

Foreign born in the U.S. labor market: the results of a special survey

New data from the Current Population Survey confirm that recent arrivals encounter labor market hardship, but as time passes their employment and earnings approach the levels of native-born workers

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The labor market experiences of the foreign born are part of the "success story" of America. Studies of the foreign born show patterns of economic difficulties in the first years after arrival, but substantial upward mobility thereafter. For example, analyzing 1970 Census data, Barry Chiswick found that foreign-born men tend to reach earnings equality with their U.S.-born counterparts in a little over a decade, and after that, they actually have higher earnings.¹ Recent data from the Current Population Survey (CPS) on foreign-born U.S. residents provide further confirmation of these earlier findings.

The CPS data show striking similarities between the native-born population and the foreign born who entered the country from 1960 to 1979 with regard to their work experience during 1982. For example, among both groups, about 65 percent had worked at least some time during that recession year, of whom more than half managed to work full time the whole year. Another similarity was that for both groups the proportion experiencing some unemployment was about 20 percent. There also was a close resemblance among both groups in terms of their earnings in 1982. The median annual earnings for the foreign-born workers were \$10,405, about 6 percent lower than for the native-born workers (\$11,125).

However, the employment and earnings patterns of re-

cently arrived foreign born are very different from those of U.S.-born workers and reflect in part the obvious difficulties which such workers encounter during their first years in the country. Of the foreign born who entered the United States in 1980 and 1981, about one-half (470,000) worked at some time during 1982, and one-third experienced some unemployment. The median annual earnings of the recent arrivals amounted to only \$6,726. There also are some differences in labor market experiences between the U.S. born and the foreign born who came here before 1960: In large part because the latter are an older population, these people were much less likely to have either worked or looked for work in 1982.

Data on persons' country of birth (not shown) were obtained through special questions in an April 1983 CPS supplement sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.² To obtain much of the labor force information discussed in this article, the April data on country of birth were matched with "work experience" data—that is, data on employment, unemployment, and earnings during 1982 which had been gathered for the same persons a month earlier through the annual supplement to the March CPS. Given the design of the CPS, only about 75 percent of the sampled households interviewed in April also had been interviewed in March.

It should be noted that the foreign born, as identified in the CPS, were persons whose "usual residence" was in the United States, such as immigrants and refugees. Foreign-

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born visitors were not included in the survey. Note, too, that CPS coverage of the foreign born is understated: Although the respondents are not asked whether they are in the United States "legally," it is quite likely that "illegal" aliens were underrepresented. (However, the extent of this incomplete coverage, and consequent bias, could not be quantified.) Finally, it is important to recognize that the totals based on the matched March–April 1983 sample (such as those related to persons who had worked during the year and those who had encountered unemployment) are different from the previously published estimates from the March 1983 supplement.³ This is primarily because no special adjustment was made to take account of the approximately 6 percent of missing cases attributable to the failure to match data between the March and April supplements. Nevertheless, the findings from the March–April match are still relevant, as they shed considerable light on the labor force characteristics of a large universe of foreign born.

Work experience

Of the 11.4 million foreign born aged 16 years and over who came to the United States prior to 1982 and who were identified in the April 1983 CPS, more than half (6.3 million) reported that they had entered the country between 1960 and 1979. Of the rest, 3.8 million arrived before 1960 and

more than 900,000 in the 1980–81 period.⁴ (See table 1.) Of the recent arrivals, 53 percent were women, about the same proportion as among the 1960–79 entrants at the time of the survey.

