

HAGEDORN FOUNDATION

**STRENGTHENING LONG ISLAND:  
THE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF IMMIGRANTS  
TO NASSAU AND SUFFOLK COUNTIES**



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A REPORT PREPARED FOR THE  
HAGEDORN FOUNDATION



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study was supported by the Hagedorn Foundation (HF). I wish, first and foremost, to thank Darren Sandow from HF for his interest in the subject and commitment to this project. Special thanks also go to my esteemed colleague and sometimes co-author Curtis Skinner, for reading through earlier versions of the study and providing me with valuable comments and insights. I am also grateful to the folks at the North Shore-Long Island Jewish Health System, especially Julie Liu (from its Office of Strategic Planning and Program Development), for her invaluable assistance in the preparation of the maps found in this report.

I also would like to thank Debbie Hallock from the Suffolk County Sheriff's Office and Warren Vandewater from the Nassau County Sheriff's Office for supplying me with information required to calculate the respective Counties' corrections expenditures.

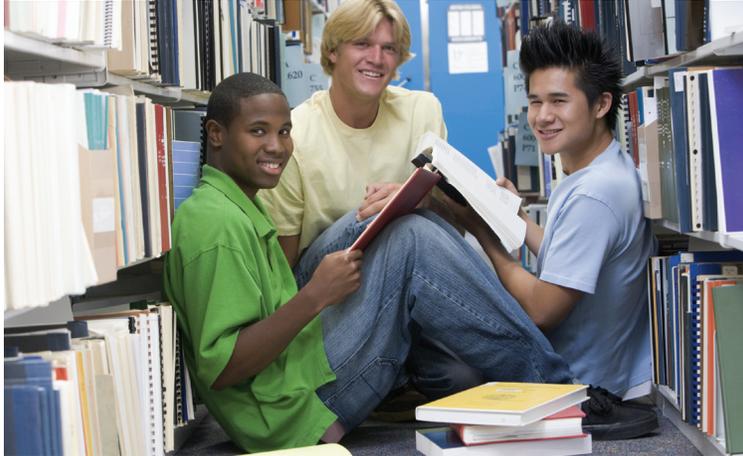
Responsibility for the findings and conclusions contained herein is mine and mine only.

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*Adelphi University*  
*Project Director*

2008



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Long Island's immigrant population has grown dramatically over the past three decades. In recent years, Central America and Asia have been the leading sources of migrants to Long Island, but immigrants continue to arrive from regions all over the world. Immigrants have emerged as the major source of demographic growth on Long Island: excluding new immigrants, Long Island would have lost, rather than gained, people since 1980. Immigrants are found throughout Long Island, both in cities and villages with well-established immigrant communities and dispersed across the numerous area townships.

As workers, consumers, and taxpayers, immigrants—documented as well as undocumented—make important contributions to the Long Island economy. Immigrant Long Islanders added \$10.6 billion to total Long Island output and generated an estimated 82,000 jobs in 2006 as a result of their consumer spending. Their overrepresentation among “prime working age” people further suggests that immigrants are an economically productive force on Long Island. In addition, Long Island immigrants contribute positively to local government budgets. This study finds that immigrants contribute \$2,305 more per resident to local revenues than they receive in local expenditures on education, health care, and corrections. The magnitude of the figure strongly suggests that both documented and undocumented immigrants are net contributors to the Long Island economy.

The importance of immigrant Long Islanders to the regional economy will only increase as this population continues to grow in the years ahead. This study documents the extraordinary recent changes in the region's immigrant population and describes its key demographic characteristics. It then quantifies the immigrant population's contributions to production and employment. The report concludes by analyzing the immigrant contribution to local government revenues and costs.



*Among the study's major findings:*

#### POPULATION

- The Long Island immigrant population more than doubled since 1980 to just over 465,000 residents, accounting for more than 16 percent of the general population. The rate of increase was far greater than that for the Long Island population as a whole (7 percent).
- More than 85 percent of immigrants arriving on Long Island prior to 1980 are today U.S. citizens.
- More than one-half of all immigrants arriving on Long Island since the year 2000 are Latin American. This compares to less than 17 percent of those who had arrived in 1980 or earlier.
- Tiny El Salvador contributes by far the most immigrants to Long Island. As of the year 2000, only Italy accounted for at least half as many as El Salvador's total of 44,067.
- Asians have the highest proportion of immigrants among the major ethnic groups. Almost 70 percent of Long Island's Asians are foreign born as of 2000, according to the U.S. Census.
- The Long Island immigrant population tends to concentrate in certain townships. In the year 2000, 56 percent of Nassau County's immigrants lived in Hempstead Town, while nearly three-quarters of Suffolk's immigrants lived either in Babylon, Brookhaven, or Islip.
- Hempstead, Freeport, and Elmont in Nassau County and Brentwood in Suffolk County are by far the four largest immigrant communities on Long Island, with over 13 percent of Long Island's immigrants among them.
- Over 46 percent of Long Island's immigrants are in the "prime working age" category of 18 to 44, compared to less than one third of non-immigrants. Immigrants are also relatively more plentiful in the other category of working age adults, 45 to 64 year-olds.
- An overwhelming majority of Long Island's immigrants report that they speak English "well" or "very well": nearly 60 percent of Spanish-speaking immigrants, 85% of non-Spanish-speaking Europeans, 75% of Asians or Pacific Islanders, and over 95% from other groups.
- Long Island immigrants are more likely to be married than their native counterparts. Nearly two-thirds are married, compared to 54.5 percent of the general population.

#### ECONOMIC IMPACT

- After subtracting income and payroll taxes, savings, remittances, and property taxes, Long Island immigrants had an estimated \$7.5 billion in buying power in 2006. Their total spending produced an economic impact of \$10.6 billion.
- Immigrants in 2006 contributed an estimated \$2.13 billion in taxes and other government revenues (directly and indirectly), while costing Nassau and Suffolk local governments (counties, towns/cities, villages, and school districts) about \$1.06 billion for K-12 education (\$772 million), health care (\$244 million), and corrections (\$44 million). This yields a net benefit to Long Island of about \$1.07 billion, or \$2,305 per immigrant resident.
- All immigrant groups are net contributors, although the extent varies significantly. Asian immigrants contributed a net benefit of \$3,249 per head in 2006, non-Hispanic white immigrants contributed \$4,059, Hispanic immigrants \$842, and black immigrants \$789.

## THE LONG ISLAND IMMIGRANT POPULATION: GROWTH AND CHANGE

Long Island, originally settled by the Dutch and then by the English, was founded by immigrants. Throughout most of its history it was mainly agricultural and remained sparsely populated, especially in Suffolk County. Large-scale migration to Long Island did not get its start until early last century, led by predominantly European immigrants who had originally settled in the New York City area. Many were to move further east to Nassau County, and some eventually to Suffolk County. In the 1920s, developer Robert Moses set in motion a number of new State Park projects on Long Island, which required the development of a network of highways. Suburban development gradually followed, and it is in these early Long Island communities, mostly in Nassau County, where one continues to find an abundance of Italian- and Irish-Americans, as well as other European-American (and notably Jewish) populations. Many of today's Long Islanders, therefore, are from second or third generation immigrant families who originally came to New York City, and a significant percentage of them originate from Brooklyn or Queens.<sup>1</sup> Although according to the Fiscal Policy Institute nearly three quarters of all immigrants in New York State live in New York City,<sup>2</sup> Long Island's immigrant population has increased substantially over the past half century. The growth has been especially rapid in the past twenty to thirty years.

Following the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, which liberalized international migration quotas, immigration to Long Island began to take on a more diverse appearance. Starting in the 1970s, large numbers of migrants from the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, and a number of other countries came

to settle in New York, and a significant fraction of them eventually migrated further east to Nassau and Suffolk. Ten years later, it was Central Americans (Salvadorans in particular) who moved to Long Island, many fleeing violence or poverty in their countries. To a greater extent than any other immigrant communities, Central and South Americans have since tended to concentrate in enclaves on Long Island, such as Hempstead, Brentwood, Central Islip, and Glen Cove City. Asians, led by Indians and Chinese, represented the next major wave of immigrants to Long Island. While beginning in the early to mid-1980s, the Long Island Asian population grew especially rapidly a decade later, with Long Island's Indian population nearly doubling during the 1990s<sup>3</sup>. Asian immigration to Long Island continues despite having slowed slightly since 2000.

Immigration to Long Island today appears more heterogeneous than ever. While relatively speaking migration from Europe has dropped off, in absolute terms the numbers are still significant. Immigration from India, China, and other parts of Asia, as well as from the West Indies, has leveled off since 2000 but shows no indication of slowing significantly. The most rapidly growing immigrant population, however, is from Central America and, more recently, also South America. Moreover, Mexicans, previously almost unknown on Long Island, have in recent years appeared, most notably on the South Fork of Suffolk County. Yet despite the recent controversy on Long Island over undocumented immigrants, among whom many originate from Mexico, Mexicans represent a very small percentage of total immigrants on Long Island.

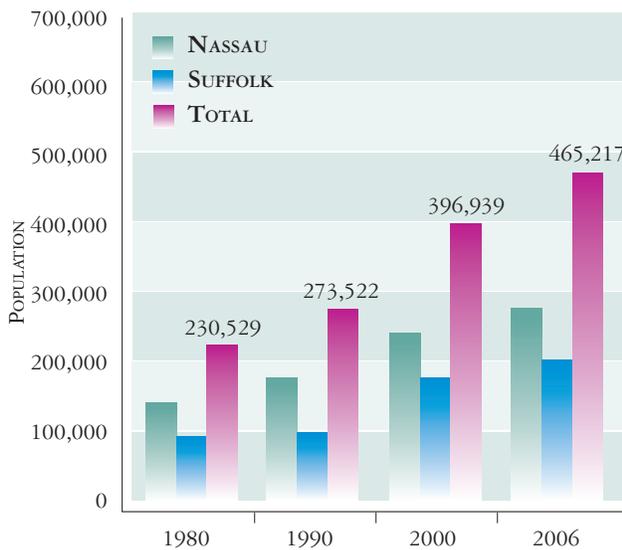
1. It should be clarified that the study will be using the term "immigrant" to refer exclusively to Long Island residents (whether documented or undocumented) who are foreign born, with the exception of those born abroad to U.S. citizens. Second or third generation Americans will not be counted among Long Island's immigrants. Also, the term "Long Island" is used in its contemporary political sense, referring to Nassau and Suffolk counties exclusively. Brooklyn and Queens, of course, also form part of the physical entity that is Long Island.

2. Fiscal Policy Institute. 2007. *Working for A Better Life: A Profile of Immigrants in the New York State Economy*.

3. Fischler, Marcelle S. 2004. "Indian Culture Clash: Classical or Pop?" *New York Times*, September 26.

Figure 1 shows the growth in the total Long Island immigrant population during the past quarter-century. The region's immigrant population more than doubled to 465,000 residents since 1980, at an average annual increase of 2.7%. The rate of growth far exceeds the annual growth rate for the Long Island population as a whole, which is less than three-tenths of one percent.<sup>4</sup>

**FIGURE 1. GROWTH OF THE LONG ISLAND IMMIGRANT POPULATION, 1980-2006**



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1980, 1990, 2000; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2006

The Long Island immigrant population grew by about 19% during the 1980s, and by more than twice as much—45%—in the next decade. According to U.S. Census Bureau estimates, the growth rate during the present decade has averaged 2.7% annually which, if maintained, translates to an increase in the Long Island immigrant population from 2000 to 2010 of about 30%, to more than 517,000 immigrants. At present 16.6% of Long Island's population is foreign born, up from 10.5% in 1990 and 8.8% in 1980.

Perhaps most remarkable, if we excluded all immigrants arriving after 1980, Long Island's current population would be more than four percent less than its 1980 population.

At the county level, Table 1 shows that the growth rate of the immigrant population in Suffolk County has over recent years exceeded that of Nassau County, although the growth is from a smaller base. While the immigrant population grew comparatively much more rapidly in Nassau during the 1980s, the growth trends reversed during the 1990s, and in the present decade growth is almost twice as rapid in Suffolk as in Nassau. At current rates, Suffolk County receives over 7,200 new immigrant residents every year and Nassau over 5,300.

**TABLE 1. GROWTH RATES OF THE IMMIGRANT POPULATIONS IN NASSAU AND SUFFOLK COUNTIES, 1980-2006**

PERIOD	NASSAU	SUFFOLK
1981-1990	24.6	10.1
1991-2000	40.8	52.1
2001-2006	12.5	24.2

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1980, 1990, 2000; American Community Survey, 2006

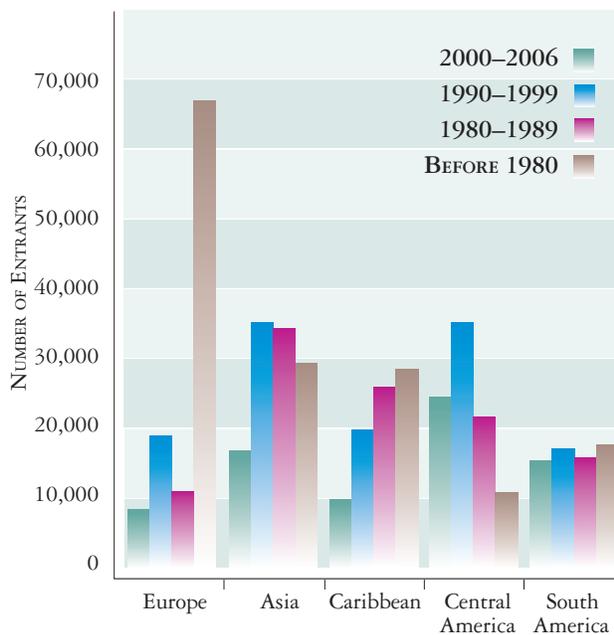
Figure 2 illustrates the changing composition of Long Island's foreign-born population.<sup>5</sup> The contrasts are noteworthy. Almost two-thirds of European immigrants to Long Island arrived in the U.S. before 1980, with only slightly more than 38,000 arriving after. In contrast, most Asian immigration to Long Island is fairly recent. Asian immigrants have steadily increased their numbers with each passing decade, peaking at slightly less than 35,000 for the 1990s. Numbers for the present decade exhibit a slightly slower growth trend than in the preceding decade, but growth

4. Unless otherwise noted, all demographic numerical data are drawn from U.S. Bureau of the Census, Decennial Census, various years; and U.S. Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, 2006. The American Community Survey samples only the household population, while the Decennial Census counts the entire population, including those living in institutions, college dormitories, and group quarters. Hence, the immigrant population growth rate since 2000 may be slightly understated here. It should also be emphasized that U.S. Census data for the immigrant population are an amalgam of information for undocumented as well as documented immigrants.

5. It should be noted here that all Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens at birth and are not counted as "foreign born" under the U.S. Census Bureau definition.

remains fairly rapid. Caribbean immigrants to Long Island exhibit almost the opposite trend. Numbers have declined, gradually but steadily, since 1980. For the 2000-2009 decade Caribbean immigration is projected to slightly exceed 15,000, which is about 25% less than in the previous decade. Immigration growth is most visible among Central and South Americans, boosted in no small measure by tiny El Salvador, which has contributed tens of thousands of immigrants. For the present decade, immigration from both Central and South America is projected to exceed that of any previous decade. While fewer than 17 percent of immigrants who arrived in Long Island before 1980 are Central or South American, more than 51 percent of those arriving after 2000 originated in those regions.

**FIGURE 2. REGIONAL ORIGIN OF THE LONG ISLAND IMMIGRANT POPULATION, BY U.S. YEAR OF ENTRY, 2006**

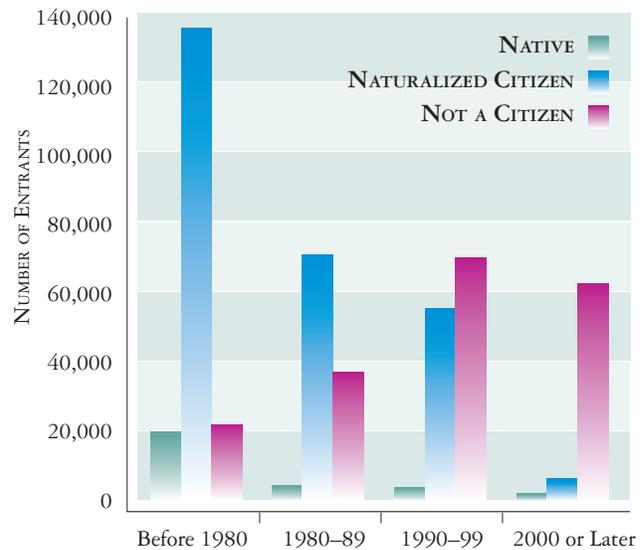


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2006

There is a clear tendency towards obtaining citizenship among Long Island's immigrants. Figure 3 shows that while the overwhelming majority (85.5%) of Long Islanders who entered the U.S. after 2000 are not U.S. citizens, a majority of those who entered earlier have been naturalized as citizens (the "native" category refers to individuals born abroad to U.S. citizens). Most important, the longer that

Long Island immigrants have been in this country, the more likely they are to be citizens. Only one-eighth of Long Island immigrants arriving to the U.S. before 1980 have not yet become citizens, and only one-third of those arriving between 1980 and 1990 are not yet citizens. The pattern suggests that most Long Island immigrants either eventually become U.S. citizens or end up moving out of the region, often back to their country of origin. A similar pattern has been observed in New York City, but while 51% of immigrants residing there are citizens, nearly 55% of Long Island's immigrants are.<sup>6</sup>

**FIGURE 3. CITIZENSHIP STATUS OF THE LONG ISLAND'S FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION BY YEAR OF ENTRY**

