

What Americans (Still) Want From Immigration Reform

American Public Opinion March - November 2013



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Executive Summary

Throughout 2013, there has been consistent bipartisan and cross-religious support for creating a path to citizenship for immigrants living in the United States. Today, 63% of Americans favor providing a way for immigrants who are currently living in the United States illegally to become citizens provided they meet certain requirements, while 14% support allowing them to become permanent legal residents but not citizens, and roughly 1-in-5 (18%) favor a policy that would identify and deport all immigrants living in the United States illegally. This support for a path to citizenship has remained unchanged from earlier this year, when in both March and August 2013 an identical number (63%) supported a path to citizenship for immigrants currently living in the United States illegally.

- Roughly 6-in-10 Republicans (60%) and independents (57%) and approximately 7-in-10 (73%) Democrats favor a path to citizenship for immigrants currently living in the United States illegally.
- Majorities of white evangelical Protestants (55%), white mainline Protestants (60%), Catholics (62%), minority Protestants (69%), and the religiously unaffiliated (64%) also favor a path to citizenship for immigrants currently living in the United States illegally.

Despite having different experiences with immigrants, there is remarkable consistency in support for immigration reform policy across key states.

- Roughly 6-in-10 Ohioans (60%), Floridians (61%), and Arizonans (64%) favor a path to citizenship for immigrants currently living in the United States illegally.
- More than 6-in-10 (61%) Americans favor the DREAM Act, which would allow immigrants brought illegally to the United States as children a way to attain legal resident status by joining the military or going to college, while 34% oppose. The profiles of Ohio (60% favor, 34% oppose), Arizona (64% favor, 36% oppose), and Florida (64% favor, 33% oppose) residents look nearly identical to all Americans on this question.

Compared to earlier this year, Americans are now significantly more likely to say the U.S. immigration system is completely broken.

- Nearly two-thirds of Americans believe the U.S. immigration system is either completely broken (34%) or mostly broken but working in some areas (31%).
- In March 2013, more than 6-in-10 Americans said the immigration system was completely broken (23%) or mostly broken but working in some areas (40%).

Between March 2013 and today, there has been no significant shift in Americans' opinions about how high a priority immigration reform should be for President Obama and Congress.

- Roughly 4-in-10 (41%) Americans believe immigration policy should be an immediate priority for President Obama and Congress, while roughly as many (42%) say it should

be a priority during the next couple of years. Only 14% of Americans say it should not be a priority at all. Notably, Hispanic Americans (55%) are significantly more likely than both white Americans (38%) and black Americans (39%) to say immigration policy should be an immediate priority for President Obama and Congress.

- In March 2013, 37% reported that immigration policy should be an immediate priority for the president and Congress, while 46% said it should be a priority over the next couple of years, and only 17% said it should not be a priority.

Using a controlled survey experiment, PRRI found survey questions that make no mention of requirements immigrants living in the country illegally must meet produce lower support for a path to citizenship than questions that do mention requirements, especially among more conservative groups such as Republicans and white evangelical Protestants.

- When there is no mention of requirements that immigrants living in the country illegally must meet, nearly 6-in-10 (59%) Americans support a path to citizenship.
- When the question mentions “certain requirements” that immigrants living in the country illegally must meet, nearly 7-in-10 (68%) Americans support a path to citizenship.
- When the question references specific requirements such as paying back taxes, learning English, and passing a background check, 71% support a path to citizenship.

There is general consensus across religious and political lines that the proposed 13-year waiting period is too long. Nearly 7-in-10 (68%) Americans feel that a 13-year waiting period for someone to receive citizenship is too long, roughly one-quarter (24%) say this length of time is about right, and only 5% report that it is too short.

More Americans than not (43%) say that an estimated \$4,000 per person in mandatory fines and fees is too much, although a substantial minority (35%) say this amount is about right. Only 16% of Americans believe that \$4,000 in fines and fees is too little.

Americans are divided on the issue of increasing border security to include adding 20,000 new border control agents and 700 miles of fencing along the border with Mexico at an estimated cost of \$46 billion. Nearly half (49%) are in favor of this proposal, while nearly as many (45%) are opposed.

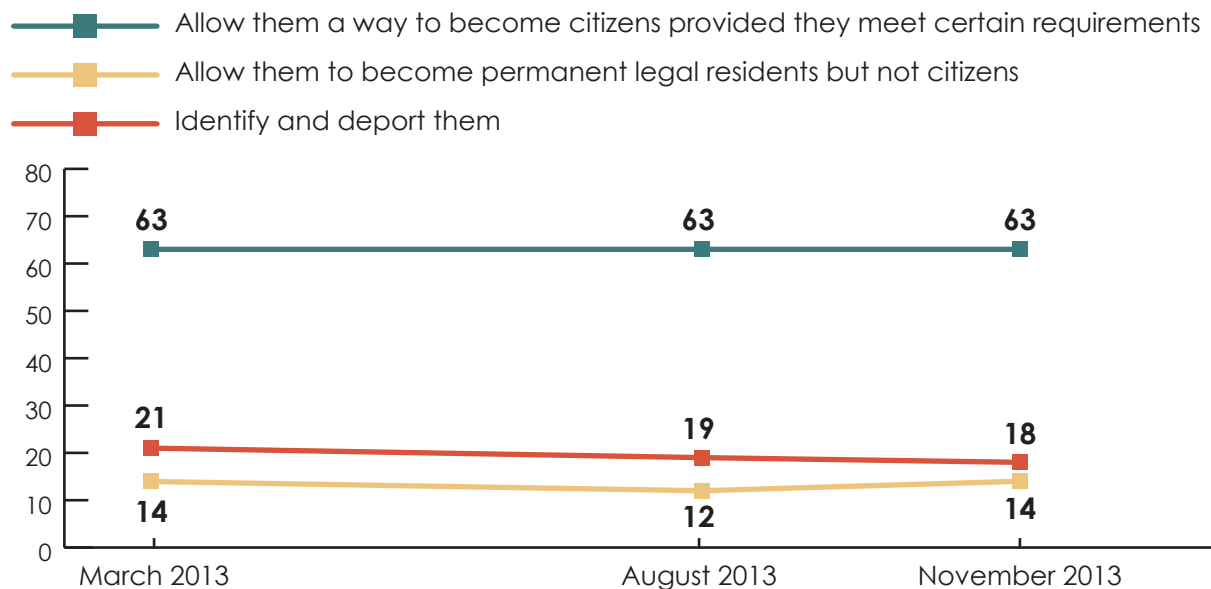
American Attitudes about Immigration Reform in 2013

