organizations of any place in the United States. Partly as a result, Mayor Bloomberg has directed city employees to not inquire about the documentation status of people with whom they were interacting and reaffirmed that undocumented immigrants were entitled to receive services (in stark contrast to Arizona SB1070). Another example: by May 2009, thirty-nine agencies had filed accessibility-improvement plans with the Office of Operations at an estimated cost of $27 million – improving accessibility to clients with limited English proficiency across the City.

Suffolk County lies sixty miles east of the city on Long Island,– but it is a world away in terms of receptivity. Given both its declining agricultural activities and the continual growth of its second home and vacation sectors, it has been a magnet for low skilled workers serving predominantly middle- to upper-middle class consumers. This produced what we have termed an "immigrant shock," with the number of immigrants more than doubling since 1980. For a time, the former County Executive and County legislators backed anti-immigrant local laws, including an attempt to deputize Suffolk County police to be immigration agents in 2004 (not passed) and a requirement that county contractors demonstrate the legal status of their employees (passed). Several anti-immigrant hate groups emerged in the county and a number of high profile hate crimes took place on the island. In response, immigrant advocacy organizations founded the Long Island Immigrant Alliance (LIIA), an umbrella organization of nonprofit, social justice, labor, and religious organizations.

Of course, the New York metro is far more than the contrast between the city and its affluent far suburbs. For example, the town of Port Chester in Westchester County has become an increasingly diverse microcosm, with the emergence of Latino political leaders, while South and East Asian communities have emerged in Northeastern New Jersey. But the contrast illustrates our themes. The urban core celebrates its past and contemporary immigrant heritages – in part because the diverse groups that have settled in the city are becoming increasingly prominent parts of its electorate. The fact that they range from low-skilled workers, sometimes undocumented, to highly accomplished professionals means both that immigrants themselves need to form coalitions across national origin groups *and* that they are harder to racialize. By contrast, Suffolk County lacked the rich immigrant history and the influx was disproportionately made up of low skilled workers from Latin America. Political entrepreneurs saw

the opportunity to stir up emotions but the spark of opportunism fell on a tinder set by these structural factors. Partly because of the strong pro-immigrant focus in the central city and outreach by city-based philanthropies, nonprofits, and unions, and partly because of local leadership, these sparks did not catch fire.

Leadership thus matters. The City retains its current leadership role – and Mayor Bloomberg co-chaired Partnership for a New American Economy, a coalition of mayors and business leaders pressing for national immigration reform. After Superstorm Sandy battered the East Coast in the fall of 2012, the new Suffolk County Executive issued an order mandating translation support for emergency services, making this one of the first suburban areas in the country to adopt such a provision.[3] Political change in Suffolk County came about partly because of work initiated by immigrant rights groups based in the City, showing how suburban locales are sometimes dependent on services and organizing imported from areas with deeper experience with receiving immigrants.

Los Angeles

Los Angeles also has a large and firmly established immigrant presence; indeed, the foreign-born share of the population is actually on the decline, with the growth of immigrant-origin populations now coming from the second and third generations. This maturing of the immigrant population has lessened any "shock" pressures and provided a sufficiently large political base that elected officials are open to immigrant concerns. However, the Los Angeles region is, in some sense, an "underperformer." Given its long and large immigrant presence, one might expect an even more welcoming attitude, even in the core central city. To explore both the general regional response and the variation within the region, de Lara, Pastor, and Rosner focused on two iconic parts of metropolitan Los Angeles (from an immigrant integration point of view): the City of Los Angeles and the small, dense, heavily Hispanic municipality of Maywood in Los Angeles County east of the city.

Given its current demographics, it is sometimes easy to forget that Los Angeles was unusually white for a major city through the first half of the twentieth century, with most of its population being

---

[3] http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/opinion/2012/11/19/suffolk-county-bellwether-on-immigration-politics/

migrants from the Midwest (Waldinger and Bozorgmehr 1985). Immigrants arrived all through the post-war period, but flows were especially significant in the 1970s and 1980s, transforming Los Angeles into a majority-minority city by 1987. Less than twenty years later, in 2005, Antonio Villaraigosa won office as the first Mexican American mayor of the modern era (Sonenshein and Pinkus 2005). The son of an immigrant father and a US-born mother, Villaraigosa forged a broad coalition of Latino, African American, and white liberal supporters – and he often led on immigration issues, including welcoming immigrant marchers at City Hall but also taking a lead on pushing for federal reform of the immigration system. (In May 2013, Eric Garcetti, the grandson of Mexican immigrants, succeeded him.)

Both because of its large immigrant-origin population and the particular political configuration that provided majorities for these and other elected officials, the City of Los Angeles has adopted a number of pro-immigrant measures. For example, its Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs works to provide translation services in city agencies and an Immigrant Advisory Council to the Human Rights Commission (HRC) enables immigrant advocacy organizations to have access to city officials. Since 1979, Special Order 40 has directed the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) not to determine immigration status in the course of routine stops and in 2011, the LAPD reformed its towing policies to allow undocumented drivers stopped in the course of a routine checkpoint to have someone with a driver's license come to pick up the car rather than have it hauled to a storage yard. In 2012, City officials also began movement on a city identification card, modeled after pioneering efforts in New Haven and the Bay Area.

At the same time, advocates criticize the City for being less systematic in its efforts than other locales with far smaller immigrant populations. For example, previous mayor James Hahn originated the Office of Immigrant Affairs but it foundered over the past few years of the Villaraigosa administration. Initial timidity may have been the problem: while one of Villaraigosa's first acts was to welcome over half a million immigrants as they marched on City Hall in 2006 to protest anti-immigrant legislation in Congress, some of his advisors argued that he should be more restrained in promoting immigrant causes lest he be seen as simply defending ethnic interests. White mayors like Michael Bloomberg in New York and Richard Daley in Chicago do not face such pressures, although Villaraigosa did take a leadership

position in the campaign to boycott Arizona over its 2010 adoption of Senate Bill 1070.[4]

As in New York, conditions vary considerably outside the central city. One of the five members of the powerful Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors has expressed significant concerns about undocumented immigrants and what he claims is the over-use of welfare and health services by their children. The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department maintains a "287(g) agreement" with the federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) that allows local law enforcement officers to identify and detain undocumented resident for hand-off to ICE during their normal duties. The Council on Immigrant Integration, a private sector effort, has been working for a more uniform welcoming approach. Hosted by a local community foundation, it seeks to bring civic actors together who are not necessarily on the forefront of the immigration struggle. Still, this effort is mostly city-based, reflecting the geographic variance within the metropolitan area.