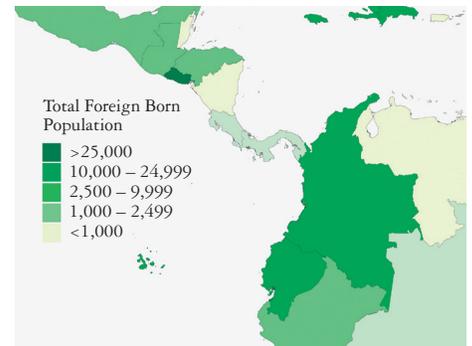
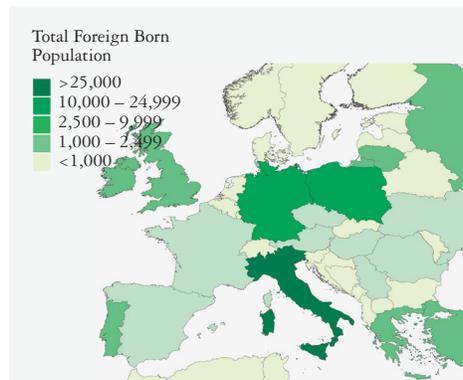
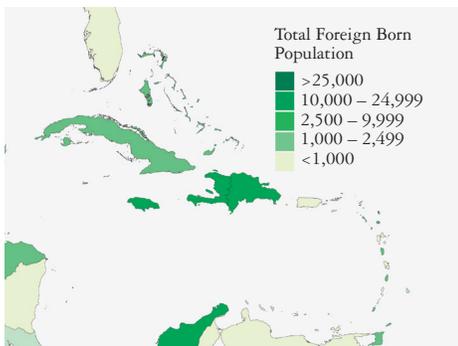
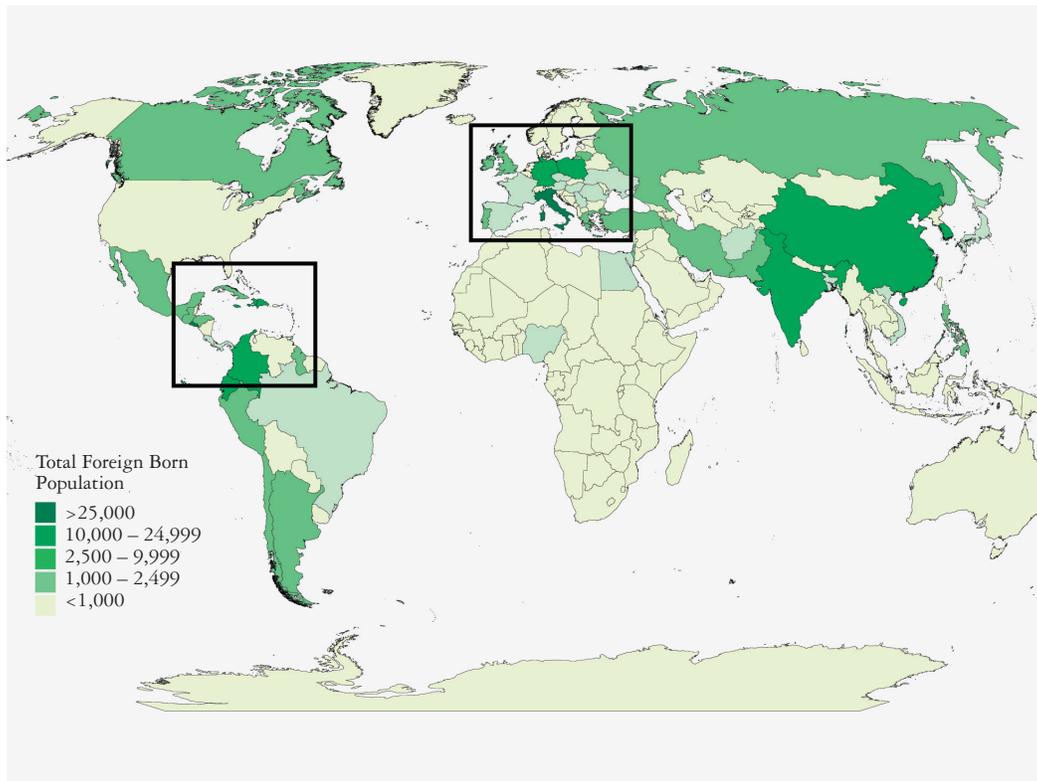


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2006

El Salvador accounts for more immigrants to Long Island than any other country in the world by far (Figure 4). With a total count of 44,067, only Italy (with 29,012) accounts for even half of El Salvador's total as of 2000. Only ten other countries contribute at least 10,000 immigrants, after which the numbers drop off sharply. They are spread fairly evenly across the world, although the Caribbean region is especially well represented among them. The countries and their respective immigrant totals are as follows: India (19,552), Jamaica (18,232), the Dominican Republic (16,885), Haiti (16,509), China (16,077), Colombia (14,701), Germany (12,348), Poland (10,821), South Korea (10,164), and Ecuador (10,059).

6. Fiscal Policy Institute, 2007, *Op cit.*, p. 47.

FIGURE 4. NUMBER OF IMMIGRANTS ON LONG ISLAND BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census  
 Map by North Shore-LIJ Health System Office of Strategic Planning and Program Development

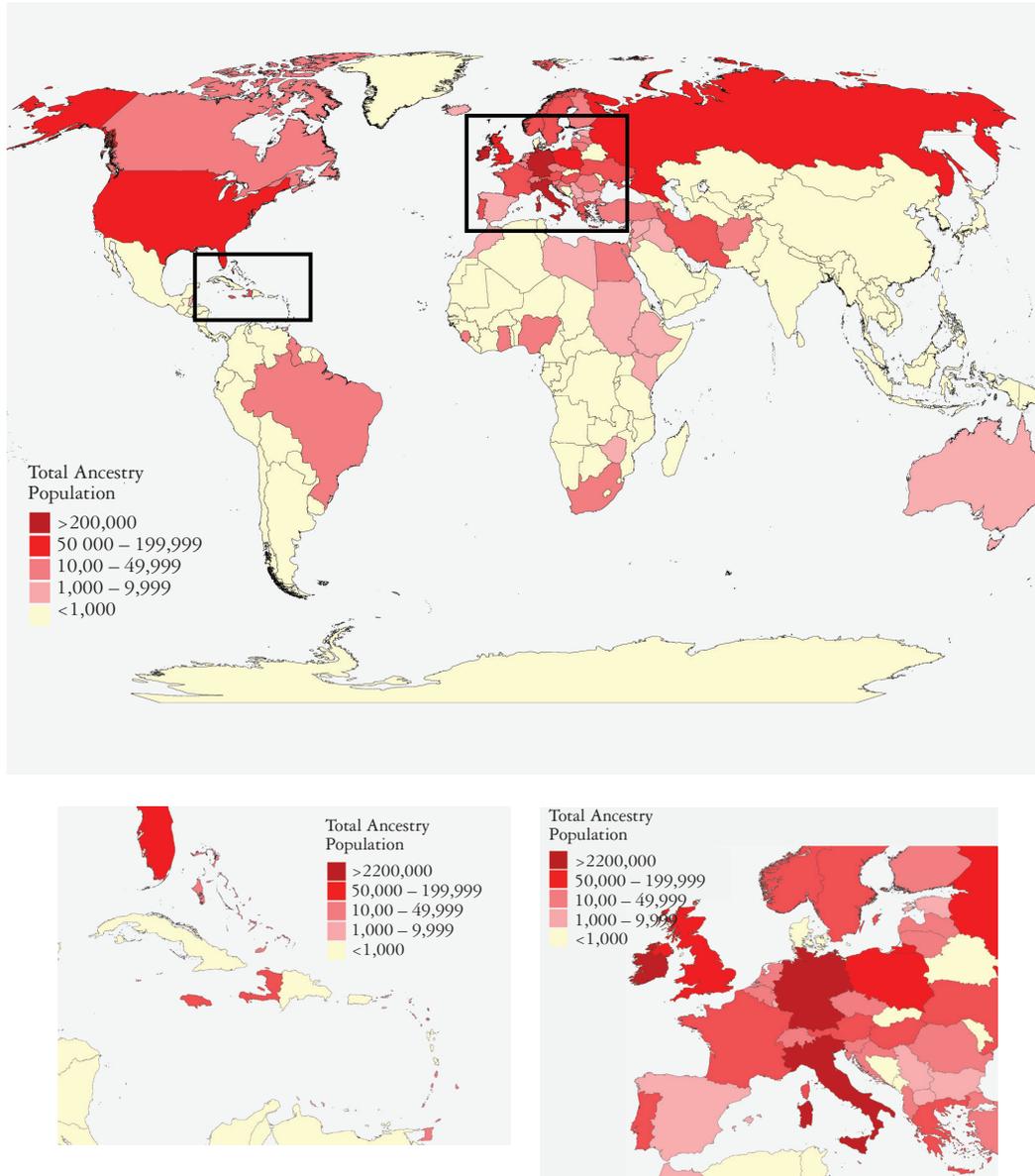
One often hears a distinction made between whether one is a “true” immigrant or a second or third (or greater) generation American. Yet in reality most Long Islanders are immigrants in the sense that if they were not born outside the U.S. they are descended from those who were. Figure 5 shows the countries most frequently declared as places of ancestry by Long Island residents. Note the contrast with

Figure 4. Italy is by far the most represented country, as Italian-Americans on Long Island number more than 632,000 as of 2000. Irish-Americans are next, numbering just short of 400,000, followed by German-Americans, estimated at about 224,000. Poland (107,875) and the U.S. (101,454) round out the short list of countries for which at least 100,000 claim ancestry. According to the Census

figures, very few Salvadoran immigrants claim Salvadoran ancestry, and the same is true for other countries with sizable immigrant populations on Long Island, like India and China.<sup>7</sup> Europe dominates in terms of Long Islanders

claiming ancestry. Of the 18 most represented countries—that is, those for which at least 10,000 Long Islanders claim ancestry—only three apart from the U.S. (Jamaica, Haiti, and Iran) are non-European.

FIGURE 5. REPORTED ANCESTRY OF LONG ISLAND POPULATION



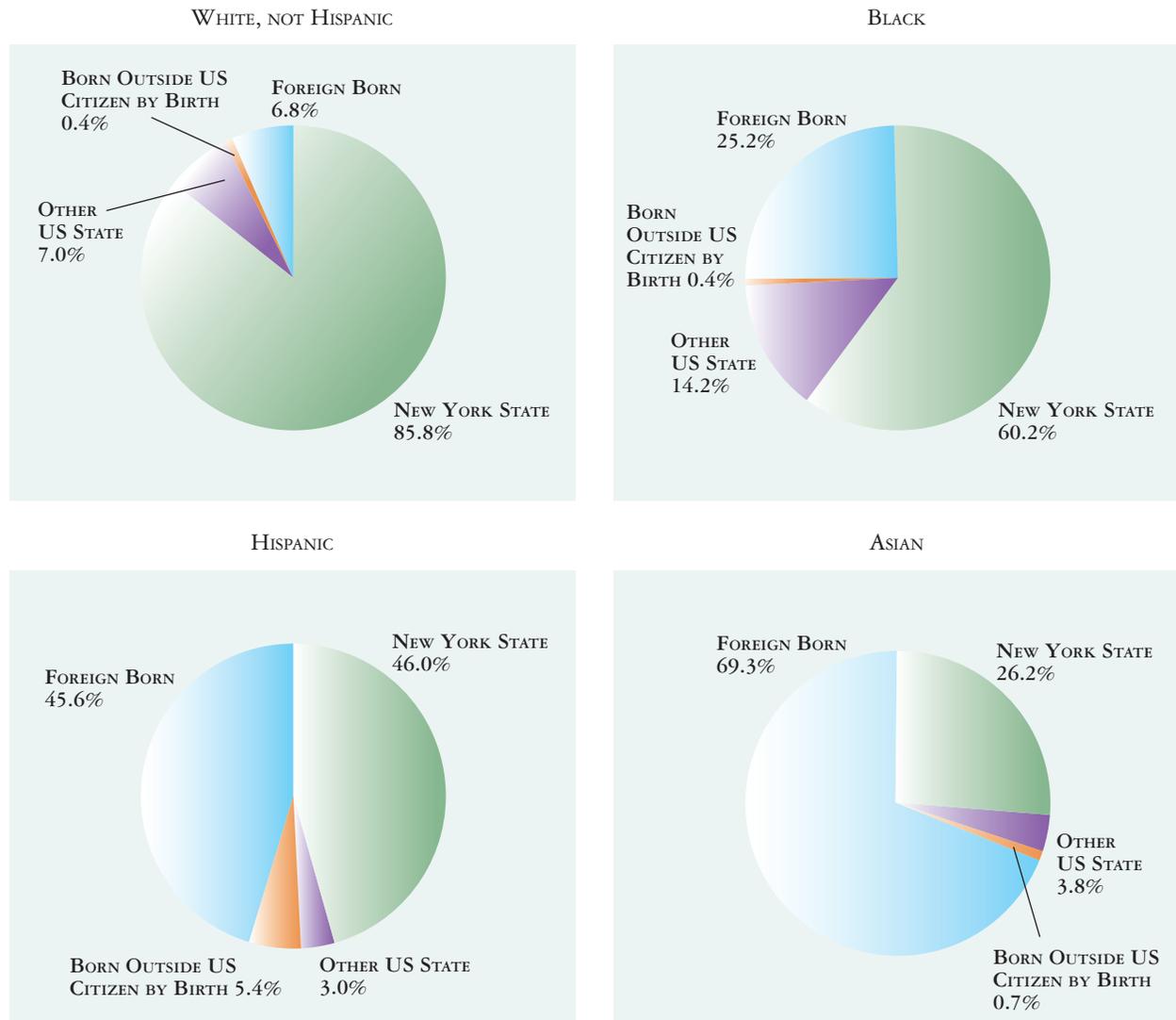
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2000.  
 Map by North Shore-LIJ Health System Office of Strategic Planning and Program Development.

7. It is probably safe to assume that most of the 101,454 who declare U.S. ancestry are neither native people nor their descendants, although precise data on the matter are impossible to obtain, since the ancestry numbers are based exclusively on what individuals and households report as their ancestry. A sizable share of the U.S. number are likely to be recent immigrants from a variety of countries who simply reported their ancestry in this way either out of a desire to demonstrate that they are fully assimilated into U.S. society and culture or, in rarer instances, because they were not entirely sure what was being asked.

Figure 6 compares the major racial or ethnic groups on Long Island—immigrant and non-immigrant alike—according to place of birth. We see considerable difference among the groups. Only 6.8% of non-Hispanic whites are immigrants, compared to 16.6% of all Long Islanders. This, however, does not signify a relative scarcity of white immigrants since, as noted earlier, even today Long Island continues to receive a fair number of European migrants. Rather, the relatively low number results from the fact that whites still significantly outnumber each of the other groups. Also notable is the fact that the total number of whites born in any other of the 49 U.S. states only slightly

exceeds the white foreign-born total. Relative to their population, close to four times as many blacks as whites are foreign born (25.2%). The vast majority of them are from Caribbean nations such as Jamaica, Haiti, the British West Indies, Barbados, Trinidad, and Grenada. Long Island's Guyanese community has also been growing in recent years. But only a minority of the three-quarters of all Long Island blacks who are born in the U.S. can claim ancestry from one of these communities, as a significant number are African-American or from African ancestry. Only among Long Island blacks is a significant percentage (14.2%) from some other U.S. state.

**FIGURE 6. PLACE OF BIRTH BY RACIAL OR ETHNIC GROUP, 2006**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2000; American Community Survey, 2006.

In striking contrast, nearly half of all Long Island Hispanics are foreign born. Hispanic immigrants to Long Island hail from a variety of countries, most notably El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Colombia, and Ecuador, and to a lesser degree Peru and Guatemala. Only three percent of Long Island Hispanics originate from some other U.S. state, less than for any other group. Puerto Ricans account for most of the apparently anomalously high percentage of Hispanics in the “born outside U.S./citizen by birth” category, since they are considered native U.S. citizens by birth. Finally, the Long Island Asian population has an even greater percentage of foreign-born residents among them. Fully 69.3% of Long

Island Asians were born outside the U.S., and relative to their current numbers, their presence on Long Island a mere generation ago was almost unnoticeable. They originate from many countries, among them India, China, South Korea, the Philippines, Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey.

## GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF LONG ISLAND IMMIGRANTS

Long Island’s immigrant population is numerically concentrated in the region’s most populous sub-county divisions, called “towns,” according to the 2000 U.S. Census (see Table 2).<sup>8</sup> Hempstead Town alone was home to over 56%

**TABLE 2. TOWN DISTRIBUTION OF LONG ISLAND IMMIGRANTS, 2000**

NASSAU COUNTY TOWN/CITY	NUMBER OF IMMIGRANTS	IMMIGRANT % OF TOWN/CITY POPULATION	TOWN/CITY % OF ALL COUNTY IMMIGRANTS
<b>GLEN COVE CITY</b>	<b>7,422</b>	<b>27.9</b>	<b>3.1</b>
<b>HEMPSTEAD</b>	<b>134,598</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>56.5</b>
<b>LONG BEACH CITY</b>	<b>5,427</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>2.3</b>
<b>NORTH HEMPSTEAD</b>	<b>55,357</b>	<b>24.9</b>	<b>23.2</b>
<b>OYSTER BAY</b>	<b>35,610</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>14.9</b>
<b>NASSAU COUNTY TOTAL</b>	<b>238,414</b>	<b>17.9</b>	
<b>SUFFOLK COUNTY TOWN/CITY</b>			
<b>BABYLON</b>	<b>27,643</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>17.4</b>
<b>BROOKHAVEN</b>	<b>39,730</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>25.1</b>
<b>EAST HAMPTON</b>	<b>3,594</b>	<b>18.2</b>	<b>2.3</b>
<b>HUNTINGTON</b>	<b>21,808</b>	<b>11.2</b>	<b>13.8</b>
<b>ISLIP</b>	<b>47,088</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>29.7</b>
<b>RIVERHEAD</b>	<b>2,653</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>1.7</b>
<b>SHELTER ISLAND</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>0.1</b>
<b>SMITHTOWN</b>	<b>8,354</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>5.3</b>
<b>SOUTHAMPTON</b>	<b>6,096</b>	<b>11.2</b>	<b>3.8</b>
<b>SOUTHOLD</b>	<b>1,388</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>0.9</b>
<b>SUFFOLK COUNTY TOTAL</b>	<b>158,523</b>	<b>11.2</b>	