Stable Support for a Path to Citizenship

Throughout 2013, views on immigration reform have remained remarkably steady, with more than 6-in-10 expressing support for a policy that would provide a way for immigrants who are currently living in the United States illegally to become citizens, provided they meet certain requirements. Currently, 63% of Americans support a path to citizenship, while 14% support allowing them to become permanent legal residents but not citizens, and roughly 1-in-5 (18%) favor a policy that would identify and deport all immigrants living in the United States illegally. This support for a path to citizenship has remained unchanged from earlier in the year, when in both March and August 2013 an identical number (63%) supported a path to citizenship for immigrants who are living in the United States illegally.¹

How should the immigration system deal with immigrants currently living in the U.S. illegally?

(March – November 2013)



Sources: Public Religion Research Institute/Brookings Institution, Religion, Values, and Immigration Reform Survey, March 2013 (N= 4,465); Public Religion Research Institute, Religion and Politics Tracking Survey, August 2013 (N= 1,006); Public Religion Research Institute, Religion and Politics Tracking Survey, November 2013 (N= 1,005)

¹ Unless otherwise specified, results from March 2013 are from the Religion, Values and Immigration Reform Survey, conducted by Public Religion Research Institute in partnership with Brookings Institution. Full results from that survey can be found at the PRRI website here: <http://publicreligion.org/research/2013/03/2013-religion-values-immigration-survey/>.

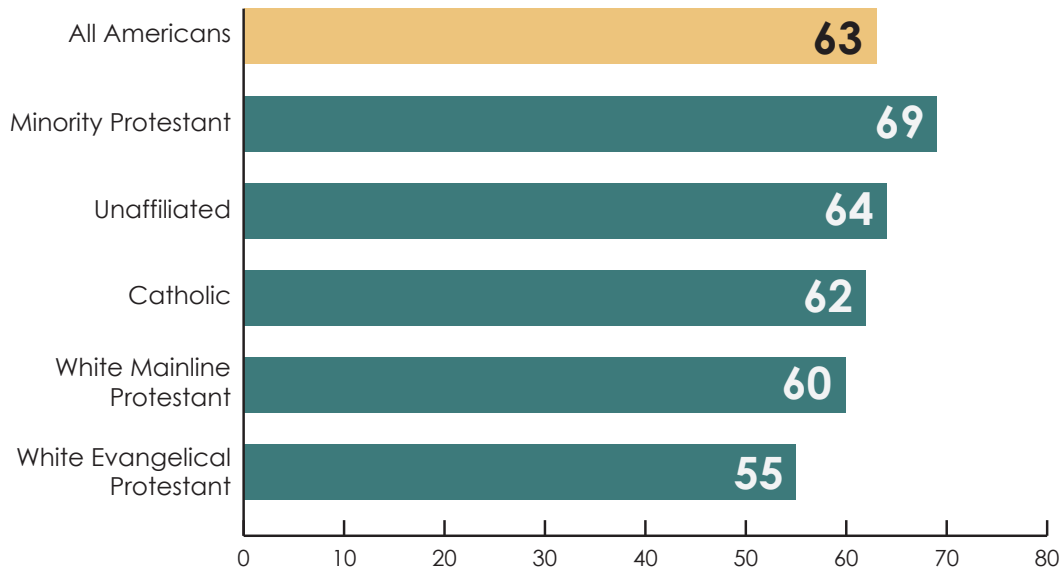
In March 2013, majorities of self-identified Democrats, independents, and Republicans supported a path to citizenship for immigrants living in the country illegally, and this remains true today. The political landscape has since shifted modestly, with an increase in support among Republicans for a path to citizenship for immigrants living in the country illegally accompanied by a decrease in support among independents. Support among Republicans for a path to citizenship has risen from 53% in March to 60% today. Conversely, support among independents has fallen from 64% in March to 57% today. Support for a path to citizenship has remained steady among Democrats, with 71% supporting the policy in March and 73% supporting it today.

There has also been relative stability among ideological groups in levels of support during the year. In March 2013, a majority (54%) of conservatives, 67% of moderates, and 72% of liberals supported a path to citizenship for immigrants living in the country illegally. Today, nearly 6-in-10 (58%) conservatives, 63% of moderates, and 72% of liberals support a path to citizenship.

As in March 2013, majorities of all major religious groups support a path to citizenship for immigrants living in the country illegally. There have been no significant shifts in levels of support among religious groups during the year. Earlier in 2013, a majority of white evangelical Protestants (56%), and more than 6-in-10 white mainline Protestants (61%), minority Protestants (68%), Catholics (65%), and religiously unaffiliated Americans (64%) supported a policy that would allow immigrants currently living in the United States illegally to become citizens. At the end of 2013, nearly identical numbers of white evangelical Protestants (55%), white mainline Protestants (60%), minority Protestants (69%), Catholics (62%), and the religiously unaffiliated (64%) voiced support for this policy.

