

**FROM NATIVE TO IMMIGRANT AND BACK AGAIN:
A HISTORICAL AND PROSPECTIVE ANALYSIS OF GENERATIONAL CHANGES IN
THE LATINO POPULATION, 1960–2030**

By

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Abstract

Historical demographic analysis of population change in the Latino and total U.S. population over the 1960–2000 period finds that both immigration and net movement from Puerto Rico are severely understated in official population estimates. This paper incorporates these larger levels of immigration into a 5-generation projection model to analyze changes in generational and age composition of the Latino population over the last 4 decades. Use of the fitted model permits a decomposition of population change into the contributions of various waves of immigrants and the initial population. For Latinos, we attempt to determine the degree to which the 3rd and higher generation population consists of the grandchildren of immigrants (3rd generation) and higher order descendants. Based on the historical results, we produce a set of population projections with fairly high levels of immigration that shows continued rapid growth in the Latino population. The generational shifts in place by 2000 are expected to continue as the generations take on distinctive age structures. Finally, the implications of such changes for the future influence of Latinos are discussed.

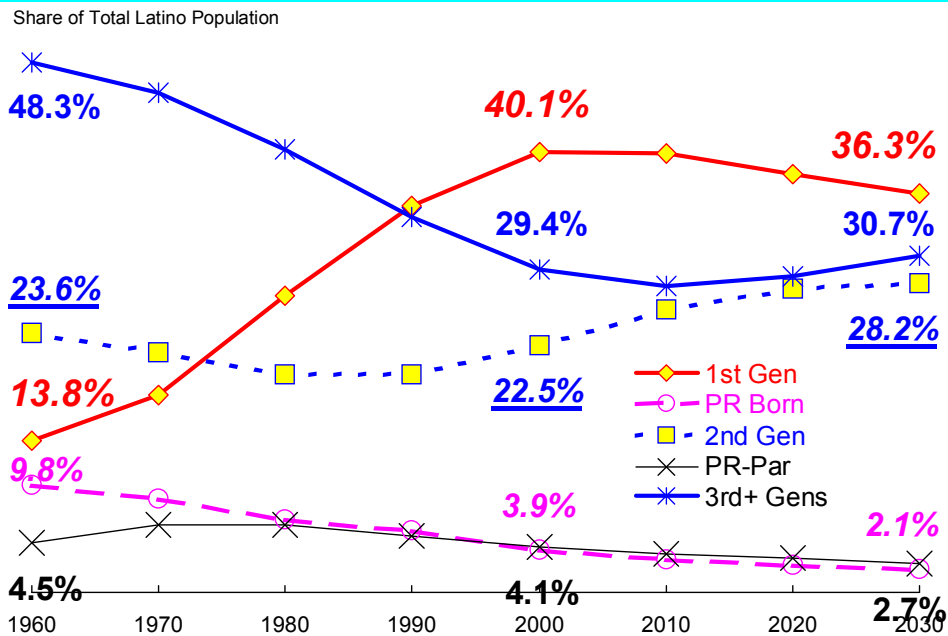
FROM NATIVE TO IMMIGRANT AND BACK AGAIN: A HISTORICAL AND PROSPECTIVE ANALYSIS OF GENERATIONAL CHANGES IN THE LATINO POPULATION, 1960–2030

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This paper uses an innovative application of cohort-component projection models to analyze both historical and prospective dynamics of population change in the Latino population for 1960–2000 and then 2000–2030. The demographic model has *five “generations”*—foreign-born or 1st generation; Puerto Rican-born; U.S.-born with foreign parent(s) or 2nd generation; U.S.-born with Puerto Rican parent(s); and U.S.-born with U.S.-born parents or 3rd-and-higher generations.¹ During the 1960–2000, there has been a profound shift in the generational composition of the Latino population accompanied by explosive growth. In 1960, there were only 6.7 million Latinos² representing 3.6 percent of the total population. By 2000,³ the Latino population had become the largest racial/ethnic minority population at 37.7 million³ and represented more than 13 percent of the total.

Generation Shares of the Latino Population: 1960-2030



¹ The models is an extension and elaboration of the multi-generation projection model developed and used by Edmonston and Passel (1992, 1994).

² This population has been defined by the authors on the basic of individual and family characteristics in the Integrated Public Use Microdata Sample (IPUMS) drawn from the 1960 Census to be approximately consistent with post-1980 Census data.

³ Authors' estimate.

The generational shift during this time was equally remarkable. In 1960, less than one-quarter of Latinos were born outside the continental United States—9.8 percent in Puerto Rico and 13.8 percent in foreign countries. (Note that there were almost as many Puerto Ricans as immigrants in the population.) By 2000, over 40 percent of Latinos were immigrants and another 4 percent born in Puerto Rico; there were more than 10 times as many immigrants as Puerto Ricans.