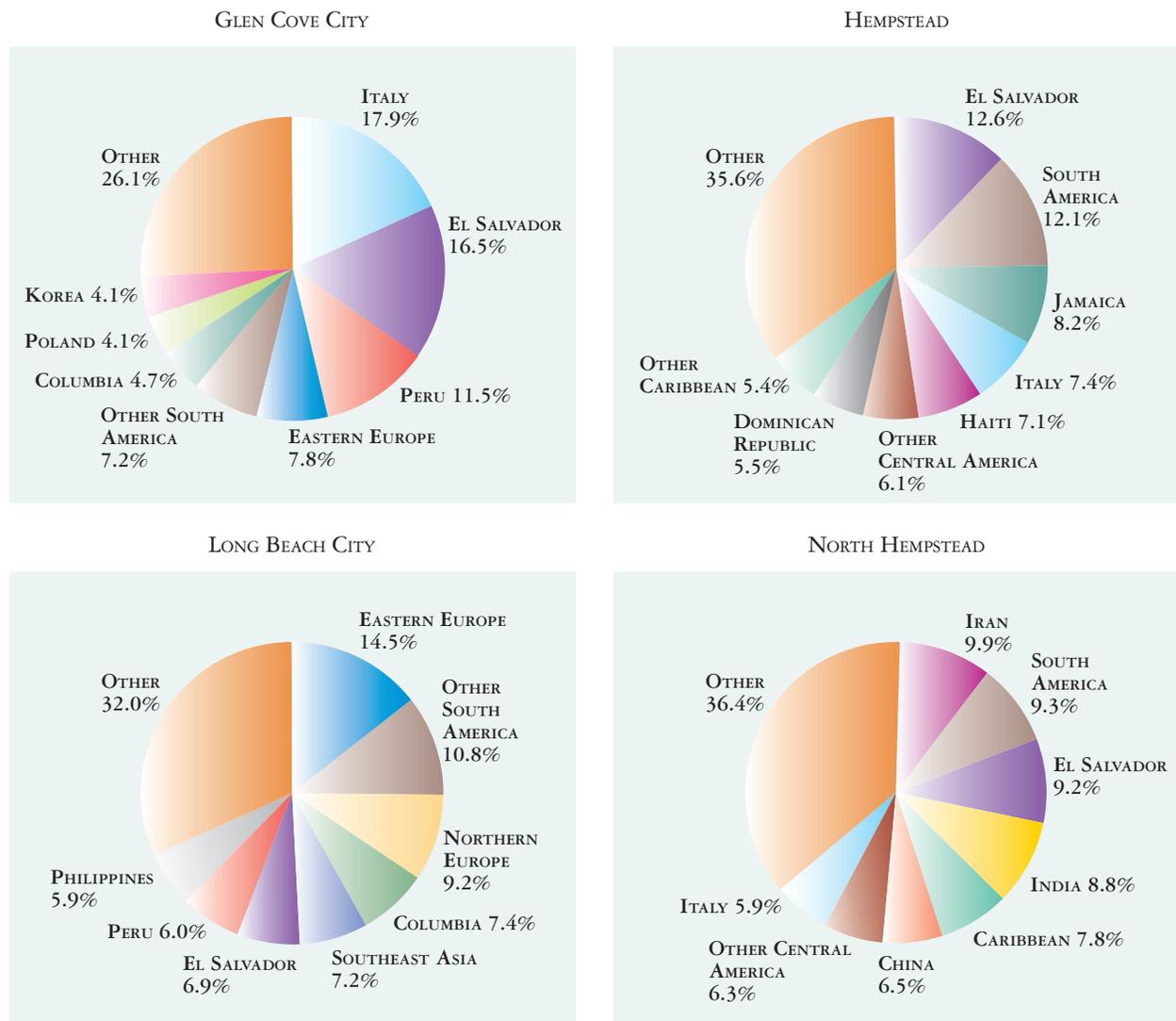
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2000

8. As elsewhere in New York State, the primary sub-county division on Long Island is the town, comprising an extensive geographical area. In Nassau County, these are Hempstead, North Hempstead, and Oyster Bay, with Glen Cove and Long Beach separate entities classified as cities. In Suffolk County, the towns are Babylon, Brookhaven, East Hampton, Huntington, Islip, Riverhead, Shelter Island, Smithtown, Southampton, and Southold. Within the towns are incorporated villages and hamlets and unincorporated areas. Two areas apart from Glen Cove and Long Beach cities lie outside the town system: Suffolk County’s Poospatuck and Shinnecock Native American reservations.

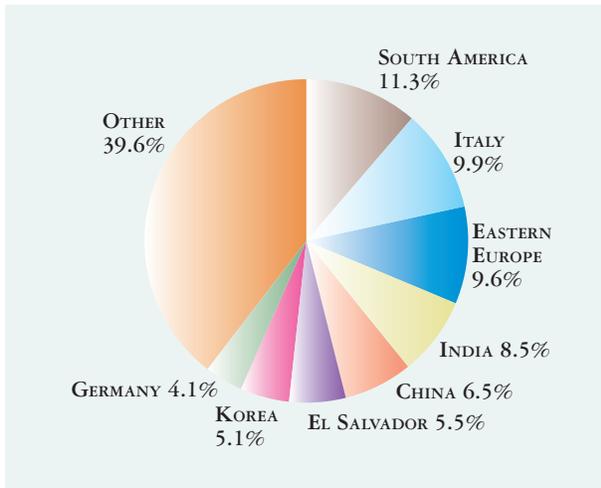
of Nassau County's immigrant population that year, with North Hempstead Town accounting for another 23%. Despite being home to only slightly more than three percent of Nassau's immigrant population, Glen Cove City had the greatest concentration of immigrants within its population (27.9%). Nearly three-quarters of Suffolk County immigrants lived in Babylon Town, Brookhaven Town, or Islip Town, with the latter being home to almost 30% of the county's immigrants. Yet here it is also evident that the immigrant population is fairly well spread out, as its highest concen-

tration is found in East Hampton, where 18.2% of the population is foreign born. The data also show substantial variation in immigrant settlement by national origin. For example, Latin Americans—particularly Colombians and Ecuadorians—are highly represented in East Hampton, Polish immigrants tend to concentrate in Riverhead, Southold, or Shelter Island, and Islip contains the greatest concentration of Salvadoran immigrants. Figure 7 shows immigrant distributions by nationality and town (or city) in the year 2000.

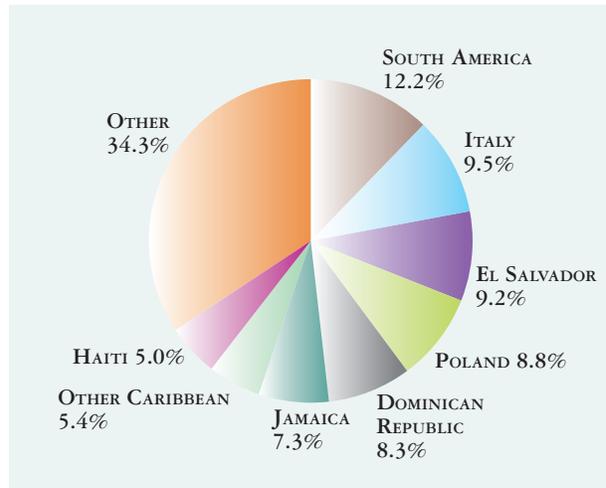
**FIGURE 7. NATIONAL ORIGIN DISTRIBUTION OF THE IMMIGRANT POPULATION IN LONG ISLAND TOWNS, 2000**



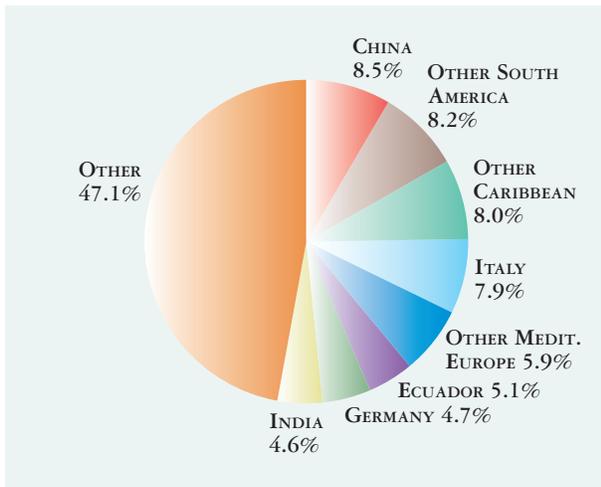
OYSTER BAY



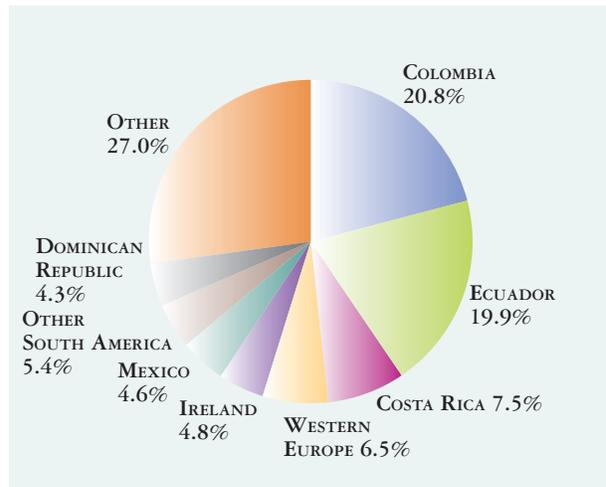
BABYLON



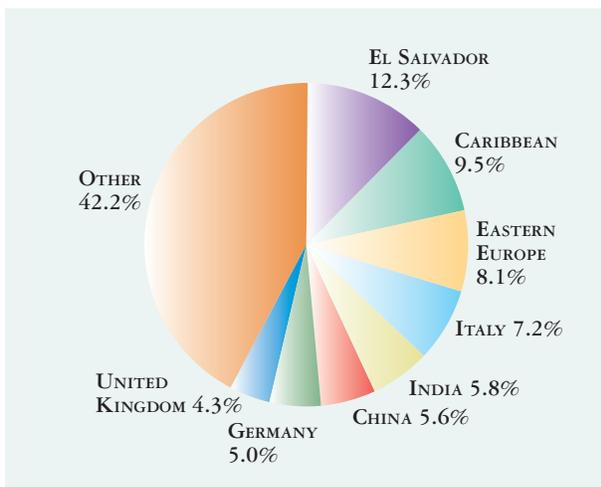
BROOKHAVEN



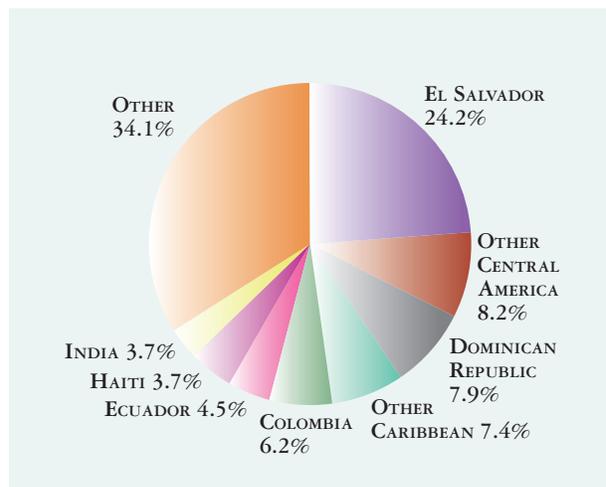
EAST HAMPTON



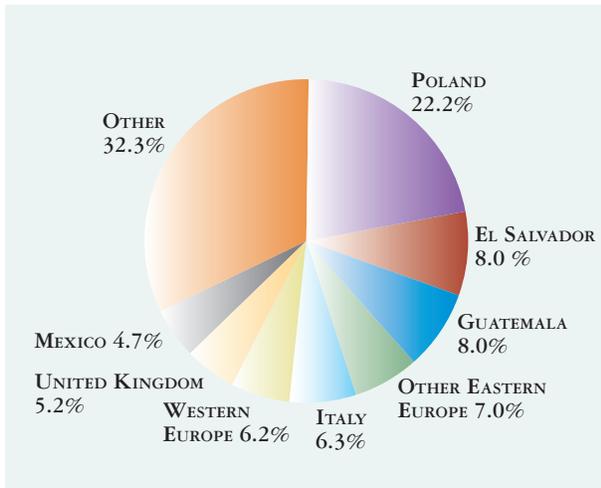
HUNTINGTON



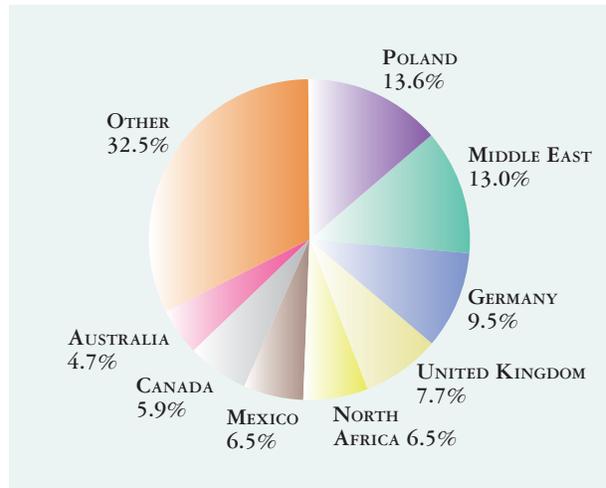
ISLIP



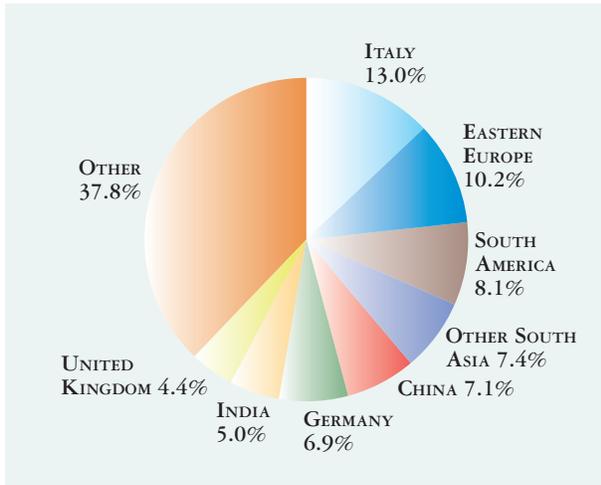
RIVERHEAD



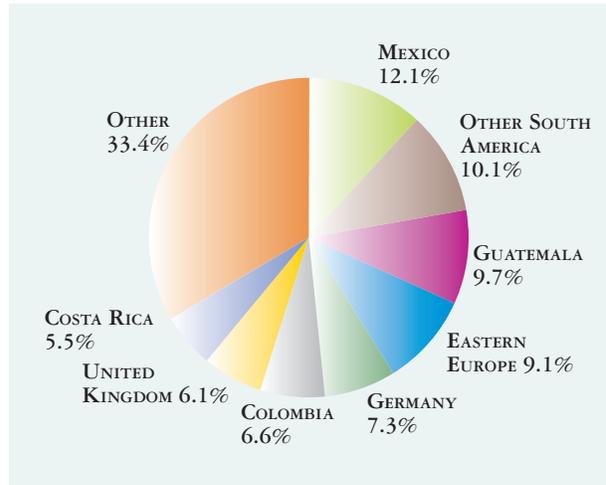
SHELTER ISLAND



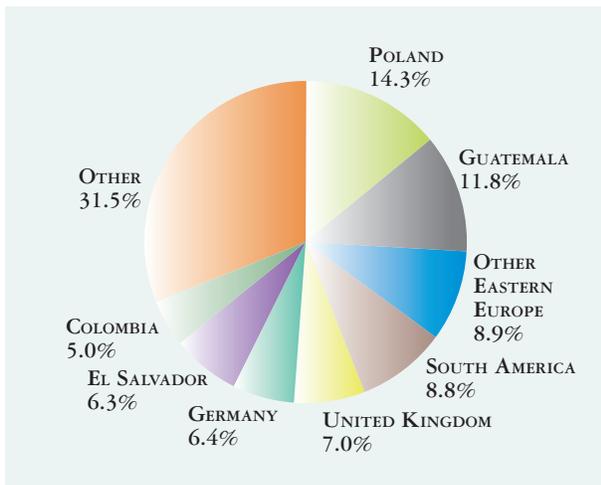
SMITHTOWN



SOUTHAMPTON



SOUTHOLD



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2000

At the more disaggregated community level, Table 3 reveals that a significant fraction of Long Island immigrants in both counties resides in a relatively small number of the region's villages and unincorporated communities. Immigrants living in the three Nassau communities where they are most represented (Hempstead, Freeport, and Elmont) account for 18.4% of all Nassau County immigrants, while the top ten immigrant communities account for 37.0% of the total. The respective numbers in Suffolk are even higher: 20.4% of Suffolk County immigrants live in Brentwood, Central Islip, or Huntington Station, and 38.1% live in

one of the ten communities on the Suffolk list. Many of these communities also exhibit relatively high concentrations of immigrants as a share of total residents. Indeed, with a 45.3% share of the population, New Cassel in North Hempstead was, as of 2000, not far from being a majority immigrant community. Most other communities with populations at least 30% immigrant are also found in Nassau County (Hempstead, Elmont, Uniondale, and North Valley Stream), the exception being Brentwood, the Long Island community with the greatest number of Hispanics.<sup>9</sup>

**TABLE 3. PRINCIPAL IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES ON LONG ISLAND, 2000**

NASSAU COUNTY TOWNSHIP	PLACE	NUMBER OF IMMIGRANTS	IMMIGRANT % OF TOTAL POPULATION
<b>HEMPSTEAD</b>	<b>HEMPSTEAD VILLAGE</b>	<b>18,769</b>	<b>33.2</b>
<b>HEMPSTEAD</b>	<b>FREEPORT VILLAGE</b>	<b>13,089</b>	<b>29.9</b>
<b>HEMPSTEAD</b>	<b>ELMONT CDP</b>	<b>12,039</b>	<b>36.9</b>
<b>HEMPSTEAD</b>	<b>UNIONDALE CDP</b>	<b>7,836</b>	<b>34.1</b>
<b>OYSTER BAY</b>	<b>HICKSVILLE CDP</b>	<b>7,410</b>	<b>18.0</b>
<b>HEMPSTEAD</b>	<b>VALLEY STREAM VILLAGE</b>	<b>7,129</b>	<b>19.6</b>
<b>NORTH HEMPSTEAD</b>	<b>NEW CASSEL CDP</b>	<b>6,026</b>	<b>45.3</b>
<b>HEMPSTEAD</b>	<b>EAST MEADOW CDP</b>	<b>5,423</b>	<b>14.5</b>
<b>HEMPSTEAD</b>	<b>NORTH VALLEY STREAM CDP</b>	<b>5,408</b>	<b>34.3</b>
<b>HEMPSTEAD</b>	<b>MINEOLA VILLAGE</b>	<b>5,125</b>	<b>27.1</b>
SULFOLK COUNTY TOWNSHIP	PLACE	NUMBER OF IMMIGRANTS	IMMIGRANT % OF TOTAL POPULATION
<b>ISLIP</b>	<b>BRENTWOOD CDP</b>	<b>18,721</b>	<b>34.7</b>
<b>ISLIP</b>	<b>CENTRAL ISLIP CDP</b>	<b>7,325</b>	<b>23.0</b>
<b>HUNTINGTON</b>	<b>HUNTINGTON STATION CDP</b>	<b>6,254</b>	<b>20.9</b>
<b>BABYLON</b>	<b>COPIAGUE CDP</b>	<b>4,754</b>	<b>21.7</b>
<b>BABYLON</b>	<b>WEST BABYLON CDP</b>	<b>4,688</b>	<b>10.8</b>
<b>ISLIP</b>	<b>NORTH BAY SHORE CDP</b>	<b>4,405</b>	<b>29.3</b>
<b>HUNTINGTON</b>	<b>DIX HILLS CDP</b>	<b>3,717</b>	<b>14.2</b>
<b>BROOKHAVEN</b>	<b>CORAM CDP</b>	<b>3,695</b>	<b>10.6</b>
<b>HUNTINGTON/SMITHTOWN</b>	<b>COMMACK CDP</b>	<b>3,416</b>	<b>9.4</b>
<b>ISLIP</b>	<b>BAY SHORE CDP</b>	<b>3,376</b>	<b>14.2</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2000. Note: "CDP" refers to "census designated place," defined by the Census Bureau as "a densely settled concentration of population that is not within an incorporated place but is locally identified by a name."