Support for a Path to Citizenship for Immigrants Living in the U.S. Illegally

By Religious Affiliation



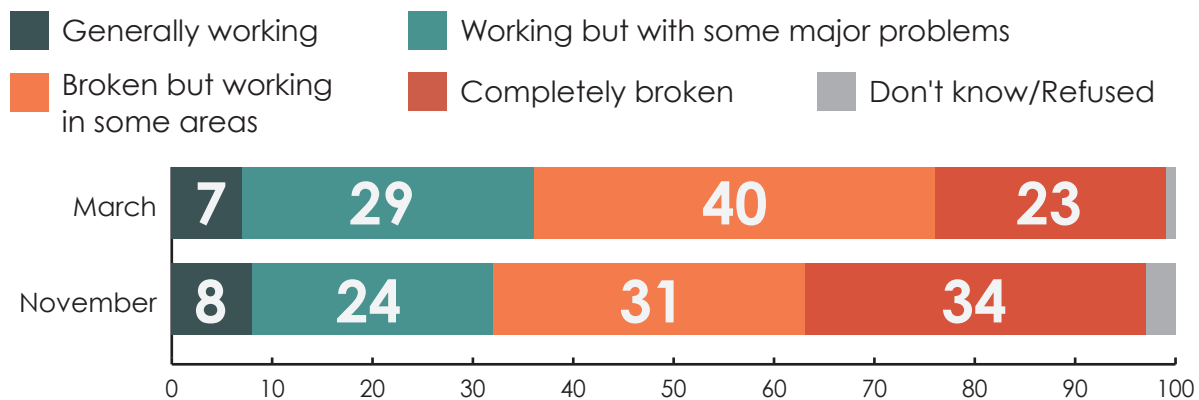
Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Religion and Politics Tracking Survey, November 2013 (N= 1,005)

Growing Belief that the U.S. Immigration System is Broken

Compared to earlier this year, Americans are now significantly more likely to say the U.S. immigration system is completely broken. Nearly two-thirds of Americans believe the U.S. immigration system is either completely broken (34%) or mostly broken but working in some areas (31%). Only about one-third of the public believes the immigration system is generally working (8%) or that it is mostly working but with some major problems (24%). Earlier this year, more than 6-in-10 Americans said the immigration system was completely broken (23%) or mostly broken but working in some areas (40%). Across the political spectrum during 2013, Americans have become more likely to say the immigration system is completely broken.²

Status of the U.S. Immigration System

March vs. November 2013



Sources: Public Religion Research Institute/Brookings Institution, Religion, Values, and Immigration Reform Survey, March 2013 (N= 4,465); Public Religion Research Institute, Religion and Politics Tracking Survey, November 2013 (N= 1,005)

Few Americans are aware that deportation rates have increased during the past five or six years, and knowledge of the change in deportation rates varies by geographic location.³ Among Americans overall, less than 3-in-10 (28%) report, correctly, that the number of immigrants who were deported back to their home countries has increased in recent years. More than 4-in-10 (42%) believe it has stayed about the same, and 18% say deportations have decreased. Americans who reside in the West are more likely than other Americans to know that the number of deportations has increased during the last few years, but even in the West only about one-third (32%)

² The recent increase in the number of Americans who think the immigration system is completely broken is notable, especially since public opinion has remained relatively stable since 2010, when 7% reported that the immigration system was generally working, more than one-third (34%) reported that it was working but with some major problems, roughly 4-in-10 (35%) Americans reported that it was broken but working in some areas, and just more than 1-in-5 (21%) said it was completely broken. See PRRI's 2010 Religion, Values, and Immigration Reform Survey here: <http://publicreligion.org/research/2010/03/religion-values-and-immigration-reform/>.

³ According to the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), deportations increased by more than 10% between FY 2008, when nearly 370,000 immigrants were deported, and FY 2012, when about 410,000 immigrants were deported. See ICE's official website (<http://www.ice.gov/doclib/about/offices/ero/pdf/ero-removals.pdf> and <http://www.ice.gov/removal-statistics/>), accessed March 12, 2013.

are aware that deportation rates have increased. The most substantial knowledge gap on this question is related to race and ethnicity. Nearly half (46%) of Hispanic Americans correctly report that the number of illegal immigrants who were deported back to their home countries has increased during the past five or six years, compared to 34% of Asian Americans, 31% of black Americans, and less than one-quarter (24%) of white Americans.⁴

Priority of Immigration Reform for President Obama and Congress

Between March 2013 and today, there has been no significant shift in Americans' opinions about how high a priority immigration reform should be for President Obama and Congress. In March, 37% reported that immigration policy should be an immediate priority for the president and Congress, while 46% said it should be a priority over the next couple of years, and only 17% said it should not be a priority.⁵ Roughly 4-in-10 (41%) Americans believe that immigration policy should be an immediate priority for President Obama and Congress, while roughly as many (42%) say it should be a priority during the next couple of years. Only 14% of Americans say it should not be a priority at all. Notably, Hispanic Americans (55%) are significantly more likely than both white Americans (38%) and black Americans (39%) to say immigration policy should be an immediate priority for President Obama and Congress.

Compared to both Democrats and independents, Republicans see less urgency in addressing immigration reform. Republicans are more likely to say immigration should be addressed during the next couple of years (48%) than to say it should be dealt with immediately (37%). Democrats and independents are about equally likely to say it should be an immediate priority (41% and 41%, respectively) as to say it should be a priority during the next couple of years (44% and 41%, respectively).

Importance of Requirements in Immigration Reform Legislation

Much of the debate surrounding immigration reform has focused on which requirements should be part of the citizenship process for immigrants currently living in the United States illegally. By conducting a unique survey experiment in partnership with the Brookings Institution, PRRI found that survey questions making no mention of requirements produce lower support for a path to citizenship in immigration reform legislation than questions that do mention requirements, especially among more conservative groups such as Republicans and white evangelical Protestants.⁶

⁴ The results for Asian Americans are based on fewer than 100 cases (N=94) and should be interpreted with some caution.

⁵ The March 2013 numbers on the priority of immigration reform come from McClatchy/Marist Survey, March 2013.

⁶ For the full details of the survey experiment, see the PRRI research page here: <http://publicreligion.org/research/2013/04/april-2013-religion-politics-tracking-survey/>.

The importance of requirements was also expressed in focus groups conducted by PRRI in August 2013. An evangelical Protestant man in Columbus, Ohio, put it this way:

Like the average person, I work a minimum wage job, and I have to pay taxes on it. I'm having loans already going to college. And I'm going to be paying for it out of my minimum wage job. Right now I'm losing money big time, but it's like for a hope that after I graduate from college I can get a better job, pay back those loans you know, and get a whole life. If it was clear to [immigrants coming to the U.S. illegally]...that they should have to pay these taxes, then that would be both a just consequence and a fair treatment for the other people trying to work hard.