The age structures of the generations differ dramatically at each point in time and across the span of years with strong implications for forthcoming generational change. As the foreign-born Latino population has grown, it has gotten younger (median age of 41 in 1960 but 33 in 2000) thereby fueling the rapid growth of the 2nd generation. These U.S.-born children of immigrants have gotten markedly younger as a group (median 23 years to 12! years in 2000) so that the population is poised for future growth to occur in both the 2nd and 3rd+ generations.

Methods. The historical and prospective “projections” were done for the total population of the United States subdivided into 5 racial/ethnic groups. The 5 census date populations for 1960–2000 were first adjusted for undercount using official Census Bureau estimates extended to fit generations and detailed race groups (Fay et al 1988; Robinson et al. various dates). IPUMS data were used to fill in the missing groups (Latinos in 1960, 1970; Asian/Pacific Islanders in 1960, 1970; corrected Latinos in 1980); initial “projections past 1970 provided estimates of the U.S.-born generations not available from the Census data—estimates that were refined as the analysis proceeded. Finally, sex ratio by age, race, and generation were smoothed to conform to known biodemographic patterns.

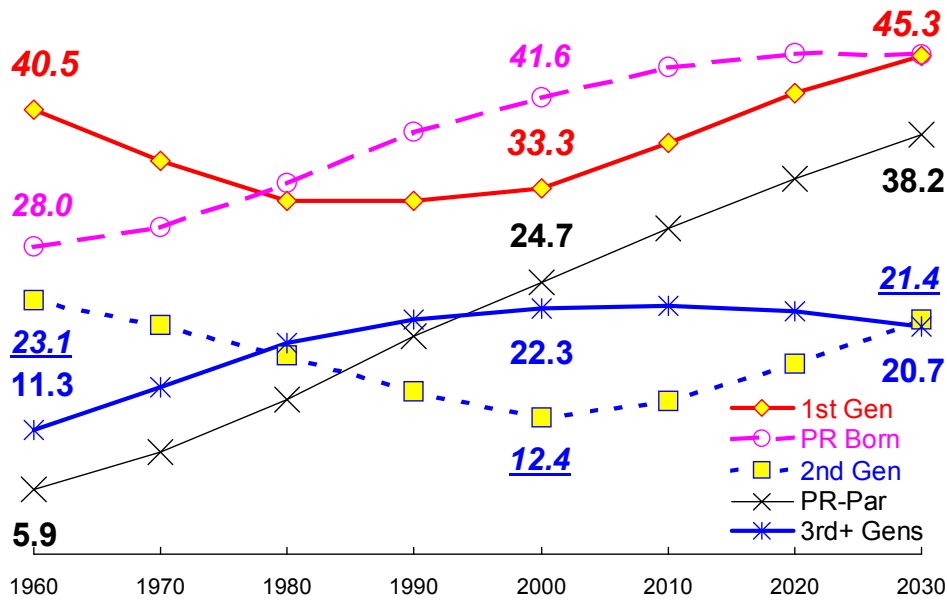
Total numbers of births and deaths were constrained to equal official decade totals but were allocated across race groups and generations in accordance with available vital statistics and research. The remaining components of population change (mainly immigration—legal and unauthorized, movement from Puerto Rico, and emigration) were initially set at levels used by the Census Bureau in measuring census coverage. However, measured levels of migration did not fully account for measured change in the foreign-born population. Specifically, it was necessary to *double the net movement from Puerto Rico* and significantly increase levels of immigration for the 1960–2000 period.

These revisions (increases) in historical levels of immigration did not affect the measured size of the foreign-born or Puerto Rican-born population, but did lead to increases in the total population of almost 6 million in 2000, thereby increasing the implied undercount of the 2000 census and the size of the population. Further, since immigration during the 1980–2000 period was greater than previously thought, the projections for 2000–2030 include larger amounts of immigration than previous versions of population projections (Hollmann et al. 1999; Passel 2002; Suro and Passel 2003).

Projections and Analyses. Starting from the 2000 population, projections to 2030 were done that include extrapolations of fertility and mortality consistent with previous projections. However, levels of migration were set initially at levels of the 1990s (16 million total immigrants) but were projected to decrease during the decade from peak values occurring around 2000. (See Passel 2004 forthcoming.) Following 2010, immigration was assumed to increase slightly in each subsequent 5-year period. Although these levels of immigration imply larger populations in the future, they are consistent with the patterns uncovered during the first phase of the research.