9. Only communities with a sizable immigrant population are considered here. There are likely to be a number of much smaller communities that have a high percentage of immigrants.

Table 4 shows a remarkable disparity in settlement habits among different groups. It appears that in cases of countries from which the largest community of migrants is at least twice the size (in terms of residents) of the second-largest community, the country is, almost without exception, Latin American. In Nassau County, for example, Dominicans overwhelmingly prefer Freeport, while Salvadorans and Hondurans choose Hempstead.<sup>10</sup> Peruvians, a smaller group overall, opt for Glen Cove City. In Suffolk, Brentwood appears to be the community of choice for Colombians,

Dominicans (though Copiague also, to a lesser extent), Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and Peruvians. Iran is the one non-Latin American country with migrants to Long Island concentrating in particular areas, in their case in Great Neck and Kings Point. Haitian and Jamaican immigrants also tend to concentrate a bit more than migrants from most other countries. But for the most part, Latin Americans are the exception to the observed pattern within Long Island's immigrant population to spread out fairly evenly across a variety of distinct communities.

**TABLE 4: PRINCIPAL IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN, 2000**

			NASSAU COUNTY			
CHINA			COLOMBIA		DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	
VALLEY STREAM	477		FREEPORT	654	FREEPORT	3,135
HICKSVILLE CDP	437		HEMPSTEAD	522	HEMPSTEAD	751
SYOSSET CDP	429		LONG BEACH CITY	403	ROCKVILLE CENTRE	590
NORTH NEW HYDE PARK CDP	350		MINEOLA	376	BALDWIN CDP	487
EAST MEADOW CDP	311		GLEN COVE CITY	350	UNIONDALE CDP	373
JERICHO CDP	293		HICKSVILLE CDP	287	VALLEY STREAM	320
NORTH HILLS	283		VALLEY STREAM	258	NORTH AMITYVILLE CDP	307
GARDEN CITY PARK CDP	222		OCEANSIDE CDP	211	OCEANSIDE CDP	273
WOODBURY CDP	217		ELMONT CDP	204	GLEN COVE CITY	215
ROSLYN HEIGHTS CDP	181		EAST MEADOW CDP	196	ELMONT CDP	191
EL SALVADOR			GERMANY		GREECE	
HEMPSTEAD	6,947		FRANKLIN SQUARE CDP	252	HICKSVILLE CDP	316
FREEPORT	3,145		EAST MEADOW CDP	228	VALLEY STREAM	222
NEW CASSEL CDP	2,066		LEVITTOWN CDP	199	FRANKLIN SQUARE CDP	211
UNIONDALE CDP	1,788		HICKSVILLE CDP	191	LEVITTOWN CDP	190
GLEN COVE CITY	1,226		LONG BEACH CITY	188	GARDEN CITY	188
ROOSEVELT CDP	1,045		GLEN COVE CITY	187	EAST MEADOW CDP	165
HICKSVILLE CDP	739		WEST HEMPSTEAD CDP	147	BETHPAGE CDP	140
WESTBURY	684		MINEOLA	141	NORTH BELLMORE CDP	129
INWOOD CDP	659		BETHPAGE CDP	135	MERRICK CDP	128
MINEOLA	632		SYOSSET CDP	129	BELLMORE CDP	97

10. The numbers presented here offer no indication of the extent to which migrants actually “choose” their communities of residence. The data do not tell us whether Dominicans, for example, concentrate in Freeport merely to be near other Dominicans or whether family members had already settled there—or the extent to which income differential or segregation in general promote some of the patterns we observe.

**TABLE 4: PRINCIPAL IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN, 2000 CONT.**

NASSAU COUNTY					
GUYANA		HAITI		HONDURAS	
ELMONT CDP	627	ELMONT CDP	2,475	HEMPSTEAD	1,878
HEMPSTEAD	554	UNIONDALE CDP	1,346	FREEPORT	489
NORTH VALLEY STREAM CDP	304	NORTH VALLEY STREAM CDP	1,225	WESTBURY	238
UNIONDALE CDP	258	NEW CASSEL CDP	1,198	LONG BEACH CITY	205
VALLEY STREAM	244	HEMPSTEAD	1,183	NEW CASSEL CDP	144
LONG BEACH CITY	241	BALDWIN CDP	740	FARMINGDALE	127
FREEPORT	230	ROOSEVELT CDP	447	ROOSEVELT CDP	125
NORTH AMITYVILLE CDP	230	VALLEY STREAM	419	UNIONDALE CDP	120
BALDWIN CDP	172	FREEPORT	384	HICKSVILLE CDP	78
SOUTH VALLEY STREAM CDP	156	EAST MASSAPEQUA CDP	376	BALDWIN CDP	77
INDIA		IRAN		IRELAND	
HICKSVILLE CDP	1,099	GREAT NECK	1,509	LONG BEACH CITY	256
ELMONT CDP	1,046	KINGS POINT	945	LEVITTOWN CDP	218
NORTH NEW HYDE PARK CDP	727	GREAT NECK PLAZA	426	MALVERNE	212
EAST MEADOW CDP	674	ROSLYN HEIGHTS CDP	266	NORTH NEW HYDE PARK CDP	211
GARDEN CITY PARK CDP	651	FLOWER HILL	211	HICKSVILLE CDP	164
SYOSSET CDP	444	GLEN COVE CITY	184	FLORAL PARK	148
NEW HYDE PARK	441	MINEOLA	184	VALLEY STREAM	131
SEARINGTOWN CDP	421	SEARINGTOWN CDP	169	MINEOLA	125
NORTH VALLEY STREAM CDP	353	GREAT NECK ESTATES	162	NEW HYDE PARK	110
LEVITTOWN CDP	304	NORTH NEW HYDE PARK CDP	140	BALDWIN CDP	105
ITALY		JAMAICA		PERU	
FRANKLIN SQUARE CDP	1,655	HEMPSTEAD	2,157	GLEN COVE CITY	857
GLEN COVE CITY	1,331	UNIONDALE CDP	1,886	ELMONT CDP	343
ELMONT CDP	789	ELMONT CDP	1,375	LONG BEACH CITY	325
VALLEY STREAM	646	NORTH VALLEY STREAM CDP	1,061	HEMPSTEAD	258
EAST MEADOW CDP	622	FREEPORT	1,006	HICKSVILLE CDP	221
WESTBURY	615	ROOSEVELT CDP	935	LYNBROOK	165
HICKSVILLE CDP	533	NORTH AMITYVILLE CDP	848	FREEPORT	123
OCEANSIDE CDP	512	BALDWIN CDP	706	CEDARHURST	122
INWOOD CDP	446	WESTBURY	459	EAST MEADOW CDP	114
LYNBROOK	405	NEW CASSEL CDP	396	WESTBURY	112

**TABLE 4: PRINCIPAL IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN, 2000 CONT.**

NASSAU COUNTY					
PHILIPPINES		POLAND		SOUTH KOREA	
ELMONT CDP	494	GLEN COVE CITY	307	JERICHO CDP	519
VALLEY STREAM	463	EAST MEADOW CDP	272	SYOSSET CDP	408
HICKSVILLE CDP	399	LONG BEACH CITY	239	GLEN COVE CITY	305
LONG BEACH CITY	322	HEMPSTEAD	199	HICKSVILLE CDP	295
EAST MEADOW CDP	272	WOODMERE CDP	181	VALLEY STREAM	292
LEVITTOWN CDP	251	FLORAL PARK	154	MANHASSET HILLS CDP	231
FRANKLIN SQUARE CDP	217	HICKSVILLE CDP	153	LAKE SUCCESS	202
SALISBURY CDP	181	VALLEY STREAM	119	MINEOLA	190
BETHPAGE CDP	137	OCEANSIDE CDP	118	SALISBURY CDP	190
NORTH VALLEY STREAM CDP	132	GREAT NECK PLAZA	114	MANORHAVEN	177
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO		UNITED KINGDOM			
HEMPSTEAD	572	LONG BEACH CITY	204		
ELMONT CDP	410	HICKSVILLE CDP	181		
ROOSEVELT CDP	276	VALLEY STREAM	158		
FREEPORT	269	ROCKVILLE CENTRE	150		
UNIONDALE CDP	257	LEVITTOWN CDP	146		
NORTH AMITYVILLE CDP	218	EAST MEADOW CDP	140		
VALLEY STREAM	209	BALDWIN CDP	123		
LAKEVIEW CDP	166	HEMPSTEAD	119		
NORTH VALLEY STREAM CDP	138	UNIONDALE CDP	118		
NEW CASSEL CDP	118	FREEPORT	114		
SUFFOLK COUNTY					
CHINA		COLOMBIA		DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	
SETAUKET-EAST SETAUKET CDP	587	BRENTWOOD CDP	1,694	BRENTWOOD CDP	2,072
CORAM CDP	294	MONTAUK CDP	348	COPIAGUE CDP	1,076
DIX HILLS CDP	291	CENTRAL ISLIP CDP	331	CENTRAL ISLIP CDP	548
COMMACK CDP	277	EAST HAMPTON NORTH CDP	285	NORTH BAY SHORE CDP	531
STONY BROOK CDP	254	HAMPTON BAYS CDP	277	PORT JEFFERSON STATION CDP	239
COPIAGUE CDP	178	BAY SHORE CDP	227	CORAM CDP	217
CENTEREACH CDP	166	COPIAGUE CDP	219	TERRYVILLE CDP	213
HUNTINGTON STATION CDP	160	CORAM CDP	205	LINDENHURST	199
ELWOOD CDP	140	HUNTINGTON STATION CDP	204	WEST BABYLON CDP	198
HUNTINGTON CDP	139	CENTEREACH CDP	182	HUNTINGTON STATION CDP	191

**TABLE 4: PRINCIPAL IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN, 2000 CONT.**

			SUFFOLK COUNTY		
ECUADOR		EL SALVADOR		GERMANY	
PATCHOGUE	912	BRENTWOOD CDP	6,960	WEST BABYLON CDP	256
BRENTWOOD CDP	682	HUNTINGTON STATION CDP	2,169	COMMACK CDP	206
CENTRAL ISLIP CDP	525	CENTRAL ISLIP CDP	1,932	SMITHTOWN CDP	171
BAY SHORE CDP	416	NORTH BAY SHORE CDP	1,593	WEST HEMPSTEAD CDP	147
MONTAUK CDP	299	COPIAGUE CDP	634	KINGS PARK CDP	134
SPRINGS CDP	267	BAY SHORE CDP	439	LINDENHURST	131
EAST PATCHOGUE CDP	265	WYANDANCH CDP	379	DIX HILLS CDP	130
NORTH BAY SHORE CDP	207	PATCHOGUE	318	RIDGE CDP	116
COPIAGUE CDP	157	LINDENHURST	314	STONY BROOK CDP	116
WEST BABYLON CDP	149	EAST FARMINGDALE CDP	299	COPIAGUE CDP	114
GREECE		GUATEMALA		HAITI	
COMMACK CDP	192	BRENTWOOD CDP	767	BRENTWOOD CDP	1,009
TERRYVILLE CDP	127	NORTH BAY SHORE CDP	265	WYANDANCH CDP	455
DIX HILLS CDP	106	HAMPTON BAYS CDP	222	CENTRAL ISLIP CDP	373
WEST BABYLON CDP	99	HUNTINGTON STATION CDP	162	HUNTINGTON STATION CDP	350
WEST HEMPSTEAD CDP	83	RIVERHEAD CDP	108	GREENLAWN CDP	200
SETAUKET-EAST SETAUKET CDP	82	MEDFORD CDP	100	WHEATLEY HEIGHTS CDP	196
RONKONKOMA CDP	81	CENTRAL ISLIP CDP	94	WEST BABYLON CDP	194
PORT JEFFERSON STATION CDP	65	EAST QUOGUE CDP	89	NORTH BAY SHORE CDP	159
EAST PATCHOGUE CDP	60	CALVERTON CDP	83	DIX HILLS CDP	155
FARMINGVILLE CDP	60	COPIAGUE CDP	69	WEST HEMPSTEAD CDP	128
INDIA		IRELAND		ITALY	
DIX HILLS CDP	487	LINDENHURST	120	WEST BABYLON CDP	895
CENTRAL ISLIP CDP	323	SMITHTOWN CDP	110	DEER PARK CDP	530
WEST HEMPSTEAD CDP	254	WEST BABYLON CDP	102	SHIRLEY CDP	500
CORAM CDP	220	SOUND BEACH CDP	85	DIX HILLS CDP	470
MELVILLE CDP	219	KINGS PARK CDP	82	COMMACK CDP	390
COMMACK CDP	213	ISLIP CDP	79	WEST HEMPSTEAD CDP	327
BRENTWOOD CDP	204	WEST ISLIP CDP	77	COPIAGUE CDP	279
MUTTONTOWN	194	EAST ISLIP CDP	75	LINDENHURST	271
DEER PARK CDP	187	HAUPPAUGE CDP	62	SMITHTOWN CDP	270
SETAUKET-EAST SETAUKET CDP	181	MONTAUK CDP	60	TUCKAHOE	270

**TABLE 4: PRINCIPAL IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN, 2000 CONT.**

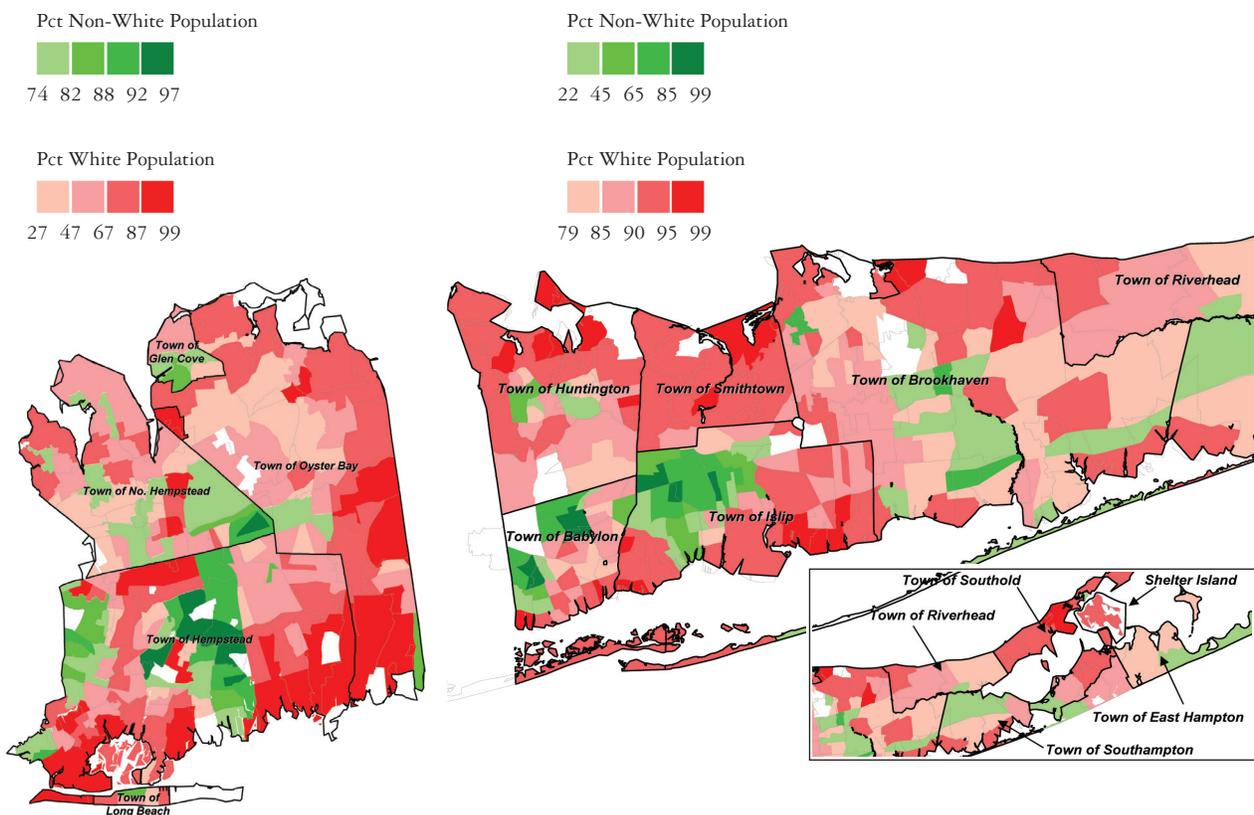
SUFFOLK COUNTY					
JAMAICA		MEXICO		PAKISTAN	
CENTRAL ISLIP CDP	633	BRENTWOOD CDP	334	BRENTWOOD CDP	260
BRENTWOOD CDP	390	HUNTINGTON STATION CDP	264	ROCKY POINT CDP	162
CORAM CDP	288	FLANDERS CDP	208	LAKE GROVE	154
WEST BABYLON CDP	266	SOUTHAMPTON	188	DIX HILLS CDP	131
DEER PARK CDP	263	NORTH SEA CDP	127	HUNTINGTON STATION CDP	124
HUNTINGTON STATION CDP	235	COPIAGUE CDP	105	CORAM CDP	116
WHEATLEY HEIGHTS CDP	189	FARMINGVILLE CDP	102	BAY SHORE CDP	95
WYANDANCH CDP	177	RIVERHEAD CDP	100	WEST BABYLON CDP	91
BAY SHORE CDP	150	CORAM CDP	95	BOHEMIA CDP	89
WEST HEMPSTEAD CDP	145	SPRINGS CDP	78	DEER PARK CDP	89
PERU		PHILIPPINES		POLAND	
BRENTWOOD CDP	614	DIX HILLS CDP	207	LINDENHURST	836
CENTRAL ISLIP CDP	217	DEER PARK CDP	173	COPIAGUE CDP	647
ISLAND PARK	200	SETAUKET-EAST SETAUKET CDP	173	RIVERHEAD CDP	481
WEST BABYLON CDP	161	CENTRAL ISLIP CDP	162	NORTH LINDENHURST CDP	355
BAY SHORE CDP	139	BRENTWOOD CDP	154	WEST BABYLON CDP	293
ISLIP CDP	112	CORAM CDP	144	CENTEREACH CDP	128
NORTH BAY SHORE CDP	103	HOLBROOK CDP	138	COMMACK CDP	108
DIX HILLS CDP	62	WEST HEMPSTEAD CDP	122	WEST HEMPSTEAD CDP	93
NORTH BELLPORT CDP	58	COMMACK CDP	106	EAST PATCHOGUE CDP	92
SELDEN CDP	58	WEST BABYLON CDP	102	ISLIP CDP	83
SOUTH KOREA		UNITED KINGDOM			
COMMACK CDP	209	HUNTINGTON CDP	173		
EIWOOD CDP	125	WEST BABYLON CDP	161		
SETAUKET-EAST SETAUKET CDP	119	COMMACK CDP	138		
WEST HEMPSTEAD CDP	118	HAUPPAUGE CDP	118		
HUNTINGTON STATION CDP	117	DEER PARK CDP	106		
DIX HILLS CDP	111	GREENLAWN CDP	106		
HAUPPAUGE CDP	98	DIX HILLS CDP	102		
EAST NORTHPORT CDP	95	BRENTWOOD CDP	98		
SMITHTOWN CDP	89	CENTEREACH CDP	98		
ISLIP CDP	88	LAKE RONKONKOMA CDP	87		