Politics at the region's geographic extremes, however, do not simply run toward restrictionism. De Lara, Pastor, and Rosner review the case of Maywood, a small town of about 45,000 people within LA County to the Southeast of the city. Almost entirely Latino, with many undocumented immigrants, its elected leadership declared Maywood a sanctuary city in 2006 and went as far as eliminating its police department's traffic division for having allegedly targeting undocumented drivers. Maywood's political leadership has embraced a range of immigrant integration policies and Maywood advocates wish to use their municipal platform to develop an immigrant-based political movement in southeast Los Angeles County. In response, Maywood has become a target for anti-immigrant activists but it also suggests a particular feature of the Los Angeles landscape which the authors of this chapter stress: the way in which social movements can find zones of opportunity within a fragmented metropolitan area.

They argue that social movement actors, including unions, community organizers, and immigrant rights activists, have created a more receptive environment in greater Los Angeles The core city hosts a broad range of nationally-known immigrant advocacy organizations, such as the Coalition for Humane

---

[4] Stepping into the gap, the California Community Foundation, headed by Antonia Hernandez, former executive director of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, launched an immigrant integration initiative, including the creation of a multisector Council for Immigrant Integration, a step recommended in Pastor and Ortiz (2009).

Immigrant Rights in Los Angeles (CHIRLA), the Consejo de Federaciones Mexicanas en Norteamérica, the Koreatown Immigrant Workers Association, the National Association of Latino Elected Officials, and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, all of which have access to local and national decision makers and influence their decisions. Even in Maywood, activists moved there thinking that it might provide an opportunity to wield an outsized voice about local policies for immigrant integration.

In any case, the long-standing immigrant population in the urban core, led by mayors from an immigrant background, has provided a climate in which public and private sectors leaders push pro-immigrant measures in the most visible part of the region. This may be as much effect as cause, however, because the remarkable flowering of social movement organizing in contemporary Los Angeles moves them to take such positions. However, Los Angeles may still be an "underperformer" because local governments do not always translate these dispositions into the kinds of concrete policy making and implementation that have taken place in New York and Chicago.

Chicago

Though it was a major immigrant destination between 1880 and 1920, the Chicago metropolitan area reemerged as the locus of a large immigrant influx over the last decade. As the data presented in Chapter 2 indicated, more than one third are of Mexican descent, many from the state of Oaxaca. Many immigrants have also moved to the surrounding Lake, Will, McHenry, and DuPage counties, which have all seen double-digit increases in their immigrant populations. As in other metropolitan peripheries, the rapidity of the increase produced a shock to the system – but the relative share of recent immigrants in the metro Chicago population is lower than in our other traditional receiving areas. Moreover, Chicago's long and proud history of European immigration has helped to deracialize the contemporary immigration issue.

Indeed, the much-vaunted Daley machine in the core city of Chicago responded by accommodating immigrant populations, in part using the growing Latino voter base to cement its electoral position against any potential African American challenge. The city's new mayor since 2011, Rahm Emanuel, has backed comprehensive immigration reform, from which he had backed away as White House chief of staff in the Obama Administration. City officials have cooperated with nonprofit

organizations on health, education, and literacy initiatives, and immigrant advocacy organizations have built multiethnic coalitions. In 2010, the Chicago-based Illinois Immigrant Rights Coalition won the prestigious E Pluribus Unum Prize from the Migration Policy Institute its work with the State of Illinois to implement an Immigrant Family Resource Program that reduces the barriers faced by low-income immigrants and their children when seeking public benefits and services; this effort is a model for cooperation between state agencies and the region's immigrant-serving organizations. The coalition also made inroads into suburban politics by pointing out to civic leaders that immigrants are a growing presence and a potential swing vote.

Politics appears to be more of a factor behind Chicago's relatively supportive approach to immigrant issues than pressure from social movements, as in Los Angeles. In his chapter, Jaime Dominguez charts the rise of Latino influence within the Democratic machine, arguing that Mayor Richard Daley modernized that organization by incorporating Latino voters, partly as a way offset challenges from black or white liberal independents (see also Simpson and Kelly 2011). While this has led them to frame relevant policy issues in a generally pro-immigrant way, it also means that any future increases in Latino empowerment will be accomplished through the machine, not by challenging the political establishment – very much not the "LA Story." Still, the dynamic of incorporation from above has paved the way for immigrant-friendly policies, including at the State level.

The influence of the city's Democratic machine has been less evident elsewhere in the metro (as is true in many other cases), despite Chicago's role in creating a Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, which in turn established a diversity task force to survey immigrant integration practices in suburban jurisdictions. In the face of broadening migration, some suburban jurisdictions adopted local strategies to enforce immigration law and others have threatened to cut bilingual education and English as a second language (ESL) classes that serve immigrant students.

At the same time, after a period of adjustment, other suburbs have responded in a more supportive manner. Under the New Americans' Initiative, the village of Melrose Park lobbied the state of Illinois in 2007 to establish the first "welcoming center" to connect recently arrived immigrants to important human, educational, and employment services. Since 2005 the town of Cicero has set several

programs in motion to create a hospitable environment for its immigrants, including a popular Department of Community Affairs and Special Projects initiative to assist Spanish-speaking business owners, many of them legal immigrants, with translation on procedures and regulations for becoming licensed. Stone Park responded to its growing Latino immigrant population with community events and festivals in local schools, cultural competency training for municipal employees who service immigrants, conflict resolution, and training (a financial literacy course and ESL) for immigrant parents.

It may be that the Chicago Democratic machine's control over Cook County has dampened (but not eliminated) the negative response of natives to immigrant "shocks" in some suburbs. It is also the case that Chicago differs from New York and Los Angeles in being better able to coordinate certain civic actions across jurisdictions. Here lies the intersection with the new regionalism we highlighted in the Utah example that began this concluding chapter: it is telling that Chicago Metropolis 2020, a business-led group, has addressed regional issues of affordable housing and former Mayor Daley made a consistent effort to meet with his suburban counterparts on issues of concern. Although the topic of immigrant integration has not been the most prominent theme in these regional approaches, these regional visioning activities may have some positive spillover for immigrants, a point driven home in the Silicon Valley case.