The survey experiment randomly divided the entire sample of respondents (n=2,018) into three demographically identical subgroups, and then asked each group a slightly different version of a question that gauged support for a path to citizenship. The first version included no mention of requirements, the second version included only a general mention of requirements, and the third version included specific requirements such as paying back taxes, learning English, and passing a background check.

When there is no mention of requirements that immigrants living in the country illegally must meet, nearly 6-in-10 (59%) Americans support a path to citizenship, compared to 35% who oppose. When the question references “certain requirements” that immigrants living in the country illegally must meet, support rises significantly in the general population, among Democrats and Republicans, and among nearly all major religious groups. When meeting “certain requirements” is mentioned, American support for a path to citizenship rises 9 points to 68%, while opposition declines to 27%. Finally, when the question references specific requirements such as paying back taxes, learning English, and passing a background check, support for a path to citizenship is similar in the general population, with roughly 7-in-10 (71%) Americans reporting favoring a path to citizenship while nearly 1-in-4 (23%) oppose. Overall, compared to a baseline question that has no mention of requirements, a question that mentions general requirements increases support for a path to citizenship by 9 points, and the inclusion of specific requirements increases support for a path to citizenship by 12 points.

The inclusion of mentioned requirements affects levels of support across the political spectrum, but is most important for Republicans. When the question makes no mention of requirements immigrants must meet, only about 4-in-10 (39%) Republicans favor a policy that allows immigrants currently living in the United States illegally to become citizens. When the question makes a general mention of requirements, support among Republicans jumps 15 points, moving support into majority territory at 54%. When specific requirements are included, Republican support increases again to 62%.⁷ Support among independents is not significantly higher when a policy includes general requirements versus when it does not (64% vs. 63%, respectively). However, independents are more inclined to support a path to citizenship when specific requirements are included; more than 7-in-10 (72%) favor allowing immigrants to become citizens when they must first pass a background check, pay back taxes, and learn English. Among Democrats, roughly 7-in-10 (69%) support a policy to provide immigrants a path to citizenship without any mention of requirements. Support among Democrats increases to 82% when general requirements are mentioned, but there is no significant increase in support when specific requirements are given (85%).

⁷ This 8-point difference in Republican support is significant at the 90% confidence interval but not significant at the 95% confidence interval.

Understanding Support for a Path to Citizenship Using a Controlled Survey Experiment

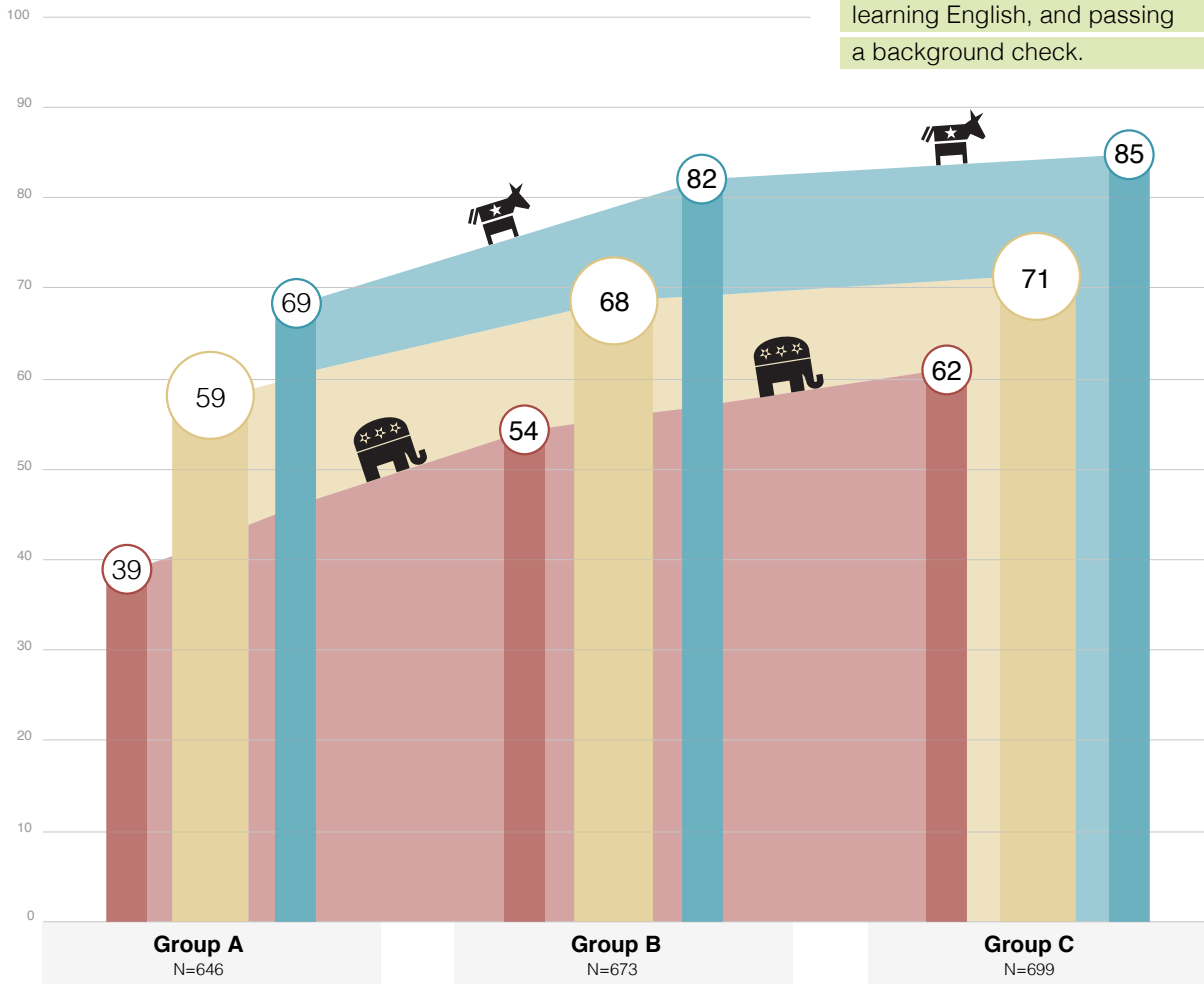
Percent who Favor | By Political Affiliation

All Americans Democrat Republican

Experimental Group A
 Allowing a way for immigrants who are currently living in the U.S. illegally to become U.S. citizens.