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2000

We can compare the immigrant community numbers shown in Table 4 to the map on Figure 8 showing the population concentration of minority groups (non-whites, according to the Census classification) in different regions.<sup>11</sup> First, note the greater number of communities with high concentrations (85-99%) of non-white groups in Nassau County, many found in Hempstead Town. The observation is consistent with Figure 7, which reveals that almost all major immigrant groups in Hempstead (Italians being the exception) are from countries in which most people are likely to be classified as non-white. Recalling Table 3, which shows that eight of the top ten immigrant communities in Nassau are in Hempstead, the observation suggests substantial overlap between

minority and immigrant neighborhoods. There appears, however, to be less of such overlap in Suffolk County. We find consistency between the Suffolk map and Table 3, which reveal Islip and Babylon as the two Suffolk towns with the greatest concentration of both minorities and immigrants. But while, according to Figure 7, immigrants in Islip are disproportionately from non-European countries, this is not as clearly the case for Babylon. Moreover, we do find a relatively high percentage of non-European immigrants in the Hamptons, especially East Hampton. What these observations imply is that there are more minority communities in Suffolk with relatively few immigrants, as well as more immigrant communities with relatively few non-whites.

**FIGURE 8: POPULATION DISTRIBUTION ON LONG ISLAND, BY COMMUNITY, 2000**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2000. Map by North Shore-LIJ Health System Office of Strategic Planning and Program Development.

11. Even though many Hispanics list themselves as white, many do not. For purposes of this study, Hispanics are treated as a minority, or “non-white” group, and “whites” means non-Hispanic whites, which is a separate Census classification.

## DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC PROFILE OF IMMIGRANT LONG ISLANDERS

### Age and Sex Distribution

Nassau’s immigrant population is relatively more female than the total population, while the opposite is true in Suffolk (Table 5). Somewhat surprisingly, the immigrant population in both counties is significantly older on average than the general population. Immigrant-to-total population median age differences range from 6.2 years for Nassau County men to 2.6 years for Suffolk County men. Table 6 also shows that, when grouped according to birthplace, the foreign born on Long Island are significantly older on average than those born in New York State, but on average younger than the other two relatively small groups of Long Islanders—those born in some other U.S. state and native U.S. citizens born outside the U.S. (mostly though not always Puerto Ricans, as noted earlier).

Figure 9 compares the immigrant and U.S.-born population distributions by age group in 2006. Close to half of Long Island immigrants (46.3%) fall into the “prime working age” category of 18 to 44 years compared to less than a third of U.S.-born Long Islanders, and there are also relatively more immigrants in the 45-64 group than non-immigrants. The dearth of immigrants in the two youngest (non-working age) groups in large part explains why the immigrant median ages are relatively high. The observations imply that because of their age profile, immigrants on Long Island are likely to be an economically productive force, relatively speaking. It is consistent with a recent study by the Fiscal Policy Institute, which finds that the immigrant share of all wage and salary income in the “downstate suburbs” of New York State (of which Nassau and Suffolk comprise about two-thirds of the population) is slightly higher than the immigrant share of the population.<sup>12</sup>

**TABLE 5. AGE AND SEX: IMMIGRANTS AND ALL LONG ISLANDERS, 2006**

SEX (%)	NASSAU COUNTY		SEX (%)	SUFFOLK COUNTY	
	IMMIGRANTS	TOTAL POPULATION		IMMIGRANTS	TOTAL POPULATION
MALE	47.2	48.5	MALE	51.0	49.3
FEMALE	52.8	51.5	FEMALE	49.0	50.7
<b>MEDIAN AGE (YEARS)</b>					
MALE	45.4	39.2	MALE	39.7	37.1
FEMALE	45.9	42.3	FEMALE	43.6	39.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2004

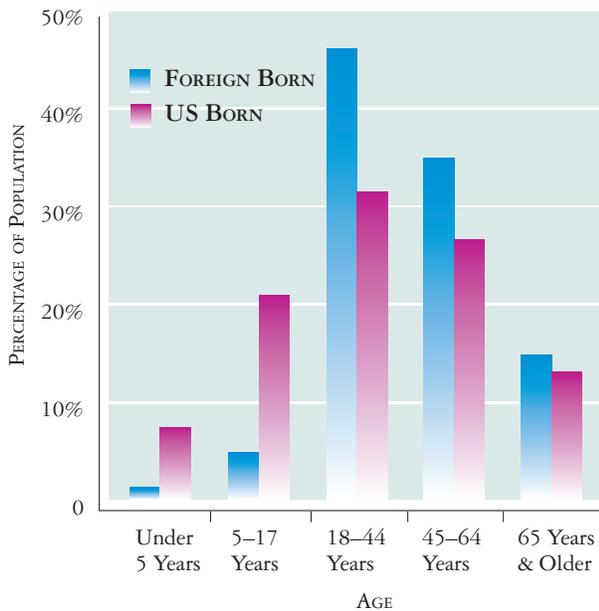
**TABLE 6. COMPARISON OF MEDIAN AGE OF LONG ISLANDERS BY PLACE OF BIRTH, 2006**

PLACE OF BIRTH	NASSAU COUNTY	SUFFOLK COUNTY
NEW YORK STATE	37.2	36.1
OTHER U.S. STATE	49.5	48.3
BORN OUTSIDE U.S., CITIZEN BY BIRTH	55.6	51.6
FOREIGN BORN	45.7	41.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2006

12. Fiscal Policy Institute, *op. cit.* They also find a similar outcome for New York State in its entirety.

**FIGURE 9. AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE IMMIGRANT AND U.S.-BORN LONG ISLAND POPULATIONS, 2006**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2006

While there are also comparatively more immigrants in the oldest age group, many of whom are retired from the work force, the difference here may be small enough to be considered insignificant.

*Marital Status*

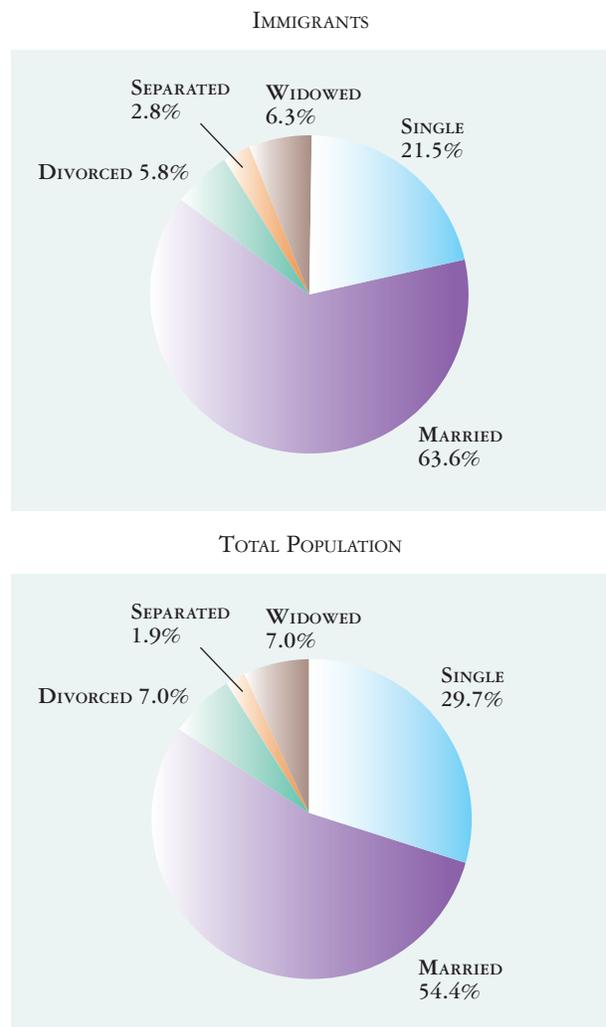
Age probably also helps explain the difference between immigrants and non-immigrants in tendency to be married (Figure 10). The difference of almost ten percentage points (63.6% compared to 54.4%) no doubt is related to the age profile differences. Simply put, everything else equal, older people are more likely to be married than younger people. Another factor may be cultural, however. It is likely that attitudes favoring early marriage may be more prevalent among the foreign born, since the U.S. as a whole tends to hold less traditional social and family values than many other countries.

*English Language Proficiency*

Figure 11 shows that the majority of the Long Island immigrant population is relatively proficient in English. Immigrants from all major language groups more frequently rated themselves as speaking English very well compared to other categories of proficiency. According to

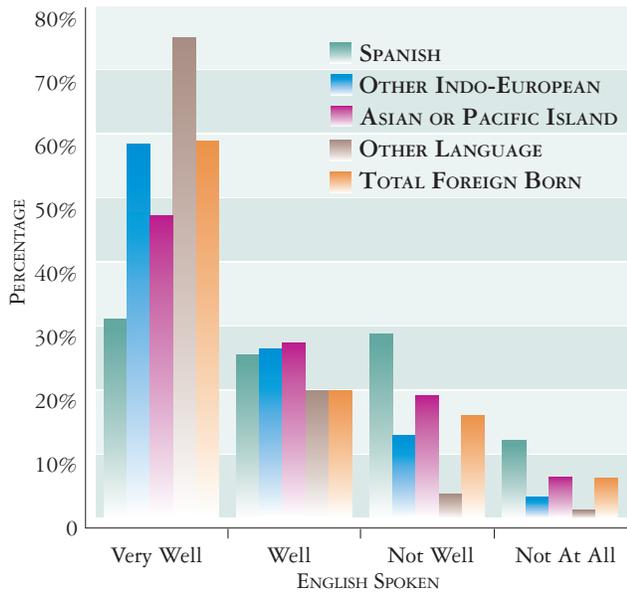
the American Community Survey, 33.3% of Spanish-speaking immigrants reported speaking English very well, and another 25.2% reported speaking it well. The respective numbers for the “other Indo-European,” “Asian or Pacific Island,” and “other” categories are even higher. Fifty-eight percent of non-Spanish Europeans speak English very well, as do 47.3% of Asian or Pacific Islanders and 76.2% of immigrants from other backgrounds. The respective numbers for the category of speaking “well” are 26.2%, 27.5%, and 19.7%. In aggregate, nearly 60% of all immigrants reported speaking English “very well,” and only about 21% of reported speaking English either “not well” or “not at all,” (comparing favorably to 27% of immigrants living in New York City).

**FIGURE 10. MARITAL STATUS OF THE IMMIGRANT AND TOTAL POPULATIONS ON LONG ISLAND, 2006**



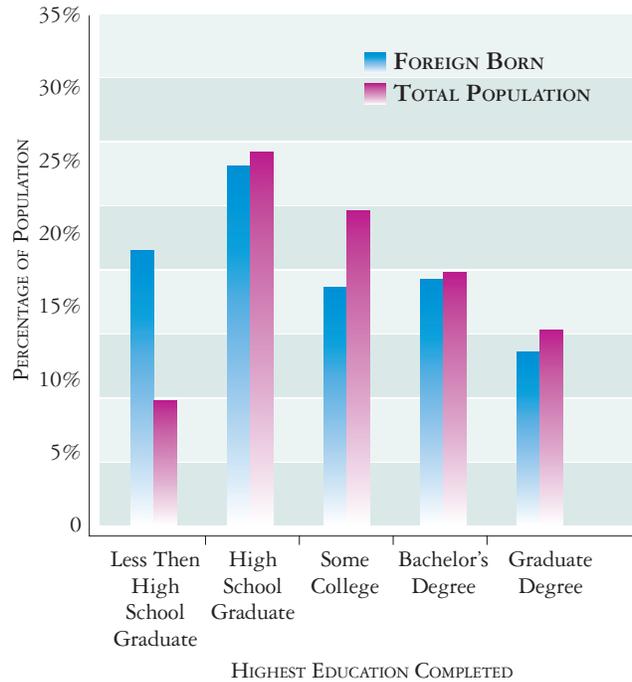
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2006

**FIGURE 11. ENGLISH PROFICIENCY OF IMMIGRANT LONG ISLANDERS, 2006**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2006

**FIGURE 12. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT: IMMIGRANTS AND ALL LONG ISLANDERS, 2006**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2006

This is important because, according to the Fiscal Policy Institute, New York City immigrants who speak better English on average earn higher incomes and therefore contribute more to the local economy.<sup>13</sup>

### Education

While immigrants on average obtain fewer years of schooling than Long Islanders overall, the difference is not great, particularly in higher education (Figure 12). More than 13% of immigrant Long Islanders age 25 or over have a graduate degree (compared with 15.6% for the total population), and 32.3% of them have at least a bachelor's degree, only three percentage points less than all Long Islanders. A substantially lower percentage in the "some college" category might be interpreted as a stronger tendency among college-attending immigrants to finish college compared to non-immigrants. The shares of immigrants and non-

immigrants who complete their educations with high school graduation are roughly similar. The only category in which there really is a notable difference is in "less than high school graduate." It includes those having dropped out of high school as well as those having never attended, the latter case probably far more common among immigrants than non-immigrants. Nevertheless, immigrants on Long Island are more than twice as likely as the general population to have never finished high school (21.9% compared to 10.4%). When compared to similar numbers for New York City immigrants, the figures above reveal a slightly higher average level of education and compare especially favorably in the "bachelor's" and "graduate degree" categories.<sup>14</sup>

13. Fiscal Policy Institute. 2007. *Op cit.*, p. 44.

14. Fiscal Policy Institute. 2007. *Op cit.*, p. 40.

**TABLE 7. INCOME AND POVERTY STATISTICS FOR IMMIGRANT AND NON-IMMIGRANT LONG ISLANDERS 15 YEARS OR OLDER, 2006**

NASSAU COUNTY SHARE OF ALL HOUSHOLDS (%)			SUFFOLK COUNTY SHARE OF ALL HOUSHOLDS (%)		
INDIVIDUAL INCOME (\$)	IMMIGRANTS	TOTAL POPULATION	INDIVIDUAL INCOME (\$)	IMMIGRANTS	TOTAL POPULATION
<b>0 TO 14,999</b>	<b>36.7</b>	<b>35.8</b>	<b>0 TO 14,999</b>	<b>36.3</b>	<b>35.8</b>
<b>15,000 TO 34,999</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>15,000 TO 34,999</b>	<b>30.0</b>	<b>23.0</b>
<b>35,000 TO 74,999</b>	<b>24.4</b>	<b>24.8</b>	<b>35,000 TO 74,999</b>	<b>24.2</b>	<b>26.6</b>
<b>75,000 AND HIGHER</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>18.8</b>	<b>75,000 AND HIGHER</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>14.6</b>
<b>MEDIAN INCOME (\$)</b>	<b>IMMIGRANTS</b>	<b>TOTAL POPULATION</b>	<b>MEDIAN INCOME (\$)</b>	<b>IMMIGRANTS</b>	<b>TOTAL POPULATION</b>
	<b>31,229</b>	<b>35,137</b>		<b>27,377</b>	<b>31,924</b>
<b>POVERTY RATE (%)</b>	<b>IMMIGRANTS</b>	<b>TOTAL POPULATION</b>	<b>POVERTY RATE (%)</b>	<b>IMMIGRANTS</b>	<b>TOTAL POPULATION</b>
	<b>7.3</b>	<b>5.2</b>		<b>9.0</b>	<b>6.5</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2006

*Income*

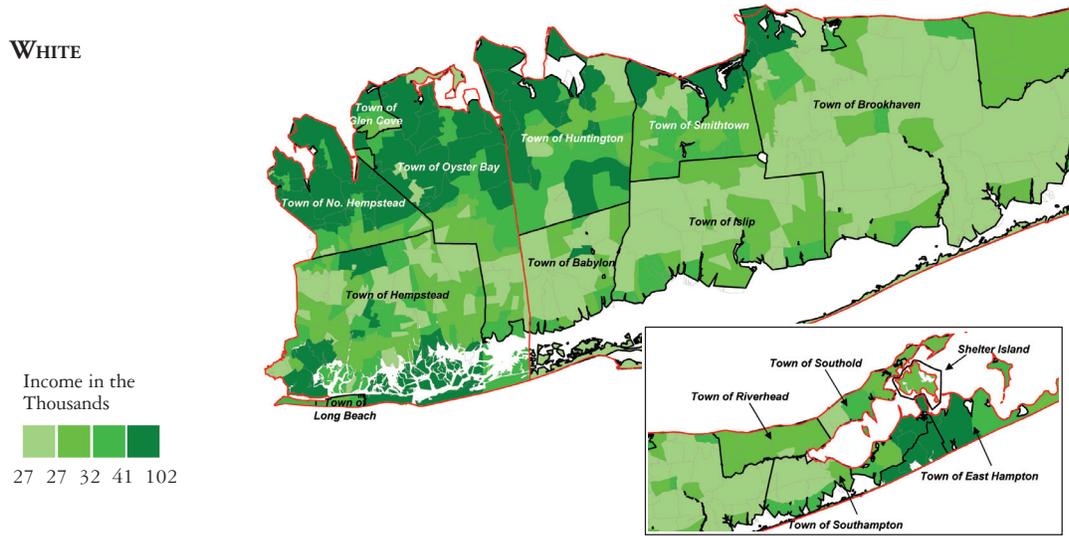
Table 7 shows that income differences between Long Island’s immigrants and non-immigrants are relatively minor. In Nassau County, three-fifths of immigrants 15 years or older had an income in 2006 of \$35,000 or less compared to 56.4% of the total population. Nearly 15% of immigrants had an income of at least \$75,000, compared to 18.8% of the total population. At \$31,229, the immigrant median income is less than four thousand dollars below the median for the total population. The difference between the groups is somewhat larger in Suffolk County, where 66.3% of immigrants over 15 earned less than \$35,000, compared to 58.8% of all Long Islanders. Also, fewer than ten percent of immigrants had incomes above \$75,000, and median income was considerably lower than in Nassau, at \$27,377. Poverty appears to be more common in Suffolk County than in Nassau, both for immigrants and non-immigrants. But immigrants are more likely to be poor in each county, by about two percentage points.