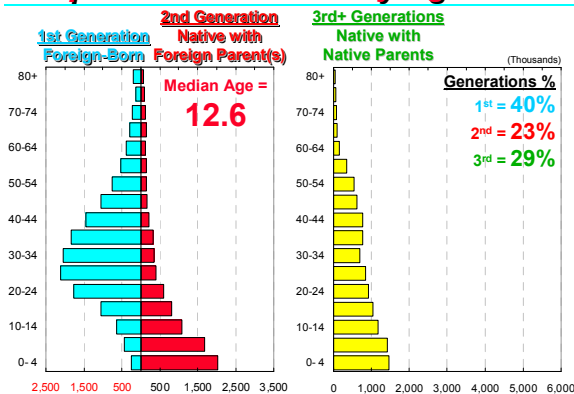
Some of the generational changes begun in the last 40 years continue as demographic momentum seems inexorable in the face of continued migration. However, the generation dynamics vary considerably as each generation digests the historic changes and moves forward. Median ages vary considerably in 2000 from only 12.4 years for the 2nd generation, increasing steadily across the range of generations, reaching 41.6 years for the Puerto Rican-born population.

Median Age, by Generation for the Latino Population: 1960-2030

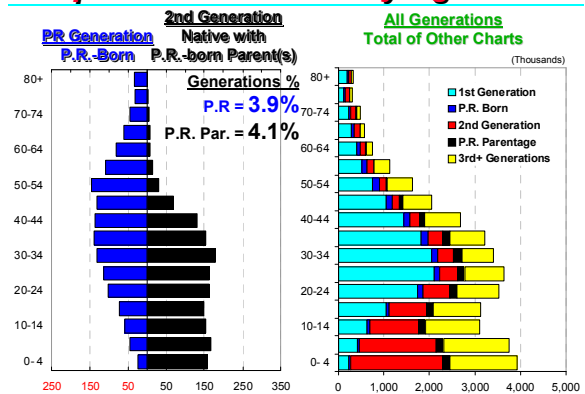


Age structures of the generations vary considerably at each point in the analysis and over time. Since the age groups place different demands on American society, a full understanding of the underlying changes can aid in assessing current and future impacts on schools, the labor market, retirement communities, hospitals, and the like.

Hispanic Generations by Age: 2000



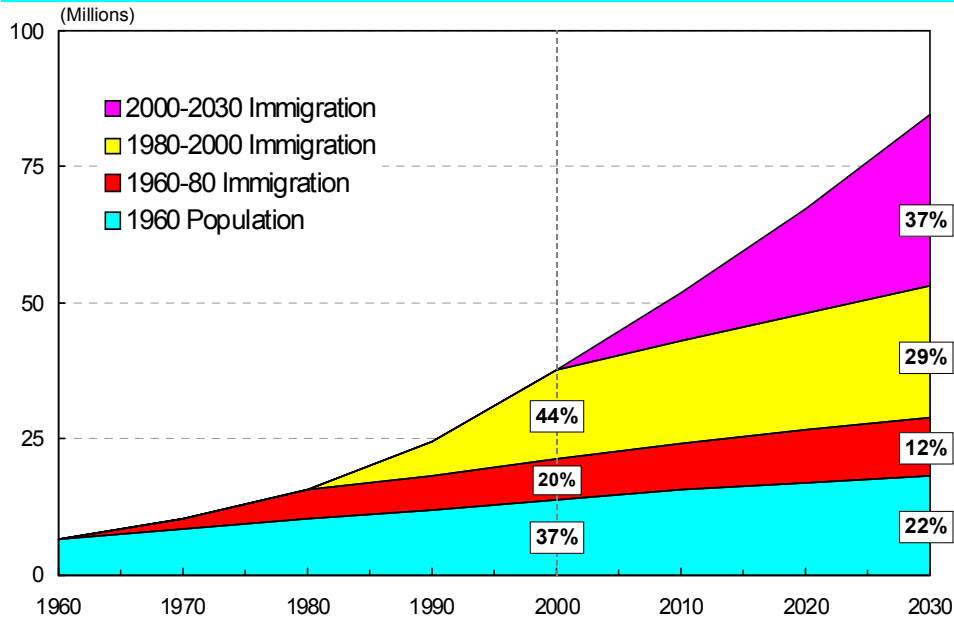
Hispanic Generations by Age: 2000



The multi-generation projection model is a powerful tool for analyzing population changes. Once the parameters are fixed (or chosen), it is possible to use alternative projection scenarios to assess the impact of changes in fertility or mortality. However, for our purposes,

alternative projection scenarios permit us to parse population change for each decade into the impacts of various waves of immigrants (and their offspring) or the effect of each generation in the starting population.

Contribution to Hispanic Population Growth: 1960-2030



We employ a variety of conventional and innovative demographic measures to assess the impact of demographic components on changes in the Latino population, its generational structure, its age-sex composition. In addition, we compute similar measures and assessments for other race/ethnic groups and the total population. By 2030, we project a Latino population of more than 84 million accounting for almost one-quarter of the American population. Further, Latinos are projected to exceed the black population (the next largest minority population) by about 70 percent; the two groups were of almost identical size in 2000.