Experimental Group B
 Allowing a way for immigrants who are currently living in the U.S. illegally to become U.S. citizens, provided they meet certain requirements.

Experimental Group C
 Allowing a way for immigrants who are currently living in the U.S. illegally to become U.S. citizens, provided they meet certain requirements, like paying back taxes, learning English, and passing a background check.



Source: Public Religion Research Institute, PRRI/Brookings Religion and Politics Tracking Poll, March 2013 (N=2,018).

The specification of requirements also matters in determining the support levels of different religious groups, most notably among white evangelical Protestants, white mainline Protestants, and Catholics. Fewer than half (45%) of white evangelical Protestants favor an immigration policy that allows immigrants living in the United States illegally to become citizens if no requirements are stipulated. When general requirements are mentioned in the question, support jumps 15 points to 60%. The inclusion of specific requirements, however, does not further increase support among white evangelical Protestants; 55% say they support immigration reform policy when it requires immigrants to pay back taxes, learn English and pass a background check. Among white mainline Protestants, less than half (49%) support a path to citizenship when no requirements are mentioned. With the mention of general requirements, support among white mainline Protestants increases 10 points to 59%, while nearly two-thirds (64%) favor this policy with the inclusion of specific requirements. Catholics exhibit a much different pattern. The mention of general requirements has no effect on support among Catholics, with 68% reporting support for a path to citizenship when no requirements are mentioned and 65% voicing support when the question mentions general requirements. When specific requirements are included, however, Catholic support increases significantly to nearly 8-in-10 (78%).

Specific Provisions: Fines, Waiting Periods, and Increased Border Security

Although immigration reform policy is complex and continues to evolve, some key features have been included in nearly all proposed policies: specific requirements immigrants must meet as part of a path to citizenship, and an increased investment in border security. The Senate bill that passed in June includes a 13-year waiting period before immigrants may become full citizens, an estimated \$4,000 in mandatory fines and fees to be paid over the course of the citizenship process, and a \$46 billion investment in increased border security that includes adding roughly 20,000 new border agents and 700 miles of new fencing along the U.S.-Mexico border.⁸

One of the overarching sentiments expressed in the focus groups was the idea that any requirements needed to be significant but also practical and not so onerous that they would serve as a disincentive for moving from illegal to legal status. A Catholic woman in Phoenix, Arizona, expressed this idea as follows:

Where's the incentive? If I put my hand out and you're going to slap it no matter what I do, why am I going to put my hand out? I mean, if no matter what I do, you're going to punish me anyway, why am I going to step forward?

Waiting Periods

There is general consensus among the American public that the proposed 13-year waiting period is too long. Nearly 7-in-10 (68%) Americans feel that a 13-year waiting period for

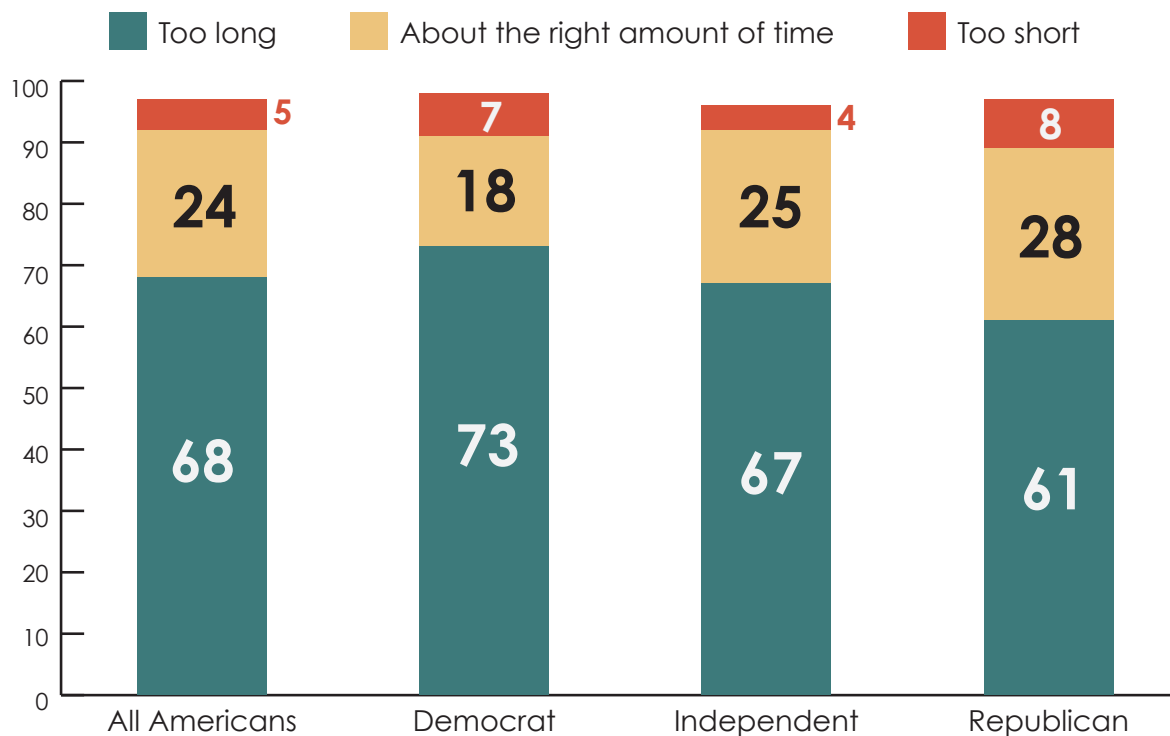
⁸ Information on the immigration reform proposition comes from Border Security, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Modernization Act (S-744), which can be located through the U.S. Government Printing Office here: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-113s744es/pdf/BILLS-113s744es.pdf>.

someone to receive citizenship is too long, roughly one-quarter (24%) say this length of time is about right, and only 5% report that it is too short.