Figure 13 presents a series of maps that show the per capita income in the different villages and census-designated places (CDPs) on Long Island, separated according to racial or ethnic group. While similar data are not available for immigrants as a separate group, there is some geographic

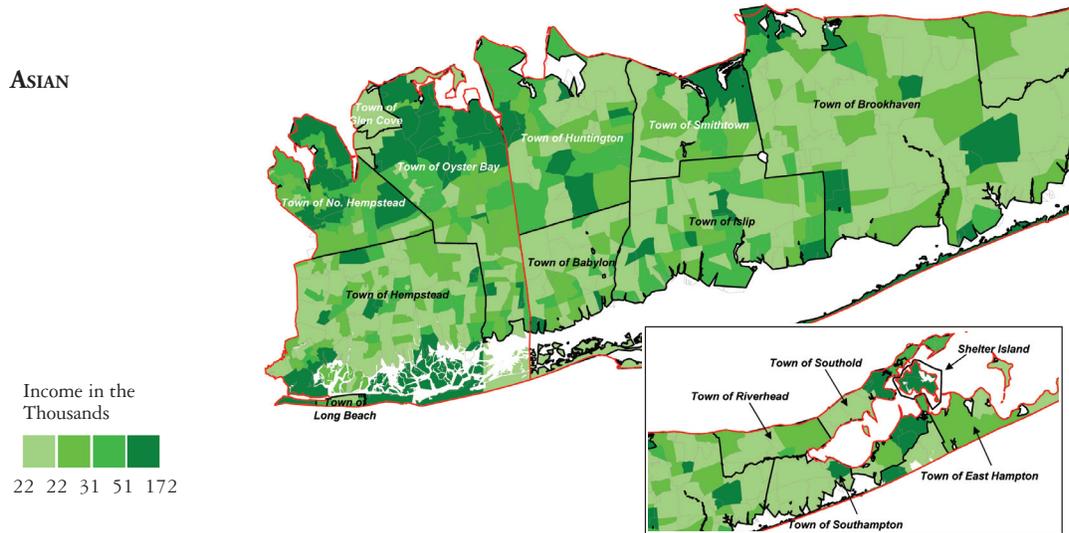
overlap between them and minorities, especially Asians and Hispanics, as noted earlier. One notable difference is that there tends to be more income-based segregation among whites than other groups. In other words, while neighborhoods in which whites tend to be rich are mostly found near other similar neighborhoods (and the same is true where whites tend to be poor), we see much more of a mosaic of shades of green on the other maps, signifying that for each of the minority groups it is much more common for the rich to be living near if not next to the poor in the same group. Unlike much of the rest of Nassau, Central Hempstead appears relatively poor, and it is also where we find some of the major immigrant communities, as noted earlier. We should also recall, however, that with the exception of Hispanics, immigrants tend to spread out fairly evenly across Long Island, and consequently most of the immigrant strongholds on Long Island have a large concentration of Hispanics. As seen in Table 8, Hispanics are poorer than the average Long Islander (although not as poor as the average black Long Islander), so it is reasonable that villages such as Hempstead and Freeport would be poorer than the average. The same appears true for Suffolk County immigrant centers such as Brentwood and Central Islip that, like the principal immigrant centers in Hempstead Town, also attract a disproportionate share of black immigrant groups.

FIGURE 13. PER CAPITA INCOME ON LONG ISLAND, BY RACIAL OR ETHNIC GROUP, 2000

**WHITE**



**ASIAN**



**BLACK**

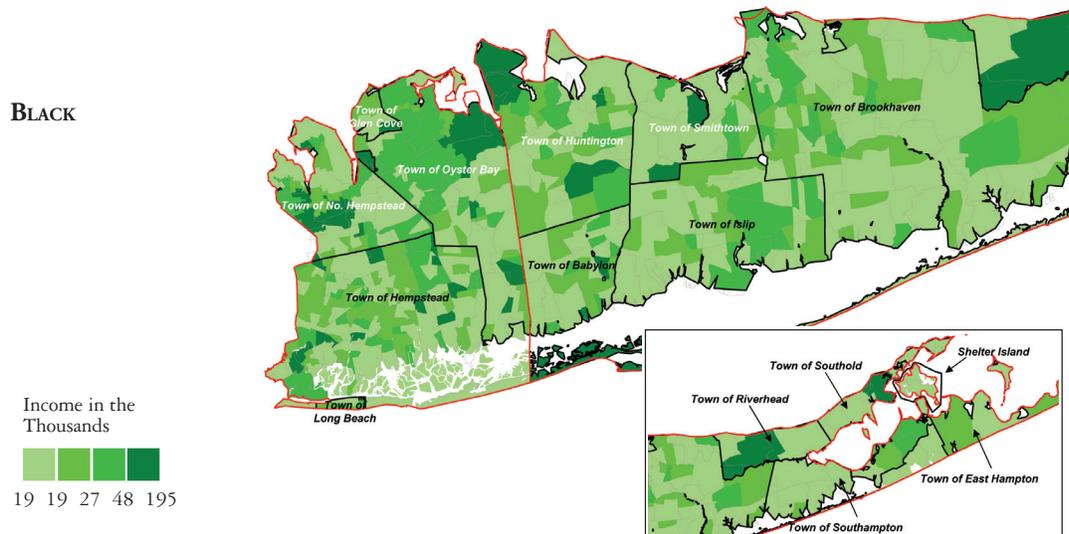
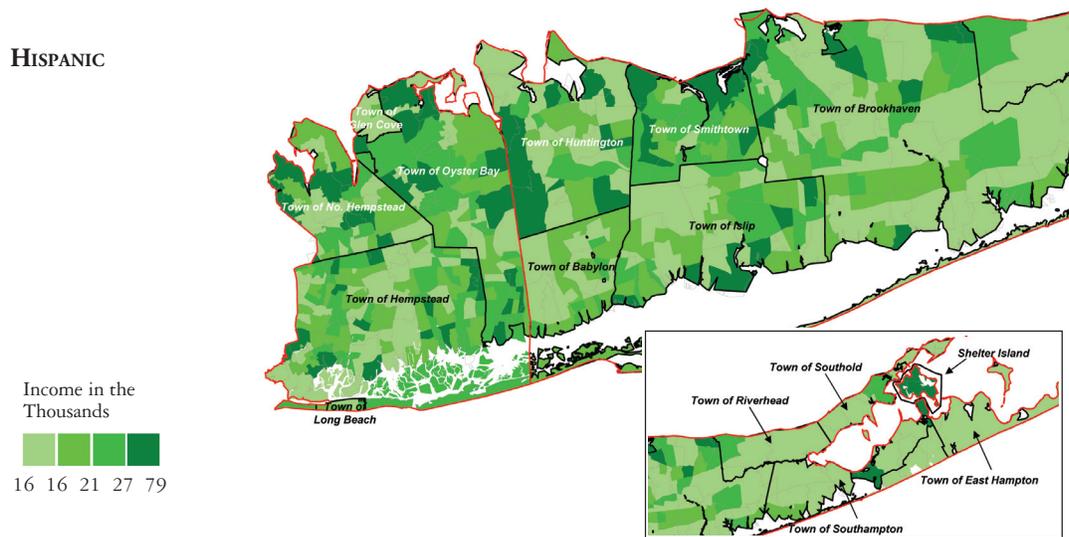


FIGURE 13. PER CAPITA INCOME ON LONG ISLAND, BY RACIAL OR ETHNIC GROUP, 2000 CONT



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2000. Map by North Shore-LIJ Health System Office of Strategic Planning and Program Development.

TABLE 8. INCOME AND POVERTY STATISTICS BY RACE OR ETHNIC GROUP, 2006

	NASSAU COUNTY			SUFFOLK COUNTY		
	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (\$)	PER CAPITA INCOME (\$)	POVERTY RATE (%)	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (\$)	PER CAPITA INCOME (\$)	POVERTY RATE (%)
WHITE, NOT HISPANIC	89,991	42,683	3.6	80,586	35,897	4.6
BLACK	70,171	25,977	10.9	65,009	21,470	17.3
HISPANIC	70,129	22,327	9.8	62,876	19,390	10.5
ASIAN	101,645	38,052	4.5	83,017	30,428	9.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2006

### THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF LONG ISLAND'S IMMIGRANT POPULATION

We now turn to the economic impact of immigrants on Nassau and Suffolk Counties, for which a methodology is used that is similar to that in earlier studies on the economic impact of Hispanic populations—one by Kasarda and Johnson (2006) on the state of North Carolina and one by Torras and Skinner (2007) on Long Island.<sup>15</sup> As in those reports, both the impact of immigrant consumer

spending on the regional economy and the net balance of the immigrant population's contributions and costs on local government budgets are assessed.

This section of the report will present, first, the calculation of the gains to Long Island output, income, employment, and public revenues attributable to immigrant Long Islanders' consumer spending, which is valued at over \$7.5 billion in 2006. Next, we will look at which

15. Kasarda, John D. and James H. Johnson, Jr. 2006. *The Economic Impact of the Immigrant Population on the State of North Carolina*. Chapel Hill, NC: Frank Hawkins Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise. Torras, Mariano, and Curtis Skinner. 2007. *The Economic Impact of the Hispanic Population on Long Island, New York*. Port Washington, NY: The Horace Hagedorn Foundation.

industries are most affected by the presence of immigrant workers and consumers on Long Island. The report concludes with the local government budget analysis, which requires a comparison of the principal tax revenues that Long Island immigrants contribute directly to local governments (county, city/town, village, and school district) and the cost of the major local services that this population receives.

An input-output model known as IMPLAN is used for most of the analysis. It is based on purchasing and consumption patterns, as well as on local production and commerce in goods and services across industries. Most of the data are obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. IMPLAN follows consumer spending through over 500 sectors of Long Island's economy in order to estimate any of a variety of impacts that would result from a certain hypothetical change—e.g., in earnings or employment for a particular sector or sectors—to the Long Island economy.<sup>16</sup> The IMPLAN model calculates the direct,

indirect, and induced effects on the Long Island economy resulting from immigrant consumer spending. The indirect and induced effects occur as this spending raises output and incomes in a broad range of industries linked to the industries that directly supply immigrant consumers.

Following Kasarda and Johnson (2006) and Torras and Skinner (2007), buying power data are used as the primary input in the economic impact analysis. In estimating it, my starting point is total income earned by all immigrants on Long Island. While the American Community Survey does not separately measure household income for the foreign born, reasonable approximations of these numbers for different immigrant groups were obtained from other statistical data available from the Census.<sup>17</sup> Other adjustments were necessary to produce a reliable estimate of immigrant consumption (see Table 9). Here the adjustment amounts are summarized; the next section explains in greater detail the methodology used to arrive at the numbers.

**TABLE 9. DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMIGRANT SPENDING ESTIMATE FOR 2006**

	<b>HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b>	<b>\$11,499,983,448</b>
<b>MINUS:</b>	<b>INCOME &amp; PAYROLL TAXES</b>	<b>\$2,265,427,017</b>
	<b>SAVINGS</b>	<b>\$57,499,917</b>
	<b>REMITTANCES</b>	<b>\$434,111,892</b>
<b>EQUALS:</b>	<b>DISPOSABLE INCOME</b>	<b>\$8,742,944,622</b>
<b>MINUS:</b>	<b>PROPERTY TAXES</b>	<b>\$1,188,048,606</b>
<b>EQUALS:</b>	<b>BUYING POWER</b>	<b>\$7,554,896,016</b>
	<b>(IMPLAN INPUT)</b>	
<b>MINUS:</b>	<b>CONSUMPTION LEAKAGES</b>	<b>\$344,999,503</b>
	<b>INDUSTRIAL LEAKAGES</b>	<b>\$2,052,010,297</b>
<b>EQUALS:</b>	<b>IMPACT SPENDING</b>	<b>\$5,157,886,216</b>

16. Among the many impacts generated by IMPLAN are the number of jobs, labor income, and tax revenue gained or lost. See Lindall, Scott A. and Douglas C. Olson. No date. *The IMPLAN Input-Output System*. Stillwater, MN: MIG, Inc. Accessed at <http://www.implan.com>.

17. The household income numbers at the Census level of county subdivision for each racial and ethnic group were combined with figures indicating the percentage of foreign-born individuals in each of these groups for each subdivision. The results were then adjusted for differences between the incomes of the average Long Islander and the average Long Island immigrant. Totaling the numbers produces estimates of total household income for foreign-born non-Hispanic whites, foreign-born blacks, foreign-born Hispanics, and foreign-born Asians.

We must first account for the fact that a portion of household income is diverted to the Federal or State governments in the form of income or payroll taxes. I estimate the total amount to be just under \$2.3 billion for all Long Island immigrants. Second, while it is well recognized that today the average American, immigrant or not, saves a negligibly small share of his or her income, it is appropriate to account for savings, however small the sum. By my estimate, Long Island immigrants saved a bit more than \$57 million in 2006. Third, immigrants—particularly those who are recent immigrants—are known to send sometimes substantial

shares of their income back to extended family in their home countries. I estimate the sum for Long Island immigrants to be about \$434 million. Fourth, I classified the substantial property taxes paid on Long Island (close to \$1.2 billion) as separate from other consumption expenditures, so that buying power is what remains of disposable income after accounting for these taxes. The total buying power estimate for Long Island immigrants in 2006 is \$7.55 billion, and this amount is the principal input into the IMPLAN system. The figure translates to an impact per immigrant of just over \$16,000.

**TABLE 10. ECONOMIC IMPACT OF IMMIGRANT SPENDING ON LONG ISLAND, 2006**  
(DOLLAR AMOUNTS ARE IN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS)

LONG ISLAND	WHITE, NON-HISPANIC	BLACK	HISPANIC	ASIAN	OTHER	TOTAL
TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT	\$4,432,922	\$1,159,289	\$2,409,919	\$2,526,087	\$90,742	\$10,618,959
JOBS CREATED	34,252	8,941	18,566	19,529	701	81,989
VALUE ADDED	\$2,846,787	\$744,632	\$1,544,390	\$1,623,925	\$58,495	\$6,818,229
LABOR INCOME	\$1,645,505	\$430,622	\$895,983	\$937,208	\$33,656	\$3,942,975
STATE TAX SPIN-OFF	\$207,866	\$54,296	\$113,150	\$118,329	\$4,235	\$497,876
FEDERAL TAX SPIN-OFF	\$472,235	\$123,404	\$257,041	\$268,865	\$9,632	\$1,131,178
<b>NASSAU COUNTY</b>						
TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT	\$2,749,634	\$779,937	\$1,261,288	\$1,731,130	\$81,097	\$6,603,086
JOBS CREATED	21,274	6,023	9,736	13,400	627	51,060
VALUE ADDED	\$1,775,435	\$503,358	\$813,945	\$1,117,969	\$52,358	\$4,263,065
LABOR INCOME	\$1,019,163	\$289,334	\$467,990	\$641,429	\$30,065	\$2,447,980
STATE TAX SPIN-OFF	\$128,100	\$36,327	\$58,747	\$80,659	\$3,778	\$307,612
FEDERAL TAX SPIN-OFF	\$291,457	\$82,668	\$133,688	\$183,493	\$8,596	\$699,902
<b>SUFFOLK COUNTY</b>						
TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT	\$1,683,288	\$379,352	\$1,148,632	\$794,957	\$9,645	\$4,015,873
JOBS CREATED	12,978	2,918	8,830	6,129	74	30,930
VALUE ADDED	\$1,071,352	\$241,274	\$730,445	\$505,956	\$6,137	\$2,555,164
LABOR INCOME	\$626,342	\$141,288	\$427,993	\$295,780	\$3,591	\$1,494,995
STATE TAX SPIN-OFF	\$79,766	\$17,969	\$54,404	\$37,670	\$457	\$190,265
FEDERAL TAX SPIN-OFF	\$180,778	\$40,736	\$123,353	\$85,372	\$1,036	\$431,276

Yet IMPLAN appropriately accounts for the fact that a not insignificant share of Long Island immigrant spending “leaks out”—i.e., takes place outside—of Nassau and Suffolk Counties.<sup>18</sup> Most of the money is leaked out through industrial channels—that is, local companies purchase factors or inputs from outside the region even if the finished goods and services are consumed on Long Island. The total leakage estimated by IMPLAN comes to almost \$2.4 billion, of which an estimated \$345 million (less than 15% of the total) are the result of consumer spending outside Long Island. After subtracting all leakages, we arrive at “impact spending,” which represents the spending that actually remained on Long Island in 2006. The total is \$5.16 billion, of which \$3.29 billion came from Nassau, and \$1.87 billion took place in Suffolk.