San Jose

Although the San Jose metropolitan region is a relatively new gateway, attention to its immigrants has become quite established in the region's civic fabric. The region stems from the northern epicenters of Silicon Valley, Palo Alto and Mountain View, down through the city of San Jose to more agricultural reaches south of the city. While the information technology industries dominate the area's economy, the city of San Jose has emerged as the nation's tenth largest and many of the adjacent municipalities are also important in their own right. Not only did immigrant entrepreneurs found many major IT companies, including Indians and Chinese (Saxenian 1999), but all these companies employ professional staff from immigrant backgrounds and have been prime movers in the national push to increase the number of H-1B visas for technical workers. The growth of immigrant-origin communities employed in these areas has in turn led to the election of many members of local city councils. In terms of receptivity, the region therefore closely approximates the immigrant-friendly tenor of the urban cores of the three traditional

receiving areas destinations; indeed, it goes beyond them in some respects because the suburbs also have reacted positively.

A clear reason is that naturalized immigrants have become an important part of the urban and suburban electorate, with some 40 percent of the voters in the principal cities of the metropolitan area being immigrants or their children.[5] As the region's immigrant communities matured, they have become civically engaged, electing a growing number of immigrant candidates. The City of San Jose is roughly one-third Latino, one-third Asian, and one-third white and has a history of progressive reform and its ten-member city council is diverse, with both Asian and Latino members (Trounstine 2008). The nearby city of Cupertino, home of Apple, has a Chinese American mayor and three Asian members on its five-member city council.

Overall, the region trends Democratic, which also provides a supportive tone. But the voters also expect the region's politicians to pay attention to immigration in a positive way. Zoe Lofgren, one of the region's Democratic representatives in Congress, and consistently took up the issue of temporary visas allowing high-tech immigrants to work in Silicon Valley as chair (and now ranking member) of the House Immigration Subcommittee and, more generally, supports comprehensive immigration reform. Another, Representative Mike Honda, chairs the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus. He was interned (along with his family) during World War II and is considered a stalwart defender of immigrant rights.

But it's not just politics. The San Jose metropolitan area has a much better-developed public and nonprofit infrastructure of immigrant services than most other new receiving areas. Santa Clara County's Human Relations Council founded the Immigrant Relations and Integration Services (IRIS) in 1996. In 2000, IRIS hosted a conference, Bridging Borders in Silicon Valley: Summit on Immigrant Needs and Contributions, and released a report with hundreds of recommendations for improving immigrant lives. While the office has suffered declining resources in the context of the Great Recession, IRIS has coordinated an immigrant leadership course in collaboration with San Jose City College, helping to

---

[5] The principal cities are San Jose, Sunnyvale, Santa Clara, Mountain View, Milpitas, Palo Alto, and Cupertino.

generate the kinds of civic infrastructure and activism that are missing in the Inland Empire, the far Chicago suburbs, or Suffolk County on Long Island.

This "warmth of the welcome," apart from modest tensions around day labor sites, is quite remarkable given that the San Jose metropolitan area saw the biggest recent percentage increase in the number of immigrants of any of our cases. With a higher share of high-skilled and wealthy Asian immigrants, it is harder for political entrepreneurs within the native white majority to negatively "racialize" immigrants as the "other" (something that also seems important in Chicago). The positive framing of immigrant IT workers and entrepreneurs seems to spill over to other populations as well. Even communities with many undocumented Mexicans, such as the Mayfair neighborhood in San Jose, receive positive attention and support from local authorities, perhaps in part because the majority population understands the importance of their contribution to low skilled work from which they benefit directly.

Another driving force in San Jose's "warmth of welcome" is that regional leaders can – and do – credibly argue that the region's ability to attract and retain immigrants is vital to its economic success. For example, the *Index of Silicon Valley* published by Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network, a grouping of new economy business and civic leaders, describes immigrants under the rubric of "Talent Flows and Diversity" and the *Index* writers express concern when the flow of foreign-born slows rather than rises. The labor movement's own think tank, Working Partnerships USA, also put out a celebratory analysis of immigrant contributions in 2004 (Auerhahn and Brownstein 2004). Both business and labor interests, therefore, have *consistently emphasized the importance of immigrants to the region's social and economic health*. Perhaps at lower levels of intensity and coherence, the same appears true of another new destination, Charlotte, North Caroline.

Charlotte

The Charlotte metropolitan region is less receptive than San Jose, but much more so than Phoenix. As in San Jose, Charlotte's well organized regional business class thinks of itself as building a model regional metropolis (though in a more politically conservative mode). Yet unlike San Jose, and even unlike Phoenix, it has the newest immigrants of any region and they and their children make up the smallest part of the city's potential electorate.

As a financial and logistics capital of the South, indeed, the nation, Charlotte's leaders may well not have expected the recent arrival of substantial numbers of Latino immigrants. Pat McCrory, a Republican, served as mayor from 1995 through 2009, when a significant portion of the recent economic and demographic transformation occurred. Key public agencies, such as the schools, have worked to adjust to the influx of non-English-speaking immigrants, providing immigrants with a modicum of "bureaucratic incorporation."

However, there is still a significant "institutional mismatch" between the needs of the immigrant community and the services provided by public and nonprofit organizations. Immigrant organizations are in their infancy and immigrant political representation has yet to emerge. Indeed, local service providers have been on the defensive, trying not only to manage increased demands from new immigrant clients, but to forestall negative reactions from native-born white and black residents. A 2007 immigration report commissioned by the former mayor adopted a schizophrenic tone, veering from suspicion of the legitimacy of new arrivals to a bureaucratic accounting of the services that the city and county provided them.

Some observers suggest that the reception has chilled since 2006, partly because rapid growth of the immigrant population and early signs of its civic political mobilization (Deaton 2008; Furuseth and Smith 2010). In 2006, the Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Department became one of the country's first to train deputies under the 287(g) program. And former Mayor McCrory, once known for welcoming immigrants, raised concerns about illegal immigration in his 2008 campaign for governor (which he lost). Still, despite these moves, Charlotte has proven relatively welcoming, particularly given how recent and rapid the increase in its immigrant population.