About three-fifths of both the U.S. born and the 1960–79 arrivals were working in April 1983. There also was not much difference in the two groups' unemployment rates (10.1 and 11.7 percent). By contrast, one-half of the 1980–81 arrivals were employed in April 1983, and 16.3 percent were looking for work:

	<i>Employment status (percent)</i>	
	<i>Employment-population ratio</i>	<i>Unemployment rate</i>
Native born	57.6	10.1
Foreign born:		
Arrived, 1960–79	60.7	11.7
Arrived, 1980–81	49.6	16.3

As noted previously, similar patterns of employment and unemployment among the foreign and U.S. born are seen in the CPS data for the year 1982. The foreign born who came to the United States in the 1960–79 period closely resembled the native born in terms of their work experience over the course of the year. About 65 percent of both the 1960–79 arrivals and the native born had either worked or

Table 1. Extent of employment and unemployment of native born, and of foreign born by selected years of entry into the United States and citizenship status, 1982

[Numbers in thousands]

Employment and unemployment	Total ¹	Native born ²	Foreign born, entered U.S. prior to 1982				
			Total ³	Year of entry			U.S. citizen
				Before 1960	1960–79	1980–81	
Civilian noninstitutional population	173,794	157,460	11,388	3,758	6,336	913	5,935
Total who worked or looked for work ⁴	112,694	103,736	6,492	1,567	4,249	494	3,203
Percent of the population	64.8	65.9	57.0	41.7	67.1	54.1	54.0
Total who worked during the year ⁴	109,064	100,370	6,313	1,545	4,124	468	3,128
Percent of the population	62.8	63.7	55.4	41.1	65.1	51.2	52.7
Worked full time ⁵	83,695	76,780	5,073	1,182	3,373	383	2,519
Worked full time, full year ⁶	60,071	55,243	3,608	922	2,379	216	1,923
Worked part time ⁷	25,369	23,590	1,239	364	751	85	609
Worked part time, full year	9,387	8,695	516	173	311	24	263
Worked full year	69,458	63,938	4,124	1,095	2,689	240	2,186
Worked part year	39,605	36,432	2,189	450	1,434	228	942
Total with unemployment ⁴	24,365	22,435	1,375	217	962	159	537
Percent with unemployment	21.6	21.6	21.2	13.8	22.6	32.2	16.8
Median weeks of unemployment	14	14	16	17	15	23	15
Percent who worked during the year	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Worked full time ⁵	76.7	76.5	80.4	76.5	81.8	81.9	80.5
Worked full time, full year ⁶	55.1	55.0	57.2	59.7	57.7	46.3	61.5
Worked part time ⁷	23.3	23.5	19.6	23.5	18.2	18.1	19.5
Worked part time, full year	8.6	8.7	8.2	11.2	7.5	5.1	8.4
Percent who worked during the year	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Worked full year	63.7	63.7	65.3	70.9	65.2	51.3	69.9
Worked part year	36.3	36.3	34.7	29.1	34.8	48.7	30.1

¹Population counts relate to April 1983 for persons 16 years and older. Total includes respondents who did not report country of birth or citizenship status, as well as foreign-born respondents who entered the United States in 1982 or 1983.

²Includes respondents who were born abroad of parents who were United States citizens.

³Includes respondents who did not report year of entry into the United States. Excludes respondents who did not report country of birth or citizenship status.

⁴The population estimates are not identical to the population estimates for 1982 derived

from the March 1983 supplement to the Current Population Survey, because this is a matched sample of the March 1983 and April 1983 CPS supplements, and no special adjustment has been made to take account of the missing cases due to any failure to match between supplements.

⁵Usually worked 35 hours or more per week.

⁶Full year is 50–52 weeks.

⁷Usually worked 1–34 hours per week.

looked for work during 1982; and of those who had worked at some time during the year, about 65 percent worked year round and about 55 percent did so on a full-time basis. About one-fifth of both groups experienced some unemployment. Of those who had been unemployed, the 1960-79 arrivals on average had 15 weeks of unemployment, and the native born, 14 weeks.

The CPS data show similarities in the distribution of both of these groups among industries. For example, about one-third of both were working in service industries in April 1983, one-fifth were in wholesale and retail trade, and about 5 percent were in construction. (See table 2.) However, larger proportions of the foreign than the U.S. born were in manufacturing, particularly durable goods manufacturing.

As indicated in table 2, about the same proportions of the 1960-79 entrants and the U.S. born were in professional occupations at the time of the survey and in technician and craft jobs. There were some differences between the two groups in their distribution among the other major occupations.