The 13-year waiting period elicited some of the strongest reactions from focus group participants. A Catholic man in Columbus, Ohio, stated bluntly, “I think 13 years sounds more like a prison sentence than anything. It should be something like in the three- to five-year range.” An evangelical Protestant man in Orlando, Florida, echoed these sentiments with an incredulous tone:

So they get jobs, they get educations, they buy a house, they’re living the American dream, and after 13 years the government says, ‘Well, we decided no.’ So 13 years they’ve lived the dream, and now they’ve just got to give their house up, and the family, the kids they’ve had that have lived here their whole lives?

If it takes 13 years for someone to receive citizenship under a path to citizenship program, does that sound...



Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Religion and Politics Tracking Survey, November 2013 (N= 1,005)

Majorities of Americans across religious and political affiliations agree that a 13-year waiting period is too long, including about 6-in-10 (61%) Republicans, two-thirds (67%) of independents, and nearly three-quarters (73%) of Democrats. Majorities of all major religious groups also agree that this length of time is too long. A majority (57%) of white evangelical Protestants, more than 6-in-10 (63%) Catholics, and roughly 7-in-10 white mainline Protestants (69%) and religiously unaffiliated Americans (71%) believe 13 years is too long a waiting period.

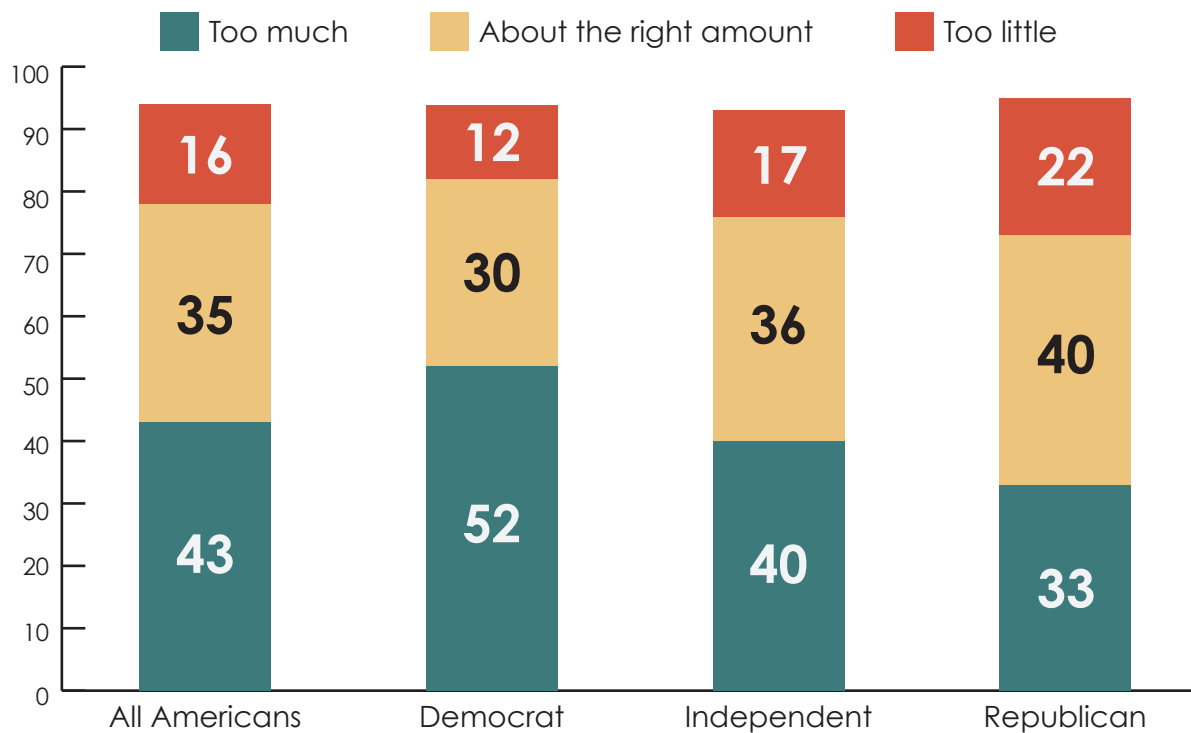
Fines & Fees

There is considerably more disagreement among Americans about the appropriate fines and fees that should be required as part of the citizenship process. More Americans than not say that an estimated \$4,000 per person in mandatory fines and fees is too much, though a substantial minority say this amount is about right. More than 4-in-10 (43%) say \$4,000 per person in fines and fees is too much, while a substantial minority (35%) say this amount is about right. Only 16% of Americans believe that \$4,000 in fines and fees is too little.

This feeling of ambivalence was also reflected among the focus group participants. On one side, an evangelical Protestant man in Columbus, Ohio, argued that the fees have to “be attainable” because then “there’s a much better chance that they’ll at least attempt...to do it and not fight it.” On the other hand, many thought that the amount was too low, a sentiment expressed by a Catholic man in Orlando, Florida.

One thousand dollars a year is only twenty bucks a week. I bet you their drain on the system is more than \$4,000, so at some levels we want independent citizens. We have enough drain on the system now.

If it costs each person a total of \$4,000 in fines and fees to receive citizenship under a path to citizenship program, does that sound like...



Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Religion and Politics Tracking Survey, November 2013 (N= 1,005)

There are pronounced differences across political, religious, and generational groups about the appropriate amount for mandatory fines and fees. A slim majority (52%) of Democrats say \$4,000 per person is too much, compared to 30% who say it is about right and 12% who say it is too little. Independents are about as likely to say this amount is too much (40%) as they are to say it is about right (36%); 17% of independents say it is too little. Four-in-ten (40%) Republicans say that paying \$4,000 in fines and fees is about right, while one-third (33%) say it is too much. More than 1-in-5 (22%) Republicans believe this amount is too little.

Among religious groups, white evangelical Protestants are significantly less likely than other groups to believe that \$4,000 per person in fines and fees is too much. White evangelical Protestants are about as likely to believe this amount is too much (27%) as they are to say it is too little (26%). More than 4-in-10 (41%) white evangelical Protestants say it is about right. Roughly 4-in-10 white mainline Protestants (41%) and Catholics (42%) say this amount is too much, while nearly equal numbers say it is about right (40% and 36%, respectively). A majority (53%) of religiously unaffiliated Americans believe \$4,000 in fines and fees is too much.