Business leadership may well account for this, as Michael Jones Correa explains in his chapter. Observers of the city's transformation into a banking center describe how a "tight-knit, private-sector, philanthropic, economic growth machine" oversaw the transformation from textile and furniture manufacturing to banking and logistics. NationsBank (now Bank of America) was a driving force in downtown development. As Furuseth and Smith note, "The Charlotte-Mecklenburg corporate community displayed little interest in targeting undocumented immigrants or designing strategies to punish or remove

them from the area" (2010:186). Jones Correa underlines how that leadership sees a need for immigrant labor and wants Charlotte to stand as a model of the tolerant "New South." While the situation may be vulnerable to local political entrepreneurs who wish to whip up anti-immigrant sentiment in the pursuit of political advancement, they at least encounter some degree of resistance from business forces concerned with the region's overall image.

Phoenix

Surprisingly, given its adjacency to Mexico, immigration has also been a recent phenomenon in Phoenix. Interestingly, the Phoenix metropolitan region, which is largely contained within Maricopa County, is not particularly fragmented; although Maricopa County includes twenty-five municipalities, the City of Phoenix occupies 517 square miles and holds 40 percent of the county's population. While this political geography is less complex than that of the other regions, Maricopa County is by no means easily governed. Rather than leading the region as Chicago does Cook County or even LA does in LA County, Phoenix co-exists alongside other large municipalities including Chandler, Gilbert, Glendale, Mesa, and Scottsdale, all of which have more than 200,000 residents and can often be at loggerheads with them. And while Maricopa County and the State of Arizona are Republican bastions, Phoenix leans Democratic.

Of all the nation's large metropolitan areas, Phoenix has the sharpest difference between its older, primarily native-born residents and its younger and more immigrant (and noncitizen) residents. This division has helped to fuel native Anglo angst. White residents tend to equate "immigrant" with "Mexican immigrant" and specifically "illegal immigrant." Undocumented Mexicans do indeed dominate the recently arrived foreign born population, stemming partly from successful Federal effort to fortify the California and Texas borders in the late 1990s. This pushed unauthorized immigration toward the northern Sonoran desert and Arizona and made Phoenix a flashpoint for frustrations about border control. Unauthorized immigrants, who may comprise 10 percent of the region's population and workforce, tend to keep a low profile, but many Phoenix residents are aware of black-market activities related to human smuggling taking place in Phoenix neighborhoods as well as the high levels of crime and violence across the Mexican border.

The state (as well as national) context has helped to politicize the Phoenix landscape. The

heavily Republican Arizona legislature's passage of SB 1070 sparked national controversy and a backlash against Phoenix in many other parts of the country. While supporters of SB 1070 deny that it has fostered racial profiling, a recent federal district court ruling found that Sheriff Joe Arpaio's implementation of the law "violated the constitutional rights of Latinos by targeting them during raids and traffic stops."[6] Indeed, the State seems to have embraced a so-called "policy of attrition" in which it seeks to reduce the unauthorized population by ratcheting up local enforcement (Krikorian 2005).

Few organizations have attempted to build bridges between natives and immigrants or form coalitions in support of immigrant integration in Metropolitan Phoenix and advocacy organizations, service providers, and Latino elected officials have often found themselves on the defensive in the face of overwhelming popular hostility to unauthorized immigration driven by publicity-grabbing efforts of anti-immigration political entrepreneurs at the county and state levels.

Phoenix has significant degrees of all the factors that we argue limit receptivity. Its new immigrants are highly racialized, the immigrant "shock" has been sudden, and many recent immigrants are in fact undocumented. The demographic distance between the new younger immigrants and the older native-born population is among the highest in the country (Frey 2010). As Doris Marie Provine and Paul Lewis note in their chapter, Its regional fragmentation is high and many elected officials, especially Sheriff Arpaio, have sought to build their careers by tapping into the anxieties that these conditions create among the voters. In contrast to San Jose and to a lesser degree in Charlotte, its business and civic leadership seems willing to condemn anti-immigrant sentiments as against the region's broader economic and social interests, although sixty business leaders did sign a letter in March 2011 arguing that Arizona's anti-immigrant legislation was hurting the state economically; this provided cover for state lawmakers to table a new set of anti-immigrant laws.

This general political vacuum has created an environment in which the Phoenix police and the county sheriff have bickered over the enforcement of immigrant policy and local politicians continue to capitalize on public anxieties. It remains to be seen what all this will mean if a program of legalization

---

[6] Fernanda Santos, "Judge Finds Violation of Rights by Sheriff," *New York Times*, May 24, 2013.

emerges; Phoenix would have a great deal to gain by authorization of its large population but it may not have the civic infrastructure to do this well or effectively.

Inland Empire

The so-called Inland Empire – a combination of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties – lies far to the east of the City of Los Angeles, practically a different world, especially given traffic congestion. It saw a dramatic increase in the foreign-born between 1970 and 2010, driven by the same forces that led to its housing bubble: the Inland Empire seemed like the cheapest housing market in Southern California to gain a stake in the American Dream. Eventually, this exurban housing market was the first to see its prices falling during the Great Recession, stripping assets from owners with the most modest grasp of middle-class life.

It is perhaps not surprising that this region has historically given immigrants a lukewarm reception. Immigrants make up less of the electorate than in Los Angeles and the Inland Empire has long leaned in a politically conservative direction. Local politicians have supported the repeal of citizenship for the US-born children of undocumented immigrants. Prominent leaders of the Minutemen and white supremacist movements also live there. This climate makes it difficult for elected officials to show sympathy for pro-immigrant policies and puts immigrant advocacy organizations on the defensive.

As de Lara points out in his chapter, conservative opponents of immigrants have adopted highly racialized terms, equating immigrants with Latinos. Along with recency of arrival, this factor predicts a poorer reception – and the area is also politically fragmented and lacks a clear regional business class. However, the Inland Empire also illustrates another important dimension of the story: how a more receptive nearby metro areas can influence an adjacent less welcoming metro region.