The tabulation below shows that a far smaller percentage of the 1960-79 entrants than of U.S.-born workers were working in government jobs at the time of the survey. One reason for this is that most Federal jobs bar aliens from employment. The following also shows only about a one-percentage-point difference between foreign- and native-born

workers reporting self-employment. Here is the employment breakdown as of April 1983 (in percent):

	Native born	Foreign born	
		Total	1960-79 entrants
Total employed	100.0	100.0	100.0
Private wage and salary	73.7	81.7	84.4
Government	16.5	9.2	7.2
Self-employed	9.2	8.5	7.9
Unpaid family worker6	.6	.4

As mentioned previously, the employment experiences of the recent arrivals were very different from the other foreign born. Only about 50 percent of the foreign born who came to the United States in 1980 and 1981 were working in April 1983 or had worked at some time during 1982. A large proportion had been unemployed for long periods—23 (median) weeks during 1982.

Other studies have found this pattern among the foreign born in earlier years. One, by Chiswick, showed that newly arrived male immigrants had lower levels of employment and higher levels of unemployment than their native-born counterparts, but after about 5 years the experiences of the two groups were found to be about the same.⁵

As expected, the foreign born who entered the United States in 1980-81 were somewhat more likely than the other foreign born or the native born to report that they were working in low paying industries, such as private household

Table 2. Industry and occupation of employed native born, and of foreign born by selected years of entry into the United States and citizenship status, April 1983

[In percent]

Industry and occupation	Total ¹	Native born ²	Foreign born, entered U.S. prior to 1982				U.S. citizen
			Total ³	Year of entry			
				Before 1960	1960-79	1980-81	
All industry groups	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Agriculture	3.4	3.4	3.6	2.4	3.9	3.7	1.7
Mining9	1.0	.7	.2	.8	.7	.6
Construction	5.9	6.0	4.7	5.0	4.5	4.5	4.8
Manufacturing	19.6	19.2	25.3	23.1	26.4	23.4	23.0
Durable goods	11.5	11.2	15.5	14.4	16.2	13.7	14.9
Nondurable goods	8.1	8.0	9.8	8.6	10.2	9.8	8.2
Transportation and public utilities	7.0	7.2	4.2	5.5	3.8	3.0	5.1
Wholesale trade	4.3	4.4	3.9	4.6	3.7	3.3	4.2
Retail trade	16.3	16.3	16.5	14.3	17.0	18.5	15.4
Finance, insurance, and real estate	6.2	6.2	6.6	5.1	7.4	4.6	6.8
Private household	1.3	1.2	1.8	1.6	1.5	4.9	1.2
Other service industries	30.3	30.3	30.5	33.0	29.4	33.1	33.4
Public administration	4.7	4.9	2.4	5.3	1.6	.3	3.7
All occupation groups	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Executive, administrative, and managerial	11.1	11.2	9.7	14.1	8.6	5.9	12.5
Professional specialty	13.2	13.1	14.1	15.6	13.7	13.5	17.4
Technicians and related support	2.9	2.9	3.4	3.4	3.3	4.2	3.4
Sales occupations	11.5	11.7	8.8	9.3	8.7	8.2	9.5
Administrative support, including clerical	16.4	16.6	12.7	13.4	12.7	9.8	13.3
Private household	1.0	1.0	1.4	1.2	1.2	3.3	1.0
Protective service	1.6	1.6	.9	1.0	.9	.7	1.2
Service, except private household and protective	11.0	10.8	14.2	11.0	15.0	18.2	12.9
Precision production, craft, and repair	12.0	12.0	12.7	15.4	12.2	10.2	12.7
Operators, fabricators, and laborers	15.7	15.6	18.1	12.9	19.3	21.3	14.0
Farming, forestry, and fishing	3.6	3.5	4.0	2.7	4.3	4.7	2.0

¹Total includes respondents who did not report country of birth or citizenship status, as well as foreign-born respondents who entered the United States in 1982 or 1983.

²Includes respondents who were born abroad of parents who were United States citizens.

³Includes respondents who did not report year of entry. Excludes respondents who did not report country of birth or citizenship status.

services. They also generally were more likely to report they were working in low-paying occupations.

