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PewResearchCenter

Between Two Worlds

How Young Latinos Come of Age in America

This publication is part of a Pew Research Center report series that looks at the values, attitudes and experiences of America's next generation: the Millennials. Find out how today's teens and twentysomethings are reshaping the nation at: www.pewresearch.org/millennials.

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About the Survey

The 2009 National Survey of Latinos was conducted from Aug. 5 through Sept. 16, 2009, among a randomly selected, nationally representative sample of 2,012 Hispanics ages 16 and older, with an oversample of 1,240 Hispanics ages 16 to 25. The survey was conducted in both English and Spanish, on cellular as well as landline telephones. The margin of error for the full sample is plus or minus 3.7 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. The margin of error for respondents ages 16 to 25 is plus or minus 4.6 percentage points, and the margin of error for respondents ages 26 and older is plus or minus 4.8 percentage points.

Interviews were conducted for the Pew Hispanic Center by Social Science Research Solutions (SSRS).

A Note on Terminology

The terms "Latino" and "Hispanic" are used interchangeably in this report.

The term "youths" refers to 16- to 25-year olds unless otherwise indicated. In this report, the terms "Latino youths," "young Latinos" and "young adults" are used interchangeably.

All references to whites, blacks, Asians and others are to the non-Hispanic components of those populations.

"Foreign born" refers to persons born outside of the United States to parents neither of whom was a U.S. citizen. Foreign born also refers to those born in Puerto Rico. Although individuals born in

Puerto Rico are U.S. citizens by birth, they are included among the foreign born because they are born into a Spanish-dominant culture and because on many points their attitudes, views and beliefs are much closer to Hispanics born abroad than to Latinos born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia, even those who identify themselves as being of Puerto Rican origin.

“Native born” or “U.S. born” refers to persons born in the United States and those born abroad to parents at least one of whom was a U.S. citizen.

Unless otherwise noted, this report uses the following definitions of the first, second, and third and higher generations:

First generation: Same as foreign born above. The terms “foreign born,” “first generation” and “immigrant” are used interchangeably in this report.

Second generation: Born in the United States, with at least one first-generation parent.

Third and higher generation: Born in the United States, with both parents born in the United States. This report uses the term “third generation” as shorthand for “third and higher generation.”

Language dominance is a composite measure based on self-described assessments of speaking and reading abilities. Spanish-dominant persons are more proficient in Spanish than in English, i.e., they speak and read Spanish “very well” or “pretty well” but rate their English speaking and reading ability lower. Bilingual refers to persons who are proficient in both English and Spanish. English-dominant persons are more proficient in English than in Spanish.

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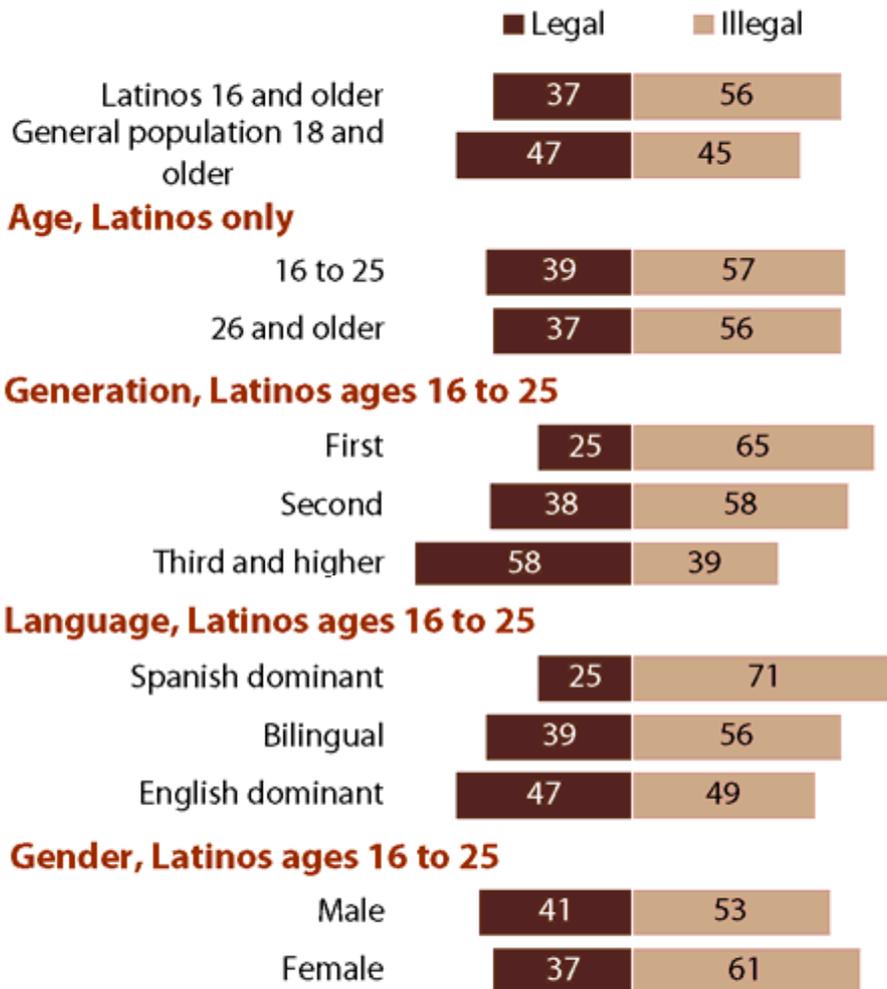
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From p. 65 of the poll...

Figure 7.10

Views on Abortion

Question: Do you think abortion should be...? (%)



Notes: First generation refers to persons born outside the 50 states or the District of Columbia, including those born in Puerto Rico. Second generation refers to persons born in the U.S. with at least one first-generation parent. Third and higher generations refers to persons born in the U.S. with both parents born in the U.S.

Sources: Pew Hispanic Center, 2009 National Survey of Latinos; Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life and the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, "Support for Abortion Slips," October 2009

Opinions on Social Issues

Latinos tend to be more conservative than other Americans on social issues such as abortion and gay marriage. Among young Latinos, there are notable differences by generation, with the foreign born and second generation more conservative than the third and higher generations.

Abortion

Hispanics overall hold a more conservative view than the general U.S. population about abortion rights. More than half (56%) of Hispanics ages 16 and older say abortion should be illegal in most or all cases, compared with less than half (45%) of the adult U.S. population that says the same (The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life and The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press 2009a).²⁵

Among young Latinos, opinions about abortion vary strongly with generation. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of foreign-born young Latinos and 58% of second-generation young Latinos say abortion should be illegal. In contrast, less than four-in-ten (39%) third-generation young Latinos say the same.

Differences in opinion about abortion are also strongly correlated with language usage. More than seven-in-ten (71%) young Hispanics who predominantly speak Spanish say they oppose abortion. Opposition among bilingual young Hispanics is lower, but still more than half (56%) oppose it. Among those who predominantly speak English, just under half (49%) say abortion should be illegal.

²⁵ The phrasing of this question on abortion rights is “Do you think abortion should be legal in all cases, legal in most cases, illegal in most cases or illegal in all cases?” The responses “legal in all cases” and “legal in most cases” are grouped as “legal.” And the responses “illegal in most cases” and “illegal in all cases” are grouped as “illegal.”