As we have noted, the strong social justice and social movement infrastructure of Los Angeles does not always extend directly to the suburbs and exurbs, in this case perhaps even less so than in New York and Chicago. Some LA organizations do work within the rest of Los Angeles County, but few have ventured as far eastward as the Inland Empire. Recently, however, churches, labor unions, and community organizations have begun to test an immigrant rights agenda there, but these efforts are only fledgling, so receptivity suffers. On the other hand, the political winds may shifting within the area, with a

rising Latino Democratic vote, which may ultimately change the region's willingness to prepare itself for immigrant integration, particularly though shifts in law enforcement and enhanced investments in education.

What Is to Be Learned?

The case studies analyzed in our collaborative effort suggest several analytic conclusions about the relationship between regional receptivity to immigrants and larger patterns of regional resilience. First, history matters. Areas with long histories of immigrant integration offer more welcoming receptions to contemporary immigrant populations. New York and Chicago both illustrate this, with New York priding itself as a city of immigrants and beacon of hope for many arriving from around the world. Los Angeles has had a more conflicted history, including mass deportations of Mexican immigrants in the 1930s and the displacement of Mexican Americans by urban redevelopment projects in the 1950s and 1960s. However, it has recently elected the son and grandsons of Mexican immigrants as their mayors. Phoenix, by contrast, has experienced the sharp recent buildup of immigrants in the context of little institutional and historical capacity and a heightened sense of dislocation and conflict; the legacy of many racist and conservative organizations has also not helped the Inland Empire accommodate to its sharp recent demographic changes. Demography is not destiny here, however, because San Jose and Charlotte have far more gracefully received immigrants despite also experiences rapid recent increases the number of immigrants.

The geography of reception also matters. The urban cores of all these regions tend to provide a more supportive context of reception featuring a legacy of immigrant service organizations, informal and formal modalities of representation for immigrant interests, and acceptance by the native-born establishment of a positive narrative about immigrants and their contributions. The peripheral parts of all the regions have less experience with immigration and greater demographic distance from them. They often have a cooler response to their newcomers.[7] They are less equipped to cope with the change and

---

[7] The regions also differ considerably in their spread and concentration of foreign born populations. They are more consolidated and compact in Silicon Valley and Charlotte than, for example, the New York, Chicago, or Los Angeles regions, which extends across multiple city, county, and even state borders.

lean toward what De Graauw, Gleeson, and Bloemraad call "free riding," that is, relying on nearby central cities to provide needed immigrant services (2010). Some sympathetic suburban jurisdictions provide services quietly, hoping to avoid attention or political conflict; on the other hand, low levels of immigrant political mobilization can provide a thin political base for providing such services. In any case, given the steady suburbanization of immigration, researchers need to develop a better understanding of suburban responses – both by agencies and by immigrants.

Race matters as well. Metropolitan areas with more diverse immigrant flows – by class as well as national origin – seem less likely to react negatively to immigration. Places where a single group is negatively framed – particularly likely for poor, undocumented Mexicans – tend to view the whole phenomenon of immigration in that light. New York and Los Angeles have more varied flows than other regions, but New York's diversity is greatest. This, along with the fact that one of its main immigrant groups, Puerto Ricans, are citizens, may enable it to respond more positively to the challenges of immigrant integration. Immigration is also more deracialized in Chicago and San Jose, where Eastern Europeans in the former case and higher-skill and higher-income Asian immigrants in the latter have a prominent presence. Conversely, the fact that so many immigrants in Phoenix are undocumented Mexicans and recent arrivals has helped to foster a racialization that diminishes empathy for the immigrant experience.

Where immigration is racialized, the perception that immigrants are all recent and undocumented may be greater than the reality. The growth of recent Mexican migrants to Phoenix was, we think, perceived as a shock even though Mexican migration was low compared to other regions; the same holds true for the Inland Empire. San Jose saw the sharpest rise in percent foreign-born and now has the highest immigrant share of the regions discussed here – but its response was the most harmonious and embracing. Race matters in Chicago where the political machine has incorporated Mexican immigrants in the grand tradition of other ethnic groups. And race has a different importance in Charlotte because the region's business leadership wants to present it as a racially tolerant center of the New South, which has

---

This has real implications for regional governance and immigrant service infrastructure.

helped to keep the tone generally civil.

Another key finding is that fragmented metropolitan landscapes provide opportunities for anti-immigrant political entrepreneurs to gain ground. The combination of certain demographic antecedents – many new, undocumented, racialized immigrant populations in areas with little experience with them and large demographic distances between older native and younger immigrants – poses a great temptation for politicians to polarize the issue. On the other hand, the patterns of response in San Jose and Charlotte suggest that regional business elites can be a critical counterweight to this politicking, something evidenced as well in Utah. New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg has organized a group of CEOs and big-city mayors into the Partnership for a New American Economy, to push for immigration reform.

This does not mean that regional business elites can counteract all negative politics. The Long Island suburbs, for example, do not always echo New York City's tone, nor does LA's progressive bent reach much into the Inland Empire. But such a finding about how larger patterns of regionalism do or don't intersect with immigrant integration suggest that further work would be useful on regional "epistemic communities" – the mechanisms, such as leadership programs, that might help multiple publics create a common base of understanding, particularly on the issue of receptivity to immigrants (Benner and Pastor 2012).

Finally, while our analysis has been cross-sectional, the degree of local receptivity has also been influenced by how the issue of immigration has unfolded nationally. San Jose's immigrant boom occurred during a period in which a Republican president supported the integration of the undocumented (IRCA under Ronald Reagan). The tensions so apparent in Phoenix occurred in a subsequent, more politically polarized era. A negative tenor in the national debate can influence local political entrepreneurs to undertake new tactics, such as how national anti-immigrant groups have promoted Arizona-style "attrition through enforcement" in other jurisdictions. As immigration reform now becomes more widely embraced, it will be interesting to see how that affects the tone of metropolitan policy making.

What Is to Be Done?

It is a unique time for immigrant integration. The national gridlock around immigration reform

during the first Obama administration shifted the geographic focus of debate to the states and metropolitan areas. For example, when Congress failed to pass the DREAM Act in December 2010, immigrant advocates began to move on parallel legislation at the state level – and succeeded in California. Meanwhile, restrictionist forces not only hoped that SB 1070 copycat legislation would lead to "self-deportation" in other states, but even began to argue against birthright citizenship for the children of undocumented immigrants.