A study by David North of a cohort of 1970 immigrants⁶ indicated that, for a few years after arrival in the United States, many were in jobs of lower skill than those they had held in their native country. North found, for example, that there had been a sharp drop in managerial and professional employment among the immigrants. After several years, however, there was an increase in the net number of professionals (that is, those who formerly were in professional jobs and those new to such occupations). By 1977, the proportion of immigrants who were managers, proprietors, and owners exceeded the average for native-born workers.

Some observers of immigration mention that recent entrants to the United States are less well educated and have fewer marketable skills than those arriving some years earlier, and therefore are less likely to succeed in the U.S. labor market. They compare, for example, the educational background of Southeast Asian refugees entering the United States in the early 1980's with those entering in the mid-1970's.⁷ However, among persons aged 25 and over, the CPS data show somewhat higher levels of college education for the most recent arrivals than for those who came between 1960 and 1979. (See table 3.)

Earnings and family income

As noted, it takes time for the foreign born to learn about, and adjust to, the U.S. labor market. Thus, it is not surprising that there was a sharp difference in median annual earnings between the foreign born who had been long-time residents and those who had arrived in the recent past—

Table 3. Years of schooling of native-born persons, and foreign born by selected years of entry into the United States and citizenship status, April 1983

Educational attainment	Total ¹	Native born ²	Foreign born, entered U.S. prior to 1982				U.S. citizen
			Total ³	Year of entry			
				Before 1960	1960-79	1980-81	
Total, 25 years of age and over (in thousands)	137,584	123,940	9,809	3,717	5,080	693	5,500
Total, 25 years of age and over (percent)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than 12 years schooling	27.8	26.6	41.5	45.4	38.2	38.7	38.7
12 years schooling	37.8	38.8	26.7	29.3	26.0	18.5	29.1
13-15 years schooling	15.7	16.1	12.0	10.9	12.9	12.6	11.7
16 years schooling	10.6	10.6	10.0	7.3	11.4	15.1	10.3
17 or more years schooling	8.1	7.9	9.9	7.2	11.5	15.0	10.2

¹Total includes respondents who did not report country of birth or citizenship status as well as foreign born respondents who entered the U.S. in 1982 or 1983.

²Includes respondents who were born abroad of parents who were U.S. citizens.

³Includes respondents who did not report year of entry. Excludes respondents who did not report country of birth or citizenship status.

although all of the difference cannot be assumed to reflect recency of arrival. In 1982, the median earnings of the foreign born who had entered the United States before 1960 were \$13,697, about twice the earnings of those who had arrived in 1980-81. (See table 4.) (Because the pre-1960 entrants also were older, on average, than the recent arrivals, some of the difference in earnings may be accounted for by the difference in age.)

For the foreign born who reported they were naturalized citizens, median annual earnings were \$13,052 in 1982.

Table 4. Annual earnings of native born, and of foreign born by selected years of entry into the United States and citizenship status, 1982

[Numbers in thousands]

Annual earnings	Total ¹	Native born ²	Foreign born, entered U.S. prior to 1982				U.S. citizen
			Total ³	Year of entry			
				Before 1960	1960-79	1980-81	
All persons:							
Total with annual earnings	108,640	99,981	6,285	1,537	4,109	463	3,110
Under \$5,000	29,267	27,067	1,486	321	954	172	641
\$5,000 to \$6,699	7,434	6,764	499	89	325	60	191
\$6,700 to \$9,999	12,031	10,873	887	169	607	87	351
\$10,000 to \$14,999	18,221	16,745	1,152	226	844	57	559
\$15,000 to \$24,999	23,714	22,002	1,249	353	797	53	733
\$25,000 and over	17,972	16,529	1,013	379	584	34	635
Median earnings	\$11,101	\$11,125	\$10,789	\$13,697	\$10,405	\$6,726	\$13,052
Year round, full-time workers:							
Total with annual earnings	59,909	55,094	3,595	919	2,371	214	1,913
Under \$5,000	1,965	1,806	117	34	73	10	66
\$5,000 to \$6,699	1,894	1,711	151	23	101	23	60
\$6,700 to \$9,999	6,285	5,633	488	63	346	61	182
\$10,000 to \$14,999	13,379	12,301	860	162	640	45	400
\$15,000 to \$24,999	19,937	18,523	1,036	279	669	47	611
\$25,000 and over	16,448	15,119	945	359	542	29	594
Median earnings	\$17,434	\$17,492	\$16,009	\$20,208	\$15,067	\$11,386	\$18,161

