

# Mexico Migration Watch

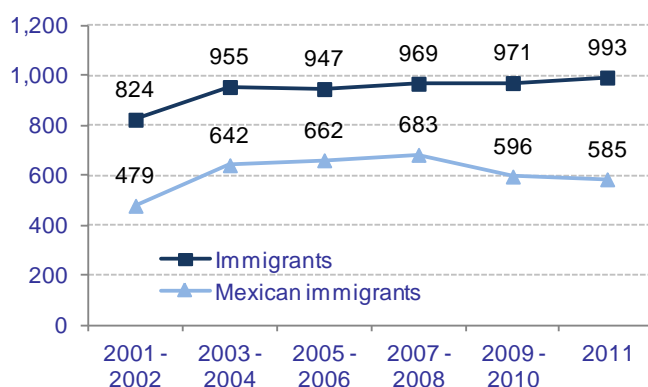
## Possible effects of Arizona immigration law: Some leave and others get citizenship

- Unlike other major groups of immigrants in Arizona, the number of Mexican immigrants has decreased. Over the last 4 years, the number of Mexican immigrants in Arizona has fallen by 100 thousand.
- Arizona immigration law could be a source of pressure pushing more immigrants to get citizenship.
- While 29% of immigrants in Arizona had US citizenship in 2007-2008, by 2011 this had risen to 43%.
- From 2007-2008 to 2011, the proportion of Mexican immigrants with US citizenship in Arizona increased from 18% to 34%, while the percentage of Mexican immigrants fell from 72% of all immigrants in the state to 61%.

The total number of immigrants in Arizona has not decreased in absolute terms since at least 2005-2006. However, it grew only relatively slightly from then until 2011, increasing by a little over 45 thousand; meanwhile the share of immigrants in the total state population fell over this period from 16% to less than 15%.

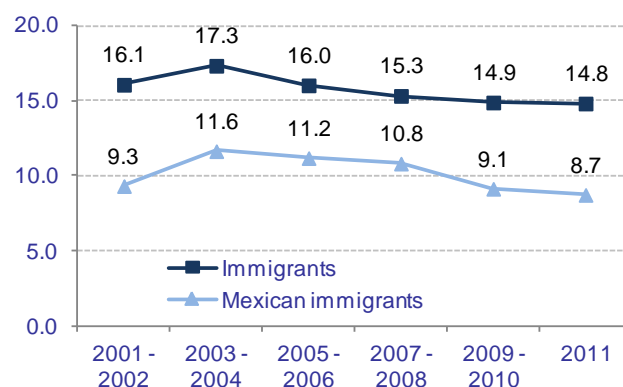
The largest group of immigrants in Arizona is of Mexican origins. However, there has been a decrease in this population. There were 683 thousand Mexican immigrants in 2007-2008, compared to 585 thousand in 2011; in other words, there are around 100 thousand fewer Mexican immigrants in Arizona. This situation could be the result of both Arizona immigration law and the economic turmoil.

Chart 1  
**Immigrant population in Arizona  
(Thousands)**



Source: BBVA Research, based on the Current Population Survey. March 2001-2011

Chart 2  
**Immigrant population in Arizona  
(% of total population)**

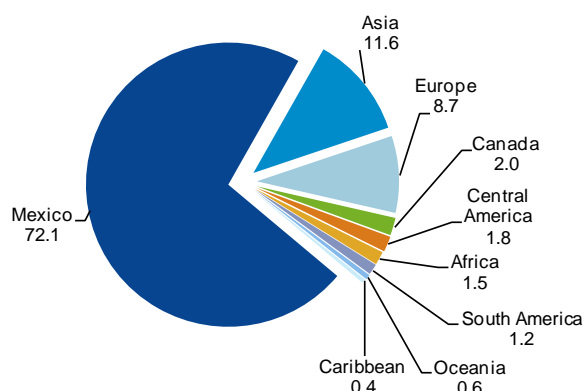


Source: BBVA Research, based on the Current Population Survey. March 2001-2011

As a result, the percentage of immigrants of Mexican origins fell from 72% of the total in 2006-2008 to 61% in 2009-2011. The flipside of this has been an increase in the share of immigrants from other regions, with those from Asia increasing from 12% to 17% and those from Europe up from 9% to 12% in the same period.