Suddenly, with the reelection of President Obama in November 2012, the national tone has shifted. It began to shift in the summer of 2012, when the President issued an order staying deportations for young people who would have qualified for the Dream Act – and experienced virtually no political blowback. The sharp Democratic swing in Latino and Asian votes in the 2012 presidential elections – partly in reaction to the Republican Party's candidates attempts to be "more restrictionist than thou" – once more put comprehensive immigration reform on the national agenda.

There are two aspects to reform. The first is in the intricate policy design of the compromises needed to win support for Congressional enactment, including how many undocumented residents may be eligible for authorization, whether their path will include access to citizenship, what new enforcement activities will be put in place at the workplace and the border, and how future flows of immigrant labor will be authorized in order to meet economic needs. But the second aspect of reform is implementation, including whether the federal government will make sufficient resources available to process applications and to help metropolitan regions accelerate the immigrant integration process, thereby maximizing economic and social outcomes.

In short, the intersection of America's metros and immigrant integration will be as central to the success of immigration reform as it has during its absence – in either case, local infrastructure is needed to help immigrants navigate existing or new systems towards citizenship and incorporate them and their children into our society for the long-haul. We believe the experiences of the metropolitan areas reported here contain lessons about how the federal government can help, what metropolitan regions can learn from one another, and what new questions researchers need to investigate.

Federal Opportunities and Responsibilities

An immediate consideration for any federal immigration reform package is to include financial support to the localities with higher shares of aspiring Americans. Unfortunately, this may not be the case, as the government might direct fines paid by undocumented immigrants to achieve regular status to enforcement even as localities will have to pay new costs for serving them (particularly since law will restrict eligibility for federal benefits).   The federal government, in particular US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), should develop programs to support and expand the welcoming and forward-looking civic leadership best practices profiled in our case study regions. It should not leave the receptivity of a region purely to its preexisting combination of immigrant-friendly business leaders, opportunity-seeking politicians, or legacies of regional collaboration. As the Obama Administration has done in other areas of urban policy, USCIS can spur regional leadership by developing indicators of immigrant integration, supporting research on immigrant contributions to regional economies, and convening regional actors to talk through the challenges of welcoming and integrating immigrants.

Newer receiving areas need particular attention because they have less institutional capacity to face the new challenges. This holds not just for new receiving regions but for new suburban destinations within the older receiving areas (for example, the Inland Empire, Suffolk County, and the Chicago suburbs). The shock of a big new population seems to trigger a more negative reaction than an equivalent addition to a large existing immigrant base (though this may be attenuated by other factors, as in San Jose). Nevertheless, the immigrant integration component of any eventual national policy reform will need to include special resources and training for newer receiving areas, and available statistics give us a reasonable initial guide to those places.

State, Metropolitan, and Local Strategies

Our case study regions and others provide numerous positive examples for state and local policy. Municipal and metropolitan leaders are sharing best practices through the National League of Cities immigrant integration initiative. The J. M. Kaplan Fund and other supporters are seeking to expand Welcoming America, a grassroots effort to build positive understanding toward immigrants in the newer receiving communities. The Haas Foundation in California has supported efforts to work with a new sort of receiving area – black communities with a significant immigrant influx. Further support for sharing real-

world scenarios and creating a broad consensus on what works would be useful.

Expertise also needs to be spread within regions. As noted earlier, the historic pattern of spatial assimilation involves immigrants first concentrating in the urban cores and then moving outward to suburbs as their socioeconomic standing improves. Today, more new immigrants are moving directly to the suburbs. Suburban jurisdictions have less experience and fewer support organizations for responding to these immigrants. Although regional coordination can help them by extending capacities that have already developed in central cities, they need to be encouraged to move beyond "free riding" to develop their own capacities for receiving and integrating immigrants.

Immigrants, of course, need not be constrained by the environments they enter. They can also devise political advancement strategies and develop policy ideas about how to make these environments more responsive (or in some cases develop political defenses to make them less hostile). The shape of immigrant political mobilization cannot be deduced simply from the political opportunity structure in which immigrants find themselves. Individual and organizational activists in these communities can draw on a repertoire of possible political actions, resources, and strategies to reframe those political opportunities.[8] New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago all have vibrant immigrant rights communities. They should be challenged and helped to extend their reach into the new suburban destinations. The immigrant rights groups in San Jose are quite active – they fielded 100,000 marchers on May 1, 2006, proportionately far larger than the Los Angeles marches – and they also have the benefit of a welcoming power structure. Newer destinations typically lack this type of mobilization and to the extent their service infrastructure is welcoming, it tends to engage immigrants as clients, not civic actors.[9] Mobilized populations create a new voice in civic debate and deliberation that can set a different tone, create new opportunities for pro-immigrant political entrepreneurs, and help to hold systems accountable. Phoenix, Charlotte and the Inland Empire all have relatively unmobilized immigrant populations – and investment in building the

---

[8] Bada and others (2010) review Latino civic engagement in nine U.S. cities, including four – Charlotte, Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Jose – that anchor the metropolitan areas we explore.

[9] Given the potential for conflict over providing immigrant services in new receiving areas, some argue that a "depoliticized" strategy is the best way to achieve a minimum service level. This, however, can lead to a truncated form of immigrant integration with shallow political roots.

social movement infrastructure can help with overall receptivity.

Local authorities can also make it possible for noncitizen immigrants to participate in local planning exercises, school councils, and other forms of active "citizenship," partly as preparation for eventual naturalization and voting. Although we recognize that this could provoke short-term anxieties among the native-born, it will also facilitate long-run political incorporation as well as maximize current investments.[10] For example, increased involvement by immigrant parents in schools may in return improve K-12 education or after school programs for their and everyone else's children. And immigrants can be engaged in "get out the vote" efforts even if they themselves cannot cast a ballot.