¹Population counts relate to April 1983 for persons 16 years and older. Total includes respondents who did not report country of birth or citizenship status, as well as foreign-born respondents who entered the United States in 1982 or 1983.

²Includes respondents who were born abroad of parents who were United States citizens.

³Includes respondents who did not report year of entry. Excludes respondents who did not report country of birth or citizenship status.

The large difference between their earnings and those of the recent U.S. arrivals can be explained in part by work experience during the 5-year waiting period required of the foreign born, specifically, permanent resident aliens,⁸ before they can become naturalized citizens. (And some permanent resident aliens wait more than the required period.) However, to some extent, the earnings of naturalized citizens also may reflect the characteristics associated with persons who choose to become citizens as well as some economic benefits which may accrue from citizenship status.

For the foreign-born population as a whole, median annual earnings in 1982 were close to those of the U.S. born (\$10,789 and \$11,125). Similarly, when comparing annual incomes of the families of the foreign born and the native born,⁹ one finds roughly the same proportions of both groups among the various income categories. (See table 5.)

The data on family income also show substantial differences between the foreign born who came to the United States in 1980 and 1981 and those who came in prior years. For example, about 40 percent of those persons who arrived in 1980-81 and who had at least one family member in the civilian labor force in April 1983 had family incomes under \$10,000, in contrast to 20 percent of those who entered the United States between 1960 and 1979, and about 15 percent of those who arrived prior to 1960. As noted, such differences conform with findings from other studies.

There are also substantial differences in the distribution of family incomes among various racial and ethnic groups—consistent with differences in their median annual earnings. The tabulation below shows that the Asian born had the highest median annual earnings of any of the foreign-born groups in 1982—\$12,200. Asian origin workers also had the highest earnings among the native born (\$13,281).

Median annual earnings—1982

	Native born	Foreign born
White	\$11,512	\$10,221
Black	9,141	11,146
Hispanic.....	9,248	9,062
Asian	13,281	12,200

Similarly, relatively high proportions of Americans of Asian origin and the Asian born reported family incomes of \$35,000 and over, as seen below. (The tabulation refers only to families with at least one member in the civilian labor force.)

Family income of \$35,000 and over—April 1983

	Native born (Percent)	Foreign born (Percent)
White	20.5	16.8
Black	17.0	29.9
Hispanic.....	10.9	7.0
Asian	26.1	30.3

Differences in earnings and family income among the various racial and ethnic groups may be explained in part by differences in their levels of schooling. As indicated below, 43 percent of the Asian born and 29 percent of their U.S.-born counterparts reported 16 or more years of schooling as of April 1983. In contrast, for the Hispanics,¹⁰ the proportions were 8 percent for both groups:

	Native born	Foreign born
White	20	15
Black	10	17
Hispanic.....	8	8
Asian	29	43

Differences in distribution of family income by racial and ethnic group may to some extent also be accounted for by

Table 5. Annual family income of native-born families¹ with at least one member in the civilian labor force, and of foreign-born families¹ by selected years of entry into the U.S. and citizenship status, April 1983²

[Percent distribution]

Annual family income	Total ³	Native born ⁴	Foreign born, entered U.S. prior to 1982				U.S. citizen
			Total ⁵	Year of entry			
				Before 1960	1960-79	1980-81	
Total families with at least one member in the civilian labor force	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under \$5,000	6.2	6.2	6.3	4.2	5.8	19.0	4.0
\$5,000 to \$7,499	5.3	5.3	6.8	5.3	7.1	10.6	4.7
\$7,500 to \$9,999	5.6	5.6	7.2	4.2	8.1	12.5	5.3
\$10,000 to \$14,999	13.9	13.9	15.8	12.9	17.7	14.2	13.3
\$15,000 to \$24,999	25.5	25.9	22.8	23.5	23.2	16.1	23.1
\$25,000 to \$29,999	9.9	10.0	9.8	9.6	10.3	6.8	11.1
\$30,000 to \$34,999	8.2	8.4	7.3	9.1	6.6	5.5	8.5
\$35,000 and over	20.3	20.5	19.1	23.1	18.2	10.3	24.8

¹Family is defined as native born or foreign born based on whether householder is native born or foreign born.