IMPLAN calculates the direct, indirect, and induced effects of the “impact spending,” and tells us what the overall impact of this spending was on Long Island. Through this method we arrive at a total economic impact in 2006 of \$10.62 billion. Of the total, there was an estimated \$6.60 billion impact in Nassau and an impact of \$4.02 billion in Suffolk (Table 10).

Immigrant consumer spending on Long Island created 81,989 jobs and \$6.82 billion in value added (income paid

to all productive factors, including labor) in 2006.<sup>19</sup> At \$3.94 billion, labor income accounts for 57.8% of the latter figure. Additionally, the spending produced an estimated \$497.9 million in state taxes and \$1.13 billion in federal taxes. These numbers, in other words, represent state and federal tax revenues, paid by all Long Islanders, on incomes earned as a *result of immigrant spending on Long Island*. Note that these are spin-off effects and do not include any of the state or federal taxes actually paid by the immigrants.

Looking at the industry level employment effects, we notice only minor differences between Nassau and Suffolk Counties in the top ten industries (Table 11). Services relating to health (13,932 jobs created in both counties), food (9,326), and education (8,028) are by far the most impacted by immigrant spending on Long Island. The retail sector also is affected to a significant degree, with over 5,000 new jobs created. Immigrant spending contributed to significantly more jobs in Nassau than in Suffolk in all sectors on the list, undoubtedly a direct result of the greater immigrant presence in Nassau. Although not among the top ten in Nassau, and, therefore, not in Table 11, the 1,057 jobs created in the industry relating to buildings surpass Suffolk’s total as well.

**TABLE 11. INDUSTRIES EXPERIENCING THE GREATEST EMPLOYMENT IMPACT FROM IMMIGRANT SPENDING**

NASSAU COUNTY		SUFFOLK COUNTY	
	NUMBER OF JOBS		NUMBER OF JOBS
HOSPITALS, NURSING, GENERAL HEALTH	8,808	HOSPITALS, NURSING, GENERAL HEALTH	5,124
FOOD AND FOOD SERVICES	5,863	FOOD AND FOOD SERVICES	3,463
EDUCATION (INCLUDING POST-SECONDARY)	5,042	EDUCATION (INCLUDING POST-SECONDARY)	2,986
RETAIL	3,669	RETAIL	1,656
SOCIAL ASSISTANCE	2,549	SOCIAL ASSISTANCE	1,199
WHOLESALE TRADE	1,751	WHOLESALE TRADE	1,185
MOTOR VEHICLE REPAIR AND PARTS	1,547	BUILDINGS AND AUXILIARY SERVICES	1,044
PRIVATE HOUSEHOLDS	1,400	MOTOR VEHICLE REPAIR AND PARTS	959
SPORTS, LEISURE, AMUSEMENT	1,366	SPORTS, LEISURE, AMUSEMENT	810
REAL ESTATE	1,262	REAL ESTATE	661

18. Unlike the case with the other adjustment items, the IMPLAN system is itself able to calculate the leakage amounts for any region in the U.S., given the primary input which is buying power. The total domestic leakage—that is, money leaving Long Island and spent anywhere in the U.S.—comes out to almost \$1.9 billion, and the foreign leakage (money leaked to other countries) is approximately \$502 million. All leakages represent consumer or producer *purchases* outside Long Island and are therefore entirely unrelated to remittance flows to other countries. The total of domestic and foreign leakages includes my estimate of the consumption leakage.

19. Total economic impact includes both new value created and the value of the non-labor inputs used in production.

All of the economic activity described above produces substantial local tax revenue through both direct and indirect channels. We now turn to the specific discussion of the amount of these revenues, after which we compare these to the relevant costs.

## LOCAL TAXES AND SPENDING: THE IMMIGRANT CONTRIBUTION

Long Island local government is notoriously fragmented, comprising 901 separate entities, according to a recent count, each with separate revenue and spending streams.<sup>20</sup> Such fragmentation complicates efforts to precisely quantify the taxes and fees paid and the cost of services received by a specific population, such as immigrants, that is dispersed throughout the region. For example, the property tax—a principal source of local revenue—may be levied, at different rates, at the county, city, town, village, and school district level of government. Spending also varies enormously among local governments. For example, in Nassau County total current spending for instruction per pupil in elementary and secondary public schools in 2005 ranged from \$11,938 in the Elmont school district to \$24,063 in the Mineola district, both of which have high immigrant student concentrations.<sup>21</sup>

To make the analysis more manageable, our scope is limited to the principal sources of local revenues and spending, following the practice of other researchers. Where, as is often the case, a disaggregated analysis is not possible, figures are generalized from average values. On the revenue side, we find the immigrant contribution to property taxes, local sales taxes, and a broad residual category of “other local revenues,” primarily composed of the utility gross receipts tax and miscellaneous user fees. Since the study only considers local government budgets, it ignores the many additional revenues that immigrant Long Islanders contribute to federal and state coffers, such as personal income and payroll taxes, business taxes, and the state

share of the sales tax. In order to arrive at county expenses, the local cost of the immigrant population’s use of public elementary and secondary schools, health services (including the local share of Medicaid spending) and corrections (expenditures related to the Long Island inmate population) were estimated. These are the principal tax-supported local expenditures that can be reasonably allocated to immigrants on the basis of their share of consumption and are the cost categories most often analyzed in similar budgetary impact studies, including the earlier-cited North Carolina study by Kasarda and Johnson.

### PRINCIPAL LOCAL PUBLIC REVENUE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM IMMIGRANT LONG ISLANDERS

#### *Property Tax*

Figures from the New York State Comptroller’s office are employed to estimate the property tax revenues.<sup>22</sup> The immigrant property tax contribution to all levels of local government (county, city/town, village, and school district) come from figures for 2005 (the latest year available), which are inflated based on growth trends from the preceding five years to arrive at an estimate for 2006. This number is then multiplied by the ratio of household income for the foreign born in 2006 to household income for the entire Long Island population (15.1% and 9.1% for Nassau and Suffolk counties, respectively). By this method, immigrant households in Nassau and Suffolk counties respectively contributed an estimated \$788.1 million and \$400.0 million in property tax payments in 2006. The sum is equivalent to about 12.4% of the total property tax revenue raised in 2006, according to the New York State Comptroller.

#### *Sales tax*

The immigrant sales tax contribution to local revenues is calculated by multiplying the estimate of regional immigrant household consumer spending by the share of spending on taxable goods and services and again by the local

20. *Long Island Index 2006*. 2006. Garden City, NY: Long Island Index.

21. A report to the governor and the legislature on the educational status of the state’s public schools, New York State Department of Education, 2006, District and County Data Tables. Albany, NY. Accessed at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/655report/2006/home.htm>.

22. Office of the New York State Comptroller. 2006. *Property Taxes in New York State*. Accessed at [www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/pubs/research/propertytaxes.pdf](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/pubs/research/propertytaxes.pdf).

sales tax rate of 4.25%. As noted earlier, to estimate regional immigrant consumer spending, it is necessary to calculate and subtract from aggregate household income the estimated values of state and local income tax payments, other payroll taxes, personal savings, international remittances (immigrants' payments to family and other recipients in their home countries) and extra-regional consumer spending (whether in neighboring New York City or in distant Colombia, for example). The adjustments are made as follows:

#### *Federal and state income and other payroll taxes*

For the estimate of the average immigrant household income tax obligations to the United States and New York State, the mean immigrant household income in each county is calculated, and it is assumed that the typical household is married with two dependent children, files a married, joint return, takes the standard deduction, and has \$10,000 in additional adjustments to gross income. One hundred percent taxpayer compliance is also assumed (conservatively, with respect to the local revenue calculation). The estimated totals come to a combined \$1.11 billion in federal and state income taxes for Nassau County immigrant households, and \$493.3 million for those in Suffolk. In addition, immigrants in Nassau and Suffolk counties respectively contributed an estimated \$401.3 million and \$264.7 million in Social Security and Medicare payroll taxes.

#### *Personal savings*

There is no reliable data source to calculate the percentage of household income that Long Island immigrants save. Nationally, Americans saved less than 0.5% of their after-tax income in 2005.<sup>23</sup> Given the high average level of remittances for immigrants, their savings rate may be even lower than the average. Yet in the absence of more precise data, a savings rate of 0.5% for all Long Island's immigrants will be assumed (again, conservatively), independent of group. Therefore,

immigrant household income dedicated to consumption is further reduced by \$36.7 million and \$20.8 million, in Nassau and Suffolk counties, respectively.

#### *Remittances*

As a recent U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) report notes, estimates of remittances of money from foreign-born workers to their home countries vary substantially among reputable researchers.<sup>24</sup> Studies suggest remittance senders tend to be young, recently arrived men with low incomes.<sup>25</sup> For the estimates to be used here, data are taken from a recently released International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) study,<sup>26</sup> which contains remittance estimates for numerous countries. The annual remittance per migrant ranges from \$1,766 to \$3,126, and it depends on the geographic origin of the immigrant in question. The further simplifying assumption was made that immigrants arriving in the U.S. prior to 1990 do not remit any funds to their home country. The resulting estimates are \$257.9 million and \$176.2 million in 2006 remittances from Nassau and Suffolk counties, respectively.

#### *Extra-regional spending (leakages)*

As a large, affluent suburb of New York, Long Island absorbs the great bulk of residential immigrant consumer spending. Two major spending categories—shelter and household utilities—are necessarily purchased locally and two others—food for home consumption and motor vehicles and associated expenses—are apt to leak only negligibly from the region. At the same time, immigrants and other Long Islanders are embedded in the broader New York metropolitan area economy, primarily as suppliers of labor to New York City; they also travel and spend elsewhere and make online purchases. Lacking data on immigrant spending outside the region, a reasonable, upper-limit estimate of such leakage is used. The figure primarily accounts for spending by immigrant Long Islanders commuting to work

23. Bureau of Economic Analysis. Personal Saving in the National Income and Product Accounts (NIPAs) 2006. Accessed at [www.bea.gov/national/nipaweb/Nipa-Frb.asp](http://www.bea.gov/national/nipaweb/Nipa-Frb.asp)

24. U.S. Government Accountability Office. 2006. *International Remittances: Different Methodologies Produce Different Results*. Washington, DC.

25. Congress of the United States, Congressional Budget Office. 2005. *Remittances: International Payments by Migrants*. Washington, DC.

26. International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). 2007. *Sending Money Home: Worldwide Remittance Flows to Developing and Transition Countries*. United Nations.

in New York City. The leakage is calculated as 20% of spending in the health care, entertainment, apparel and services, and food away from home categories and 10% of public transportation spending. Referring to the consumer-spending pattern in the New York metropolitan region, the leakage is estimated to be 3.0% of before-tax income, or \$220.3 million and \$124.7 million in Nassau and Suffolk counties, respectively.<sup>27</sup> Recall that it is only a small fraction of the *total* leakage, which includes the much more sizable industrial leakage amount.

Having estimated the value of income and payroll taxes paid, personal savings, remittances, and spending leakages, the quantities are then deducted from immigrant Long Islanders' aggregate gross household income in 2006 to calculate the value of the population's regional consumption spending.<sup>28</sup> These deductions total \$2.02 billion (27.5% of gross income) in Nassau County and \$1.08 billion (26.0%) in Suffolk County, yielding regional consumption spending values for sales tax calculation purposes of \$5.32 billion and \$3.08 billion.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Expenditure Survey cited above shows that the average consumer in the New York metropolitan statistical area devotes 45.09% of total spending to purchases of goods and services subject to the sales tax in New York State.<sup>29</sup> Immigrant Long Islanders' contribution to local sales tax revenues is therefore estimated as \$102.0 million and \$58.9 million in Nassau and Suffolk counties, respectively.

#### *Other local revenues*

According to the Center for Governmental Research, small and medium revenue streams from more than one hundred different sources account for about one-quarter of local

government revenues in Nassau and Suffolk counties.<sup>30</sup> As noted, there are over 900 independent government entities on Long Island, making reliable estimates of the total immigrant contribution to revenue extremely difficult to come by. As an approximation, use was made of the fact that the amount of revenue raised in 2004 classified in this "other" category amounted to 40.8% of the property taxes raised (Long Island Index, 2006). The property tax amount calculated earlier was multiplied by this figure (assuming no change in this ratio as of 2006) and reduced by one third in order to err on the side of being too conservative. The figures for all the revenues raised in this "other" category are \$210.1 million for Nassau County and \$112.1 million for Suffolk. Added to the above tax revenues are the property, sales, and other taxes generated as an indirect result of immigrant consumer spending. These are calculated by the IMPLAN model and are added to direct revenues already discussed. The total tax revenues attributable to the immigrant population come out to \$1.39 billion in Nassau County and \$744.0 million in Suffolk County. Table 12 lists the tax revenue flows by category and breaks the amounts down according to immigrant group.

Two things are worth noting. First, even though Nassau County has about 36% more immigrant residents than Suffolk, its immigrants generated 87% more tax revenue for the county than their counterparts in Suffolk. This reflects the fact that immigrants are richer on average in Nassau, as are residents in general and each racial and ethnic group considered separately. All else equal, higher incomes will produce greater tax revenues for the county. Second, there is considerable variability among the immigrant groups. Non-Hispanic whites—mostly European immigrants—generated nearly \$570 million in revenues for Nassau but only a bit more than half that for Suffolk. This is not a great surprise

27. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2006. Consumer Expenditure Survey 2005-2006. Table 21. "Selected Northeastern Metropolitan Statistical Areas: Average Annual Expenditures and Characteristics." Accessed at <http://www.bls.gov/cex/2006/msas/northeast.pdf>.

28. Property tax payments are not deducted from gross income because these payments are considered part of the cost of consuming shelter. In any case, most shelter-related consumption is not subject to the New York sales tax and is excluded from the sales tax revenue calculation.

29. Long Island immigrant consumer spending is modeled on the metropolitan area pattern (for all groups) in preference to the national immigrant spending pattern (also produced by BLS) because regional immigrant spending is more likely to approximate the metropolitan pattern (reflecting relatively high housing costs, for example).

30. Center for Governmental Research. 2006. *Long Island Index 2006 Special Analysis Report: Analysis of Government Expenditures and Revenues on Long Island, 1998-2003*. Rochester, NY, p. 16. CGR compiles and analyzes detailed local expenditure and revenue data provided by the Office of the New York State Comptroller.

**TABLE 12. ESTIMATED IMMIGRANT TAX REVENUE CONTRIBUTIONS, 2006**  
(IN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS)

LONG ISLAND	DIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS	(A) TOTAL		TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS
		INDIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS FROM BUSINESS	INDIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PERSONS	
PROPERTY TAX	\$1,188,049	\$266,350	\$2,544	\$1,456,943
SALES TAX	\$160,932	\$57,873	\$57,873	\$276,679
OTHER TAXES AND FEES	\$322,166	\$43,770	\$33,141	\$399,077
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,671,147</b>	<b>\$367,993</b>	<b>\$93,559</b>	<b>\$2,132,699</b>
NASSAU COUNTY				
PROPERTY TAX	\$788,063	\$166,740	\$1,558	\$956,361
SALES TAX	\$101,985	\$36,230	\$36,230	\$174,444
OTHER TAXES AND FEES	\$210,097	\$27,400	\$20,406	\$257,903
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,100,145</b>	<b>\$230,370</b>	<b>\$58,194</b>	<b>\$1,388,709</b>
SUFFOLK COUNTY				
PROPERTY TAX	\$399,986	\$99,610	\$986	\$500,582
SALES TAX	\$58,947	\$21,644	\$21,644	\$102,234
OTHER TAXES AND FEES	\$112,069	\$16,369	\$12,736	\$141,174
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$571,002</b>	<b>\$137,623</b>	<b>\$35,365</b>	<b>\$743,990</b>
(B) WHITE, NON-HISPANIC				
NASSAU COUNTY	DIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS	INDIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS FROM BUSINESS	INDIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PERSONS	TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS
PROPERTY TAX	\$321,672	\$69,388	\$649	\$391,709
SALES TAX	\$42,354	\$15,077	\$15,077	\$72,508
OTHER TAXES AND FEES	\$85,758	\$11,403	\$8,495	\$105,655
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$449,784</b>	<b>\$95,867</b>	<b>\$24,221</b>	<b>\$569,872</b>
SUFFOLK COUNTY				
PROPERTY TAX	\$164,302	\$41,702	\$413	\$206,417
SALES TAX	\$24,650	\$9,061	\$9,061	\$42,773
OTHER TAXES AND FEES	\$46,035	\$6,853	\$5,336	\$58,223
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$234,987</b>	<b>\$57,617</b>	<b>\$14,810</b>	<b>\$307,413</b>

**TABLE 12. ESTIMATED IMMIGRANT TAX REVENUE CONTRIBUTIONS, 2006 CONT**  
(IN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS)

**(C) BLACK**

NASSAU COUNTY	DIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS	INDIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS		TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS
		FROM BUSINESS	FROM PERSONS	
<b>PROPERTY TAX</b>	<b>\$90,750</b>	<b>\$19,726</b>	<b>\$184</b>	<b>\$110,660</b>
<b>SALES TAX</b>	<b>\$12,031</b>	<b>\$4,286</b>	<b>\$4,286</b>	<b>\$20,603</b>
<b>OTHER TAXES AND FEES</b>	<b>\$24,194</b>	<b>\$3,242</b>	<b>\$2,412</b>	<b>\$29,847</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$126,975</b>	<b>\$27,253</b>	<b>\$6,882</b>	<b>\$161,110</b>
SUFFOLK COUNTY				
<b>PROPERTY TAX</b>	<b>\$38,190</b>	<b>\$9,422</b>	<b>\$93</b>	<b>\$47,706</b>
<b>SALES TAX</b>	<b>\$5,577</b>	<b>\$2,047</b>	<b>\$2,047</b>	<b>\$9,671</b>
<b>OTHER TAXES AND FEES</b>	<b>\$10,700</b>	<b>\$1,548</b>	<b>\$1,204</b>	<b>\$13,452</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$54,467</b>	<b>\$13,018</b>	<b>\$3,344</b>	<b>\$70,829</b>