That said, one of the most effective ways to promote immigrant integration involves encouragement of naturalization – and partly because this is the tail end of legalization, it will be necessary to gear up the naturalization machinery so that no backlog is experienced when a new group of the formerly undocumented is suddenly on line. Part of this will be streamlining the application system but immigrant advocates note that key barriers to naturalization include lack of English language skills and a relatively expensive application process. While there may be good reason to simply change the fees, regional responses are also possible (Pastor et al. 2013). For example, in 2011, an immigrant-serving organization called CASA de Maryland joined Citigroup Foundation, the Latino Economic Development Corp., the Ethiopian Community Development Council Enterprise Development Group, and other financial and nonprofit institutions to pilot a $400,000 program to boost the naturalization rates of green card holders – an estimated 210,000 permanent residents who live in Maryland and more in the greater Washington, DC area. Together they provide microloans, legal referrals, one-on-one guidance, and civic and financial education classes to immigrants seeking to start their citizenship application process.[11]

---

[10] Immigrant integration also involves considering the impacts of immigrants on more general public systems, a topic we do not explore here due to constraints of space. See, for example, Fix's (2009) analysis of the failure to redesign systems with immigrants in mind during the 1996 welfare reform. Capps and others (2009) also explore how to adjust Workforce Investment Act funding to better respond to adult English learners of varying levels of education, while Batalova and Fix (2008) describe ways to alter the "credentialing" and other challenges facing skilled immigrants in the United States.
[11] Sources: Luz Lazo, "Microloan program to help legal immigrants cover naturalization costs," *The*

Improving the warmth of welcome also requires that members of the native born mainstream

population gain knowledge and understanding of the nature of immigrant contributions to the region. Our

case studies suggest part of what needs to happen: highlighting diversity in an immigrant population may

make it easier to promote integration policies; encouraging one-on-one contacts seems to promote new

perceptions; data, information and reports can persuade at least high-level business actors to counter

political entrepreneurs who might take advantage of the worries often induced by rapid demographic

transition. Interestingly, Welcoming America has codified a range of such welcoming activities and is

trying to replicate itself in multiple regions and states. Groups like the Council on Immigrant Integration in

Los Angeles bring together individuals from across multiple sectors, including business, labor, faith, law

enforcement and other areas. Anchor universities can play a role by providing data and community

foundations can play a role by convening but there would also seem to be a set of relevant activities that

can be undertaken by metropolitan planning organizations.

This is particularly the case because one ultimate test of immigrant integration will be the extent

to which immigrants make progress in regional labor markets. Many immigrants are relegated to low-skill

and low-wage occupations with limited opportunities to move up the economic ladder – and even the

most highly educated often find challenges translating degrees earned in their home country into

credentials accepted in the U.S. labor market (Batalova and Fix 2008). Increasing opportunities for the

economic mobility of immigrants, their families, and their communities can help immigrant fortunes as well

as improve the economy overall by maximizing their ability to contribute. This will require supporting

entrepreneurship, improving English learning systems, and working to insure that professional credentials

can be transferred. Here, financial institutions, community colleges, workforce investment boards and

professional associations could play an important role.

Developing the Research

Our key finding that immigrant integration happens at the metropolitan level means that this will

Washington Post, October 31, 2011; New American Citizen Project of Maryland, Maryland's Immigrant Community.(accessed 25 June 2012), http://casademaryland.org/storage/www/your_subsite/; USA Citizenship Services, Naturalization Eligibility and Applications (accessed June 25, 2012), http://www.usacitizenship.info/application.html.

be a key level for observing how immigration policy plays out in the coming years, regardless of what happens with reform. And while we hope that we are making a contribution with this more nuanced approach to metro-level differences, we know that our study just scratches the surface of what needs to be done in this arena.

For example, despite our effort to recruit deeply experienced analysts to examine seven important case studies, they are not representative of the nation as a whole and only begin to allow us to identify the important dimensions of the problem and how they interact. A bigger sample size would make for more reliable results – and should reform pass, it will present us with an unusually interesting "natural experiment." Our cases suggest that it would be particularly important to explore the roles played by regionally-oriented business communities. Our finding that they can provide an antidote to larger immigrant shocks and more racialized pre-existing attitudes toward immigrants is tentative but intriguing and certainly needs further confirmation.

The larger intersection between immigrant integration and regional resilience is also worthy of further exploration. The clear relationship between a rising share of immigrants and stronger metropolitan growth trends, we believe, is not simply the result of immigrants being attracted to growing locations (Benner and Pastor 2012). However, growth is not the same as resilience and a rising share of immigrant workers can also potentially lead to disturbing impacts. Defining resilience as the length of growth spells or considering the resistance to certain other shocks could be a new frontier for further research (Hill et al. 2012).

Another avenue for research is to catalog best practices at immigrant integration and identify the circumstances under which they work best. Our choice of cases was necessarily restricted. A broader examination of how practices that appear to work well in one setting fare across a larger variety of localities would be helpful. This might be accomplished by interviewing leaders in different types of national networks (civic organizations, immigrant rights groups, etc.) to get a full set of possible policies and better specific which work well in which metropolitan settings.

Finally, we need better benchmarks for defining what we mean by successful immigrant integration. New York City and Chicago and Welcoming America are the forefront of understanding and

measuring what "welcome" requires, but this is not the same as deriving an academically rigorous and defensible approach (see Pastor, et al. 2012 for one such quantitative effort). How many generations do we need to analyze? What aspects of the integration process are critical? If researchers can better answer these questions, they will provide critical help for the policy makers, local officials, and regional leaders who will lead this effort in years to come.

Conclusion

America is at a crossroads with regard to immigration. Demographers project that future flows into the country will decline, partly because of shifts in international economic dynamics but more fundamentally because fertility rates are falling in key sending countries like Mexico. Meanwhile, most analyses of the 2012 election suggest a diminishing appeal for once-popular restrictionist stances toward immigrants, partly because the electorate is changing its opinion and partly because the electorate itself is changing. As a result, the country is experiencing a vibrant discussion of comprehensive immigration reform and the passage of some sort of systemic fix seems likely.

While some believe that this will provide a welcome relief from the patchwork of local responses that range from draconian enforcement in some locales to permissive "city cards" in others, the challenge of achieving immigrant integration will always be a local affair. Each metropolitan destination for immigrants has its own character, including the degree to which immigrants have been part of the demographic landscape in the past, and each faces different challenges, including the rapidity of growth in the immigrant population, the degree to which the nature of the immigrant population facilitates negative racialization, and the extent to which political entrepreneurs see that their political fortunes can be enhanced by either laying out the welcome mat or battening down the hatches.