²Because of the structure of the survey schedule for asking annual family income and for updating the information on annual family income, family income refers to January 1982 to December 1982 for 25 percent of the sample, February 1982 to January 1983 for 25 percent of the sample, March 1982 to February 1983 for another 25 percent, and April 1982 to March 1983 for the remaining 25 percent of the sample.

³Total includes respondents who did not report country of birth or citizenship status, as well as foreign-born respondents who entered the United States in 1982 or 1983.

⁴Includes respondents who were born abroad of parents who were United States citizens.

⁵Includes respondents who did not report year of entry. Excludes respondents who did not report country of birth or citizenship status.

Table 6. Selected government benefits received by native-born persons, and by the foreign born by selected years of entry into the United States and citizenship status, 1982

[Numbers in thousands]

Government benefit	Total ¹		Native born ²		Foreign born, entered U.S. prior to 1982									
					Total ³		Year of entry						U.S. citizen	
	Before 1960		1960-79				1980-81							
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total population	173,794	100.0	157,460	100.0	11,388	100.0	3,758	100.0	6,336	100.0	913	100.0	5,935	100.0
Total recipients of selected government benefits	23,961	13.8	21,935	13.9	1,457	12.8	329	8.7	920	14.5	160	17.5	558	9.4
State unemployment compensation	10,301	5.9	9,469	6.0	603	5.3	151	4.0	404	6.4	31	3.4	285	4.8
Food stamps	12,619	7.3	11,616	7.4	707	6.2	103	2.7	457	7.2	128	14.1	220	3.7
Supplemental security income	2,952	1.7	2,634	1.7	215	1.9	94	2.5	100	1.6	4	.5	87	1.5
Aid to families with dependent children	3,102	1.8	2,876	1.8	169	1.5	12	.3	121	1.9	33	3.6	37	.6
Other public assistance	1,116	.6	1,003	.6	84	.7	9	.2	44	.7	31	3.4	21	.4

¹Population counts relate to April 1983. Total includes respondents who did not report country of birth or citizenship status, as well as foreign born respondents who entered the United States in 1982 or 1983.

²Includes respondents who were born abroad of parents who were U.S. citizens.

³Includes respondents who did not report year of entry. Excludes respondents who did not report country of birth or citizenship status.

differences in numbers of family members in the labor force. For example, the black foreign-born families were considerably more likely than the black native born to have two or more family members in the civilian labor force. (The black foreign born also were more likely to report at least 16 years of schooling and family incomes of \$35,000 or more.) While one-half of the black foreign born and Asian born had at least two family members in the labor force, this was the case for fewer than 40 percent of the Hispanics and only one-third of the whites.

Government benefits

The foreign born do not seem more likely than the U.S. born to be recipients of government benefits. (Although there are special government programs to aid refugees, they are of limited duration.) About 13 percent of the foreign born and 14 percent of the native born reported they had been recipients of one or more of the following government benefits in 1982: State unemployment compensation, food stamps, supplemental security income, aid to families with dependent children, and other public assistance. And similar proportions of the foreign and U.S. born reported receipt of each of these benefits. (See table 6.)

For the foreign born who entered the United States be-

tween 1960 and 1979, 15 percent reported receiving one or more of the benefits. However, for those who came in 1980-81, the proportion was somewhat larger (18 percent)—perhaps because of the large number of refugees who arrived during this period who were eligible for government assistance. (Note that there are restrictions on permanent resident aliens receiving supplemental security income during their first 3 years in the United States.) For the naturalized citizens, and the foreign born who entered the country before 1960, the proportion reporting receipt of government benefits was 9 percent.

