

Infographic #3: The Link between Citizenship Status and Income

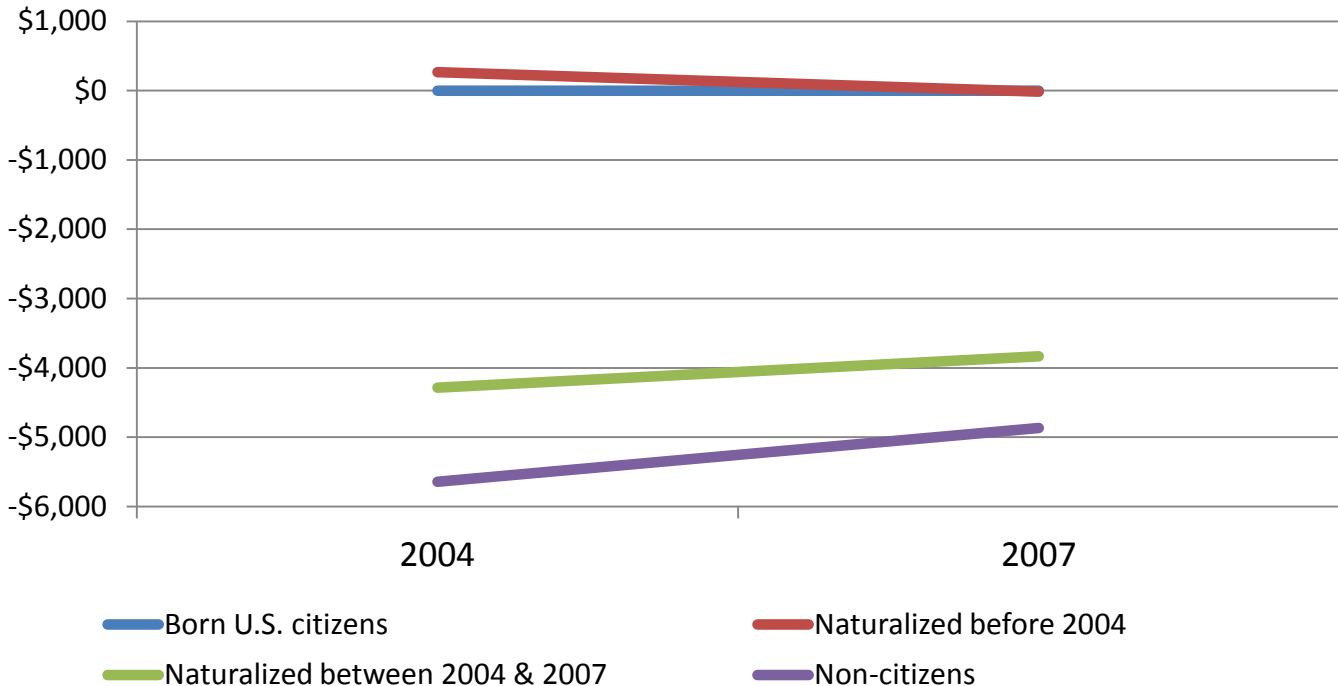
Immigrants make up a sizeable proportion of the U.S. working-age population: 19% in 2013, expected to increase slightly to 22% by 2050.¹ Among U.S. immigrants, Latinos are the largest racial/ethnic group, accounting for 47% of immigrants (by comparison, 25% of immigrants are Asians/Pacific Islanders). However, the economic security of immigrants—particularly Latino immigrants—can be jeopardized by a lack of citizenship or documentation status.

This figure illustrates how income levels change over time for immigrants with and without U.S. citizenship, compared to U.S.-born citizens.² In 2004, the income of immigrants who had already naturalized was similar to the income of U.S.-born

citizens. Immigrants who did not have citizenship earned considerably less. But those immigrants who obtained citizenship status through *naturalization* between 2004 and 2007 had higher income levels throughout the 4-year period than those who did not naturalize.

These findings show a major difference between those who naturalize and those who do not. This difference may be due in part to the lack of documentation status by those who did not naturalize. The figure illustrates the importance of improving access to documentation and citizenship as a way of improving the economic outlook of immigrants and increasing their contributions to the U.S. economy.

Differences in income level & growth, by citizenship status (based on the income of U.S.-born citizens).



¹ Author analysis, based on data from the 2013 American Community Survey (ACS), retrieved from the IPUMS-USA project.

² Figure based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). Analyses taken from chapter 4 of Gassoumis, Z. D. (2014). *The economic security of an aging minority population: A profile of Latino baby boomers to inform future retirees* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest. (UMI Number: 3628171)