Younger Americans are more likely than older Americans to say the proposed fees are too much. A majority (55%) of young adults (age 18 to 29) say that having each immigrant pay up to \$4,000 in fines and fees is too much, compared to 39% of seniors (age 65 and older) who say the same.

Increased Border Security

Americans are divided on the issue of increased border security, which would include adding 20,000 new border control agents and 700 miles of fencing along the border with Mexico at an estimated cost of \$46 billion. Roughly half (49%) are in favor of this proposal, while nearly as many (45%) are opposed.

These divisions were also evident in the focus groups. One Catholic man in Columbus, Ohio, used the metaphor of building a house to articulate his view of the structural necessity of establishing security before allowing a path to citizenship.

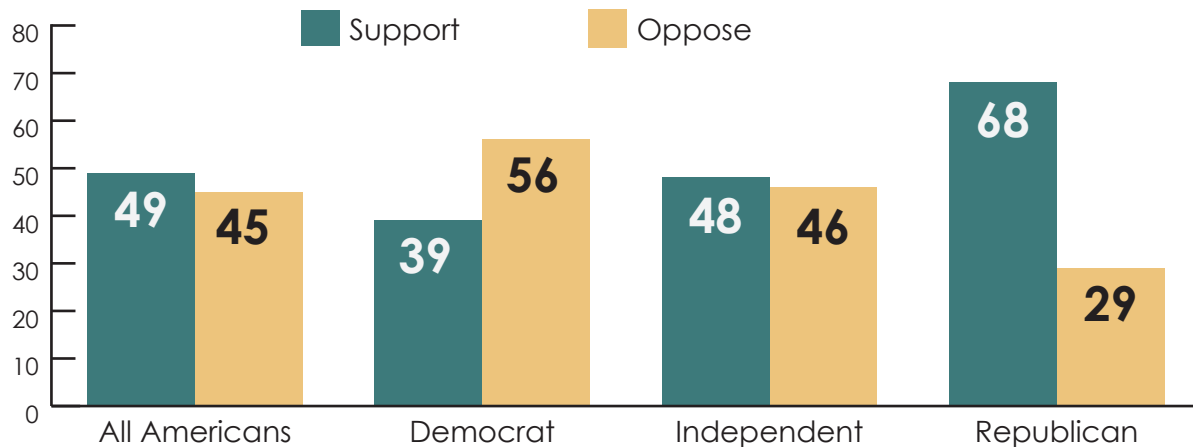
I think the thing that gets me, you know, the maddest is when they want to put up this, ‘Why are you so mean to immigrants?’ [message], they’ll find the picture of the most pathetic banjo-eyed child to use as their image. Would you put carpeting and furniture in a house that doesn’t have windows and a roof? No. You have to have the windows and a roof. You have to have the structure and the order, then you can have all the soft nice wonderful cushy things. Then you can have the fireplace and the fireside and the puppy dogs and the children, but you can’t have that without windows, walls and a roof.

Not everyone, however, was persuaded by such arguments. A Catholic man in Phoenix, Arizona, saw this amount of spending on border security as “ridiculous.”

I think it’s just a waste of money because there are so many areas where the fences can’t go – they can’t affect the national park, they can’t affect an environmental zone, they can’t go through the water... I mean, it’s ridiculous, the idea that we could somehow fence off that border. So knowing that that can’t be done, throwing billions of dollars at it is a complete waste of money.

There are wide differences of opinion between Americans of different political affiliations. Nearly 7-in-10 (68%) Republicans support increased border security measures that include additional border agents and fencing, including 42% who strongly support it. Independents are divided: nearly half (48%) of independents favor this policy, while a similar number (46%) oppose. In contrast, a majority of Democrats (56%) oppose this policy, compared to less than 4-in-10 (39%) who favor it.

Overall, do you support or oppose a plan to increase U.S. border security that includes adding 20,000 border agents and 700 miles of fence along the border with Mexico at a cost of \$46 billion?



Source: Public Religion Research Institute, Religion and Politics Tracking Survey, November 2013 (N= 1,005)

Most religious groups are in favor of increased border security measures that include more border security agents and fencing. Six-in-ten (60%) white evangelical Protestants and a majority of white mainline Protestants (53%) and Catholics (52%) support this plan to increase U.S. border security. Religiously unaffiliated Americans are among the only religious groups opposed to these proposed new security measures. More than 6-in-10 (62%) religiously unaffiliated Americans oppose this plan, compared to roughly one-third (33%) who favor it.

Immigration Reform and Local Contexts: Ohio, Arizona, and Florida

The frequency with which Americans come into contact and interact with immigrants varies considerably by their place of residence. In order to assess the different experiences of Americans in their local contexts, PRRI conducted a series of four focus groups in three states: Ohio, Arizona, and Florida. Because of the large sample size of the PRRI/Brookings Religion, Values, and Immigration Reform Survey (March 2013), PRRI was also able to report out results for these three states from the national survey.⁹ Additionally, PRRI conducted the Ohio Values Survey in August 2013, which provided an in-depth look at Ohioans' attitudes on a path to citizenship and specific provisions of the Senate immigration reform bill.¹⁰ The analysis below draws on these sources.

Local Contexts and Experiences

Overall, nearly half of Americans report living in a community with many new immigrants (24%) or some new immigrants (23%). Americans living in Arizona and Florida are about as likely to say their community has many new immigrants or some new immigrants (48% vs. 42%) as Americans overall. In contrast, less than one-third of Ohioans report living in a community with many new immigrants or some new immigrants (32%). Roughly two-thirds (66%) of Ohioans report that their community has only a few or almost no new immigrants, compared to half (50%) of Floridians and 44% of Arizonans.