DATA FROM A MATCHED SAMPLE of the March 1983 and April 1983 CPS supplements—covering about 70 percent of the sampled households—confirm earlier findings that, after some years in the United States, the labor market profile of the foreign born resembles that of their U.S.-born counterparts. Consistent with other foreign born who had been in the United States for only a relatively short time, those who arrived in 1980 and 1981 experienced considerable labor market difficulties. The CPS data also show that essentially the same proportions of the foreign and U.S. born report receiving selected government benefits. □

FOOTNOTES

¹Barry R. Chiswick, "The Economic Progress of Immigrants: Some Apparently Universal Patterns," in Barry R. Chiswick, ed., *The Gateway: U.S. Immigration Issues and Policies*, Washington, D.C., American Enterprise Institute, 1982. For more detailed analysis, see Barry R. Chiswick, *An Analysis of the Economic Progress and Impact of Immigrants*, Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor (NTIS No. PB 80200454), June 1980.

²The CPS is a monthly survey of the civilian noninstitutional population based on a sample of about 60,000 households. The April 1983 CPS supplement, in addition to questions on country of birth, included follow-up

questions on year of entry into the United States, on current citizenship status, and on fertility among foreign-born women.

³For estimates of employment and unemployment during 1982 based on the March 1983 supplement to the CPS, see Paul O. Flaim, "Unemployment in 1982: the cost to workers and their families," *Monthly Labor Review*, February 1984, pp. 30-37, reprinted as Special Labor Force Report Bulletin 2199.

⁴Although firm conclusions cannot always be drawn from the data because of the small sample size for some groups of the foreign born, the data still provide useful insights.

⁵Barry R. Chiswick, *The Employment of Immigrants in the United States* (Washington, D.C., American Enterprise Institute, 1982).

⁶David S. North, *Seven Years Later: The Experiences of the 1970 Cohort of Immigrants in the United States*, R&D Monograph 71 (U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, 1979).

⁷See, for example, Vernon M. Briggs, Jr., *Immigration Policy and the American Labor Force* (Baltimore, MD, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984).

⁸Permanent resident aliens are persons who have been admitted to the United States who may stay in the country indefinitely. In recent years, more than 400,000 have been admitted annually. In addition, large numbers of refugees have been admitted (about 100,000 in 1982); refugees may adjust their status to permanent resident alien after 1 year. (Permanent resident aliens married to U.S. citizens have a 3-year waiting period for citizenship.)

⁹When they are first interviewed in the CPS, the sampled households are asked their family income during the 12 preceding months. (Households are included in the CPS for 4 consecutive months, dropped for 8 months, and then interviewed for another 4 months.) The family income data are updated in the fifth interview month. Thus, for 25 percent of the sample interviewed in April 1983, annual family income refers to the period January to December 1982; for 25 percent of the April sample, it refers to February 1982 to January 1983; for another 25 percent the relevant period is March 1982 to February 1983; and for the remaining 25 percent it is April 1982 to March 1983.

Family income data—recorded in broad intervals when households enter the sample—are not as precise as family income data collected annually in March, with a series of probing questions. Nevertheless, the statistics are still very useful in comparing one population with another.

¹⁰The Hispanic category is not a racial classification. Persons in this group may appear in the white or black or other racial categories.

Coping with youth unemployment

Can anything be done? Over the last several decades, billions of dollars have been spent trying to mitigate or prevent youth employment problems. The problems persist because each new cohort of youth needs help, and because resources have been marginal relative to the need, but also because many mistakes have been made in designing and implementing youth programs. Yet no social problem has been more carefully studied, and this extensive research and experimentation yields some important lessons which can increase the effectiveness of our Nation's youth policies for the remainder of the 1980's. Combined with favorable demographic trends, well-designed and adequately funded programs can substantially redress this longstanding issue.

—NATIONAL COUNCIL ON EMPLOYMENT POLICY
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(Washington, National Council on Employment
Policy, 1984), p. 9.