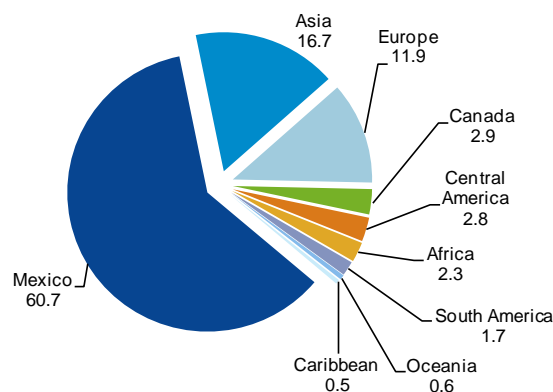
It is likely that the Arizona immigration law, which came into effect in April 2010, had mainly affected Mexican immigrants, as the largest share of undocumented immigrants in the US is from Mexico, accounting for 60% of the total according to Passel and Cohn (2011). These authors also found that around 50% of the Mexican immigrants in the USA are undocumented.

Chart 3  
**Region or country of origin for immigrants in Arizona, 2006-2008 (%)**



Source: BBVA Research, based on the Current Population Survey. March 2006-2008

Chart 4  
**Region or country of origin for immigrants in Arizona, 2009-2011 (%)**



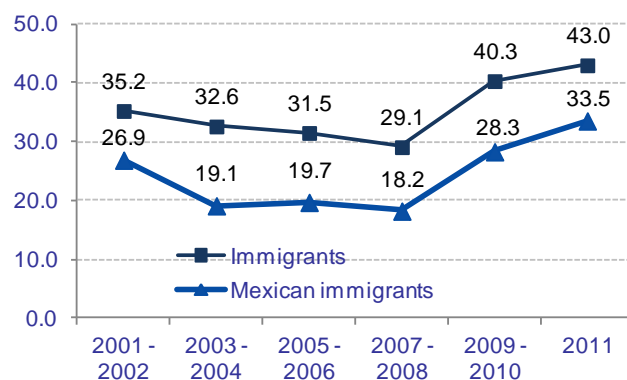
Source: BBVA Research, based on the Current Population Survey. March 2009-2011

Another possible result of Arizona immigration law is an increase in the number of immigrants with citizenship in the state. While 29% of immigrants in Arizona had US citizenship in 2007-2008, by 2011 this has risen to 43%. The proportion of Mexican immigrants with citizenship increased from 18% to 34% over the same period. In general, the significant increase in the number of immigrants with citizenship in Arizona is not being repeated in other US states.

It is very likely that many immigrants in a position to take citizenship have speeded up the process as a result of pressure from Arizona immigration law. And it is also possible that some employers of immigrants will have supported them in obtaining citizenship as a way of stopping them leaving the state and losing workers.

The Arizona immigration law and the recession may therefore have brought about an exodus of some Mexican immigrants from the state, while at the same time putting pressure on more immigrants to obtain US citizenship.

Chart 5  
**Immigrants in Arizona with US citizenship (%)**



Source: BBVA Research, based on the Current Population Survey. March 2001-2011

## References

Passel, J. and D. Cohn (2011) "Unauthorized migrant Population: National and State Trends, 2010", Pew Hispanic Center

Juan Luis Ordaz Díaz      Juan José Li Ng  
[juan.ordaz@bbva.com](mailto:juan.ordaz@bbva.com)      [juan.li@bbva.com](mailto:juan.li@bbva.com)

Av. Universidad 1200, Col. Xoco, México 03339 D.F. | [researchmexico@bbva.bancomer.com](mailto:researchmexico@bbva.bancomer.com) | [www.bbva.com](http://www.bbva.com) | Follow us on Twitter

## Notice

This publication is a joint initiative between the BBVA Bancomer Foundation and BBVA Research's Economic Research Department, Mexico. It aims to make new contributions in the field of Migration studies that add to knowledge of this important social movement.