Our study has suggests that how metropolitan regions manage their immigrant "shocks" both reflects and contributes to their regional resilience. To the extent that a metropolitan region can gracefully adjust by accommodating the new population, maximizing their economic potential, and providing avenues for civic voice, the metro may be politically less brittle and economically more vibrant (Benner and Pastor 2012). At the same time, the pre-existing character of a region's resilience capacity, including whether it is political fragmented, racially divided, and prone to having immigrant labor's substitution or

competitive effects outweigh their complementary effects on current domestic labor, will help determine whether the region is open to newcomer or stand-offish.

While there a number of structural factors that make a difference, including the size and recency of immigrants, their location in urban or suburban locales, and their relative skill levels and ethnic composition, we also found that overall regional leadership mattered: when regional civic leaders, especially those from the business community, articulated a vision that was broader in scope, even if it was simply about economic or inter-jurisdiction collaboration, that tended to help generate a more inclusive approach to more divisive issues like immigration. In our view, regional leaders who want their metropolitan areas to weather the country's inevitable economic and demographic changes will likely need to weave immigrants into their regional narratives and visions for their regional futures, helping to calm the political waters by highlighting how immigrants and their children can be assets rather than problems. If they do so, they will help facilitate a broad and much-needed recognition that a region's resilience is based not on struggling with strangers, but rather on welcoming with the warmth that will help newcomers maximize their contributions to our country's metropolitan future.

References

Auerhahn, Louise, and Bob Brownstein. 2004. *The Economic Effect of Immigration in Santa Clara County and California.* San Jose, CA: Working Partnerships USA.

Bada, Xóchitl, Jonathan A. Fox, Robert Donnelly, and Andrew Dan Selee. 2010. *Context Matters: Latino Immigrant Civic Engagement in Nine US Cities, Reports on Latino Immigrant Civic Engagement*. Washington DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Retrieved February 20, 2013 (http://www.escholarship.org/uc/item/47f308pd).

Batalova, Jeanne, and Michael Fix. 2008. *Uneven Progress: The Employment Pathways of Skilled Immigrants in the United States*. Washington, D.C.: Migration Policy Institute. Retrieved (http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/BrainWasteOct08.pdf).

Benner, Chris, and Manuel Pastor. 2012. *Just Growth: Inclusion and Prosperity in America's Metropolitan Regions*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Capps, Randy, Michael Fix, Margie McHugh, and Serena Yi-Ying Lin. 2009. *Taking Limited English Proficient Adults into Account in the Federal Adult Education Funding Formula*. Washington DC: Migration Policy Institute. Retrieved (http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/wia-lep-june2009.pdf).

Deaton, Joyce. 2008. *Charlotte: A Welcome Denied*. Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Retrieved February 20, 2013 (http://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/charlotte-welcome-denied).

Fix, Michael, ed. 2009. *Immigrants and Welfare: The Impact of Welfare Reform on America's Newcomers*. New York, N.Y.: Russell Sage Foundation.

Frey, William. 2010. "Age." in *State of Metropolitan America: On the Front Lines of Demographic Transformation*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program.

Furuseth, Owen J., and Heather A. Smith. 2010. "Localized Immigration Policy: The View from Charlotte, North Carolina, a New Immigrant Gateway." Pp. 173–92 in *Taking local control: immigration policy activism in U.S. cities and states*, edited by Monica Varsanyi. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

De Graauw, Els, Shannon Gleeson, and Irene Bloemraad. 2010. "Immigrant Suburbs and Central Cities: Understanding Differences in Municipal Support for Immigrant Organizations and Suburban Free-Riding."

Hill, Edward et al. 2012. "Economic Shocks and Regional Economic Resilience." Pp. 24–59 in *Urban and Regional Policy and Its Effects: Building Resilient Regions*, edited by Nancy Pindus, Howard Wial, Harold Wolman, and Margaret Weir. Brookings Institution Press.

Krikorian, Mark. 2005. *Downsizing Illegal Immigration: A Strategy of Attrition Through Enforcement*. Washington D.C.: Center for Immigration Studies. Retrieved February 20, 2013 (http://www.cis.org/ReducingIllegalImmigration-Attrition-Enforcement).

Pastor, Manuel, and Rhonda Ortiz. 2009. *Immigrant Integration in Los Angeles: Strategic Directions for Funders*. Los Angeles, CA: USC Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration. Retrieved (http://dornsife.usc.edu/pere/documents/immigrant_integration.pdf).

Pastor, Manuel, Rhonda Ortiz, Vanessa Carter, Justin Scoggins, and Anthony Perez. 2012. *California Immigrant Integration Scorecard*. Los Angeles, CA: USC Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration. Retrieved (http://csii.usc.edu/CAimmSCORECARD.html).

Pastor, Manuel, Jared Sanchez, Rhonda Ortiz, and Justin Scoggins. 2013. *Nurturing Naturalization: Could Lowering the Fee Help?* Los Angeles, CA: Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration, University of Southern California.

Saxenian, AnnaLee. 1999. *Silicon Valley's New Immigrant Entrepreneurs*. San Francisco, CA: Public Policy Institute of California. Retrieved (http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R_699ASR.pdf).

Scheer, Brenda. 2012. *The Utah Model: Lessons for Regional Planning*. Las Vegas, NV: Brookings Mountain West, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Retrieved (http://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/TheUtahModel_0.pdf).

Simpson, Dick, and Tom Kelly. 2011. Pp. 205–19 in *The City, Revisited: Urban Theory from Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York*, edited by Dennis R. Judd. U of Minnesota Press.

Sonenshein, Raphael J., and Susan H. Pinkus. 2005. "Latino Incorporation Reaches the Urban Summit: How Antonio Villaraigosa Won the 2005 Los Angeles Mayor's Race." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 38(04). Retrieved February 18, 2013 (http://www.journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S1049096505050389). Trounstine, Jessica. 2008. *Political Monopolies in American Cities: The Rise and Fall of Bosses and Reformers*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Waldinger, Roger, and Mehdi Bozorgmehr, editors. 1985. *Ethnic Los Angeles*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation Press.