**(D) HISPANIC**

NASSAU COUNTY	DIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS	INDIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS		TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS
		FROM BUSINESS	FROM PERSONS	
<b>PROPERTY TAX</b>	<b>\$148,933</b>	<b>\$31,918</b>	<b>\$298</b>	<b>\$181,149</b>
<b>SALES TAX</b>	<b>\$19,496</b>	<b>\$6,935</b>	<b>\$6,935</b>	<b>\$33,367</b>
<b>OTHER TAXES AND FEES</b>	<b>\$39,705</b>	<b>\$5,245</b>	<b>\$3,901</b>	<b>\$48,852</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$208,134</b>	<b>\$44,099</b>	<b>\$11,134</b>	<b>\$263,368</b>
SUFFOLK COUNTY				
<b>PROPERTY TAX</b>	<b>\$115,255</b>	<b>\$28,555</b>	<b>\$282</b>	<b>\$144,092</b>
<b>SALES TAX</b>	<b>\$16,889</b>	<b>\$6,205</b>	<b>\$6,205</b>	<b>\$29,298</b>
<b>OTHER TAXES AND FEES</b>	<b>\$32,293</b>	<b>\$4,692</b>	<b>\$3,646</b>	<b>\$40,631</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$164,436</b>	<b>\$39,452</b>	<b>\$10,133</b>	<b>\$214,021</b>

**(E) ASIAN**

NASSAU COUNTY	DIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS	INDIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS		TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS
		FROM BUSINESS	FROM PERSONS	
<b>PROPERTY TAX</b>	<b>\$215,763</b>	<b>\$43,660</b>	<b>\$408</b>	<b>\$259,832</b>
<b>SALES TAX</b>	<b>\$26,833</b>	<b>\$9,487</b>	<b>\$9,487</b>	<b>\$45,806</b>
<b>OTHER TAXES AND FEES</b>	<b>\$57,522</b>	<b>\$7,175</b>	<b>\$5,347</b>	<b>\$70,044</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$300,119</b>	<b>\$60,321</b>	<b>\$15,242</b>	<b>\$375,682</b>
SUFFOLK COUNTY				
<b>PROPERTY TAX</b>	<b>\$81,284</b>	<b>\$19,691</b>	<b>\$195</b>	<b>\$101,171</b>
<b>SALES TAX</b>	<b>\$11,689</b>	<b>\$4,279</b>	<b>\$4,279</b>	<b>\$20,247</b>
<b>OTHER TAXES AND FEES</b>	<b>\$22,775</b>	<b>\$3,236</b>	<b>\$2,520</b>	<b>\$28,530</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$115,748</b>	<b>\$27,205</b>	<b>\$6,993</b>	<b>\$149,947</b>

**TABLE 12. ESTIMATED IMMIGRANT TAX REVENUE CONTRIBUTIONS, 2006 CONT**  
(IN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS)

NASSAU COUNTY	DIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS	(F) OTHER		TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS
		INDIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS FROM BUSINESS	FROM PERSONS	
<b>PROPERTY TAX</b>	<b>\$10,945</b>	<b>\$2,048</b>	<b>\$19</b>	<b>\$13,012</b>
<b>SALES TAX</b>	<b>\$1,270</b>	<b>\$445</b>	<b>\$445</b>	<b>\$2,160</b>
<b>OTHER TAXES AND FEES</b>	<b>\$2,918</b>	<b>\$337</b>	<b>\$251</b>	<b>\$3,505</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$15,133</b>	<b>\$2,829</b>	<b>\$715</b>	<b>\$18,677</b>
SUFFOLK COUNTY				
<b>PROPERTY TAX</b>	<b>\$954</b>	<b>\$239</b>	<b>\$2</b>	<b>\$1,196</b>
<b>SALES TAX</b>	<b>\$141</b>	<b>\$52</b>	<b>\$52</b>	<b>\$245</b>
<b>OTHER TAXES AND FEES</b>	<b>\$267</b>	<b>\$39</b>	<b>\$31</b>	<b>\$337</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,363</b>	<b>\$331</b>	<b>\$85</b>	<b>\$1,779</b>

given that they number 42% more in Nassau. But the comparison is more skewed among blacks (mostly Caribbean immigrants) and Asians. For each of these groups, immigrant revenues accruing to Nassau County were significantly more than twice the revenues for Suffolk. In each case it reflects the fact that blacks and Asians are both richer and considerably more numerous in Nassau than in Suffolk. Hispanics are the only group for which there does not appear to be as significant a disparity. Hispanic immigrant tax revenues were 23% higher in Nassau, while Hispanic immigrants themselves numbered only two percent more in Nassau. Again, the discrepancy reflects a higher average income for Hispanics in Nassau than in Suffolk.

**PRINCIPAL LOCAL PUBLIC COSTS OF IMMIGRANT LONG ISLANDERS**

*K-12 public school education*

On Long Island, as in most communities, the principal expenditure borne by local government is public elementary and secondary school education. The U.S. Census Bureau's

school finance database and the New York Department of Education's statistics on public school enrollment by district and ethnicity are utilized to calculate the share of this cost attributable to immigrant Long Islanders.<sup>31</sup> For each school district, total current spending is multiplied by the share of total revenues from local sources and then multiplied again by the percentage of the population in the district that is foreign born. Doing so probably overstates the cost since, as noted earlier, immigrants are vastly underrepresented among those 18 and younger. The immigrant share of public education costs borne by local governments is estimated at \$500.0 million in Nassau County and \$272.2 million in Suffolk County, respectively, representing 18.7% and 11.5% of total local current spending on public school education.

*Health Care*

Medicaid, the public health insurance program for low-income families, absorbs the greatest share of health-related spending by Long Island local governments. In most states, Medicaid is funded entirely by state and federal governments, but counties bear a significant share of the cost in New York.<sup>32</sup>

31. U.S. Census Bureau. 2005. "2005 Public Elementary-Secondary Education Finance Data." Accessed at <http://www.census.gov/govs/www/school05doc.html>; New York State Department of Education. 2006, *op. cit.*

32. Medicaid for children under 18 in New York State is now called Child Health Plus A. The state also started the Family Health Plus insurance program several years ago to cover low-income adults who exceed regular Medicaid income limits. Both of these programs are financed like regular Medicaid, requiring a 25% county contribution, and are categorized as Medicaid expenditures. Child Health Plus B covers low-income children not eligible for Child Health Plus because household income limitations are exceeded or other reasons. This program is entirely funded by the federal and state governments and does not require a county contribution. Undocumented immigrants are barred from receiving Medicaid and Child Health Plus A benefits but may receive Child Health Plus B benefits. New York City Office of Citywide Health Insurance Access. Accessed at <http://www.nyc.gov>. Public Policy and Education Fund of New York. 2004. *Half a million and one broken promises*. Accessed at <http://www.citizenaction.org>.

The distribution of county Medicaid spending by ethnicity or nativity is not available, so the immigrant share of costs is estimated by evaluating immigrant demographic and income characteristics that bear on program eligibility. To simplify matters the comparative poverty rates among the immigrant groups were considered—since Medicaid beneficiaries include a large share of low-income households—as well as the size of the elderly population of each group, since almost 80% of statewide Medicaid spending is for nursing home residents and other care for the aged, blind, and disabled.<sup>33</sup> In addition, the decision was made to risk erring on the side of budgetary caution by assigning 25% of total county Medicaid costs to immigrants, well above their 2006 population share. Using the New York State Comptroller's estimates of county Medicaid spending, county-borne Medicaid costs attributable to the immigrant population are an estimated \$76.7 million and \$83.3 million in Nassau and Suffolk counties, respectively.<sup>34</sup>

Long Island local governments also spend significant sums on public health services, including child immunization, child development early intervention programs, county health clinics, ambulance services, and environmental health programs, among many other services.<sup>35</sup> Because some of these programs are means tested, immigrants were again assigned 25% of total spending in the “Public Health” and “Other Health” categories for all Long Island local governments estimated by the Center for Governmental Studies in the 2006 report cited above. In this case, the poverty rate and the population size for each immigrant group were accounted for, but not the size of the elderly population. The non-Medicaid-related health expenditures are estimated to be \$33.8 million and \$50.1 million in Nassau and Suffolk counties, respectively.

Hence, total local government health care spending for the immigrant population is an estimated \$110.5 million in Nassau County and about \$133.4 million in Suffolk County.

#### *Corrections*

The Nassau and Suffolk County governments spend a significant share of their annual budget on services related to their respective inmate populations. In 2006, \$140 million were budgeted for corrections in Nassau County, and a bit more than \$81 million were allocated to Suffolk County corrections. The immigrant share of corrections expenditure is based on the proportional racial and ethnic makeup of the inmate population.<sup>36</sup> Despite mounting evidence at the national level that immigrants are on the whole less likely to commit crimes than non-immigrants, again a conservative assumption is made, in this case that immigrants account for 20% of all corrections spending. The immigrant share of the corrections budget for 2006 therefore comes to an estimated \$28.1 million in Nassau County and \$16.3 million in Suffolk.

Summing the three cost categories, the Long Island immigrant population was responsible for about \$1.06 billion in costs to Long Island local governments in 2006. Table 13 shows how these cost estimates break down according to racial or ethnic group.

33. Public Policy and Education Fund of New York, *op. cit.*

34. Office of the New York State Comptroller. 2006. “County Medicaid Costs.” Accessed at <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/pubs/research/medicaidtable.pdf>.

35. Center for Governmental Research. 2006, *op. cit.* The 2003 expenditure figures in the CGR report are inflated based on expenditure growth patterns published by the State Comptroller. Office of the New York State Comptroller, 2007, “Financial Report on Counties,” Accessed at <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/pubs/fincounties.pdf>

36. These numbers, as well as the annual budget figures, were obtained through direct communication with the respective Sheriff's offices.

**TABLE 13. IMMIGRANT SHARE OF COUNTY EXPENDITURES BY RACIAL OR ETHNIC GROUP, 2006**  
(IN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS)

LONG ISLAND	EDUCATION	HEALTH	CORRECTIONS	TOTAL
WHITE NON-HISPANIC	\$228,416	\$72,203	\$19,502	\$320,121
BLACK	\$107,286	\$57,328	\$16,974	\$181,588
HISPANIC	\$260,008	\$75,583	\$6,963	\$342,554
ASIAN	\$166,799	\$37,785	\$848	\$205,432
OTHER	\$9,705	\$748	\$68	\$10,522
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$772,214</b>	<b>\$243,648</b>	<b>\$44,355</b>	<b>\$1,060,217</b>
NASSAU				
WHITE NON-HISPANIC	\$149,753	\$36,669	\$9,267	\$195,690
BLACK	\$73,885	\$26,888	\$11,514	\$112,287
HISPANIC	\$149,446	\$31,012	\$6,459	\$186,917
ASIAN	\$118,385	\$15,231	\$803	\$134,418
OTHER	\$8,514	\$555	\$39	\$9,109
SUFFOLK				
WHITE NON-HISPANIC	\$78,663	\$35,534	\$10,235	\$124,431
BLACK	\$33,401	\$30,440	\$5,460	\$69,301
HISPANIC	\$110,562	\$44,571	\$504	\$155,637
ASIAN	\$48,415	\$22,555	\$45	\$71,014
OTHER	\$1,191	\$193	\$29	\$1,413

**SUMMARY: THE IMMIGRANT IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT BUDGETS**

**FIGURE 14. THE IMMIGRANT IMPACT ON THE LONG ISLAND COUNTY BUDGETS**

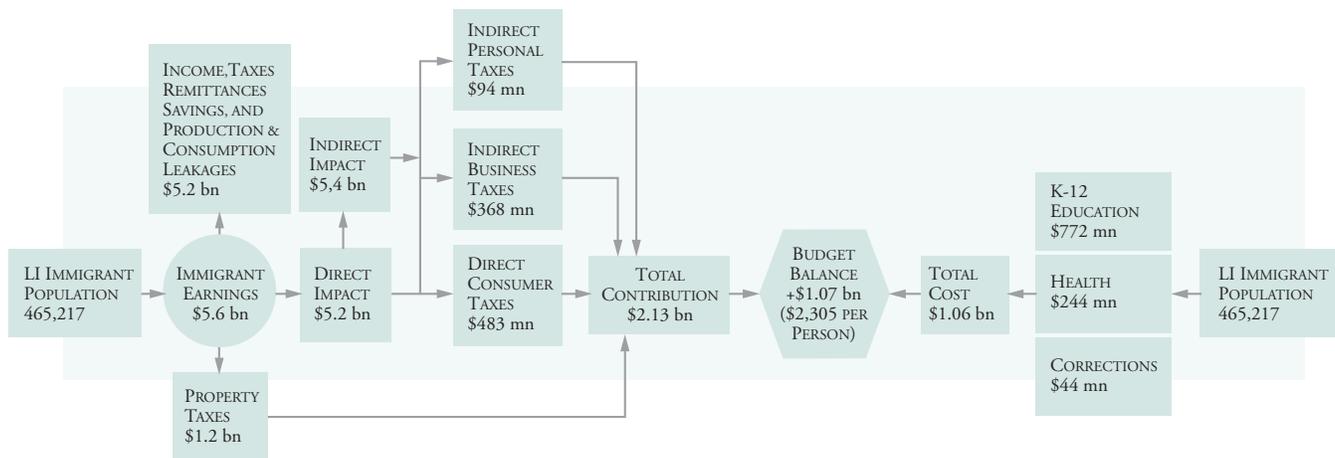


Figure 14 summarizes the principal immigrant contributions and costs to local government budgets in 2006.

We begin, on the left side, with the contributions. The Long Island immigrant population of 465,217 earned \$11.5 billion in 2006, of which \$5.2 billion went to federal and state taxes, remittances, savings, and leakages (domestic and foreign), and \$1.2 billion went to property taxes. In addition to producing sizable tax revenue, the remaining \$5.2 billion also generates spin-off income that itself yields additional revenue. The total tax revenue raised by the local governments of Long Island in 2006 is \$2.13 billion, of which \$1.67 million is directly related to immigrant income and spending. The remaining \$462 million represents taxes on all the spin-off income.

Total costs appear on the other side of the diagram. As noted earlier, the Long Island immigrant population is responsible for about \$1.06 billion in public costs for K-12 education, health care, and corrections. The difference between the estimated \$2.13 billion for tax contributions and the \$1.06 billion aggregate cost results in a net benefit to Long Island of \$1.07 billion, which works out to about \$2,305 per immigrant resident. More noteworthy than the difference is the fact that total tax revenues are double the figure for total costs. It is well known that, despite earning incomes that are substantially below the average,

undocumented workers generally contribute some local tax revenues and are not eligible for all the benefits available to documented residents. The fact that the total immigrant contribution to revenues is double their share of the cost strongly suggests that the undocumented representatives of the immigrant population on their own are also net contributors. It is impossible to discern from the census data the extent to which they contribute, however.

Finally, if we look at Table 14, we see that there are substantial differences between the group net benefits. While, by my estimates, there are no immigrant groups that are a net cost to Long Island, the white non-Hispanic immigrants, most presumably originating from Europe, contribute the greatest amount per resident—a net benefit of \$4,059. Asian immigrants, who are mostly from India, China, South Korea, the Philippines, Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey, contribute \$3,249 per resident, the second-largest amount. Hispanic immigrants contribute a net benefit of \$842 per resident, and black immigrants—most either from Caribbean countries or from Guyana—contribute the least, though still a respectable net benefit of \$789 per resident. We can attribute a significant portion—though by no means all—of the difference among the groups to the fact that Asian and white immigrants on Long Island earn higher than average incomes and therefore pay higher than average taxes.

**TABLE 14. NET BENEFIT TO LONG ISLAND OF THE PRINCIPAL IMMIGRANT GROUPS**

	TOTAL TAX REVENUES	TOTAL COST OF SERVICES USED	NET BENEFIT TO LONG ISLAND	NET BENEFIT PER IMMIGRANT RESIDENT
<b>WHITE NON-HISPANIC</b>	<b>\$877,285,174</b>	<b>\$320,121,081</b>	<b>\$557,164,093</b>	<b>\$4,059</b>
<b>BLACK</b>	<b>\$231,939,581</b>	<b>\$181,587,773</b>	<b>\$50,351,807</b>	<b>\$789</b>
<b>HISPANIC</b>	<b>\$477,388,702</b>	<b>\$342,553,923</b>	<b>\$134,834,778</b>	<b>\$842</b>
<b>ASIAN</b>	<b>\$525,628,738</b>	<b>\$205,432,322</b>	<b>\$320,196,416</b>	<b>\$3,249</b>
<b>OTHER</b>	<b>\$20,456,015</b>	<b>\$10,521,725</b>	<b>\$9,934,290</b>	<b>\$1,830</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,132,698,209</b>	<b>\$1,060,494,600</b>	<b>\$1,072,203,609</b>	<b>\$2,305</b>

The results are not entirely surprising, given the age profile described earlier. With immigrants more likely than non-immigrants to be in the “prime working age” category, their dependence on services from the county is understandably somewhat less than for non-immigrants. There may also be cultural factors that in some cases make immigrants less inclined to make use of available services—particularly health care, though also sometimes education, as noted earlier—but this requires further investigation. On the revenue side, it is clear that although the immigrants on average receive less income than non-immigrants, the difference is not huge. Moreover, some immigrants, particularly Asians, tend to earn higher than average incomes. It is the income differential among the immigrant groups that mostly explains the estimated differences in the net benefit per immigrant resident.

In summary, immigrants appear to be a clear economic benefit to Long Island. Yet basing the conclusion exclusively on their estimated budgetary contribution for 2006 ignores other important changes that are likely to bear significantly on future economic impact. As noted earlier, the Long

Island immigrant population continues to exhibit rapid growth, especially compared to the non-immigrant population, which shrunk by more than four percent since 1980. It is therefore reasonable that Long Island’s economy would have stagnated or declined over the past thirty years if not for its immigrants. The fact that its immigrant population is expected to continue growing at a healthy clip bodes well for the future of the Long Island economy.

Moreover, compared to immigrants living in New York City, a greater percentage of Long Island’s immigrants have completed college or graduate school, with the resulting average income likely producing a more favorable economic impact per resident. Long Island’s immigrants also compare favorably to New York City’s in terms of English proficiency, which also is a factor in determining one’s earnings. Finally, the fact that such a high percentage of Long Island’s immigrants eventually become citizens—over 85% of those residing on Long Island since 1980 or earlier are citizens—strongly suggests that immigrant contributions to Long Island’s economy are likely to continue well into the future.



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**STRENGTHENING LONG ISLAND:  
THE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF IMMIGRANTS  
TO NASSAU AND SUFFOLK COUNTIES**

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