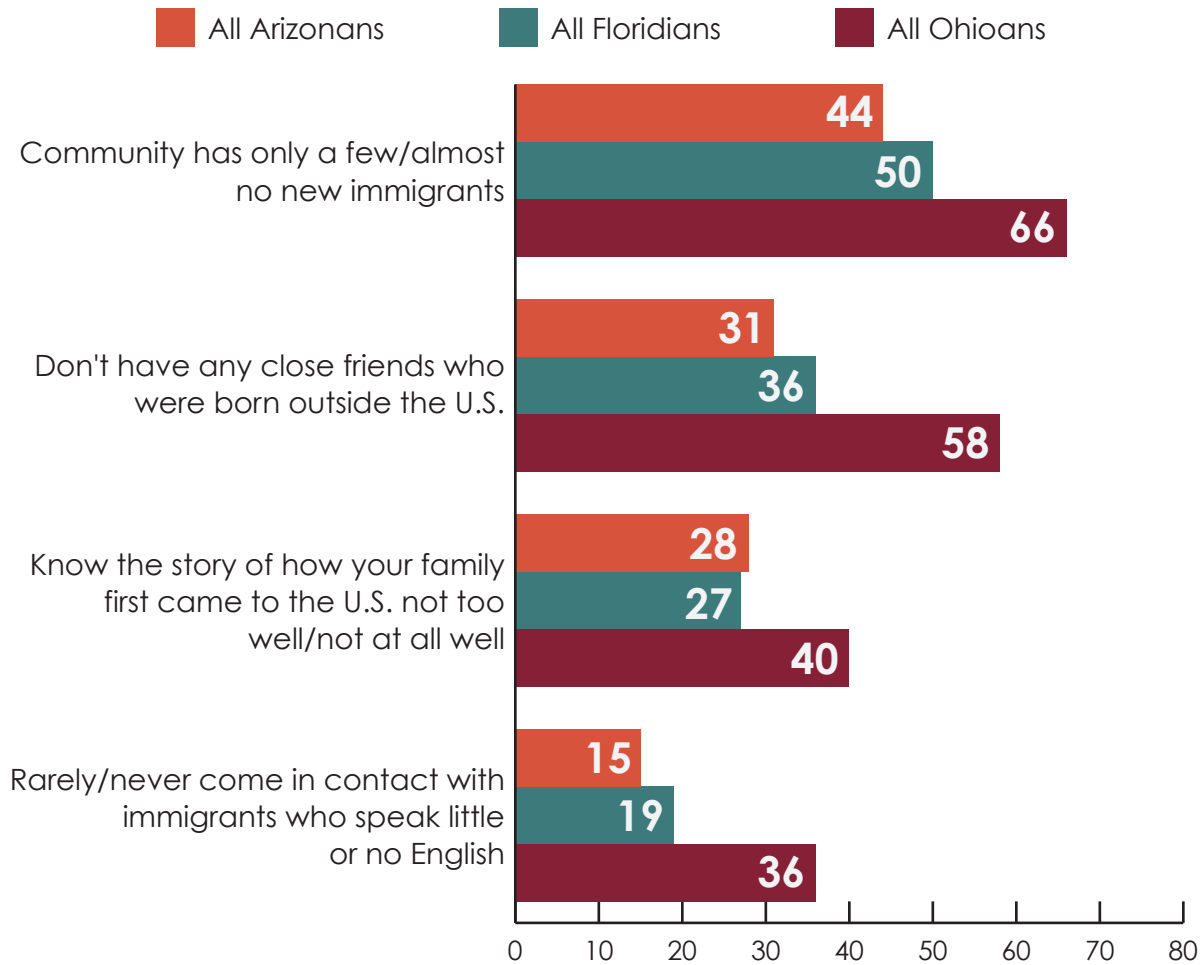
There are also notable geographic divisions in how often Americans interact with immigrants who do not speak English. Among all Americans, half (50%) say they often come into contact with immigrants who speak little or no English, a rate significantly higher than the 31% of Ohioans who say the same, but lower than rates reported by residents of Arizona (60%) and Florida (60%). Roughly 1-in-4 (23%) Americans say they rarely or never come into contact with immigrants who speak little or no English, marking a substantial difference both from Ohioans (36%), who are more likely to say the same, and Arizonans (15%) and Floridians (19%), who are less likely.

⁹ Results for Arizona are based on fewer than 100 cases (N=98) and should be interpreted with some caution.

¹⁰ The full results of the Ohio Values Survey can be found here: <http://publicreligion.org/research/2013/09/2013-ohio-values-survey/>. Ohio results in the local contexts and experiences section and perceptions of cultural threat section are based on the March 2013 national survey, while results in the path to citizenship and the DREAM Act sections are based on the September 2013 Ohio Values Survey.

Social Experience with Immigrants

Among Selected States



Source: Public Religion Research Institute/Brookings Institution, Religion, Values, and Immigration Reform Survey, March 2013 (N= 4,465)

Most Americans (61%) report that they have a close friend who was born outside the United States, while 39% say they do not. Ohioans are less likely than Americans overall to report having a close friend born outside the United States (41%), while Arizonans (69%) and Floridians (64%) report levels similar to all Americans.

Nearly 7-in-10 Americans know the story of how their family first came to the United States either very well (43%) or somewhat well (26%), while roughly 3-in-10 (29%) report they do not know their family's immigration story well. Ohioans are less likely than Americans overall to report knowing how their family first came to the United States, with fewer than 6-in-10 reporting they know their family's immigration story very well (35%) or somewhat well (22%). Ohio residents are also more likely than Americans on the whole to say they are unfamiliar with their family's immigration story (40%). Arizonans and Floridians closely resemble the population overall. Among Arizona residents, nearly 7-in-10 report they know their family's immigration story either very well (45%) or somewhat well (24%). Similarly, among Florida residents, about

7-in-10 report that they know their family's immigration story either very well (50%) or somewhat well (21%). Slightly more than one-quarter of Arizonans and Floridians report that they are unfamiliar with their family's immigration story (28% and 27%, respectively).

Perceptions of Cultural Threat

Despite having much lower levels of social contact with immigrants, Ohio residents stand out as perceiving higher levels of cultural threat to American society and holding more negative views of immigrants across several different measures.

Most Americans (54%) believe that American culture and way of life have mostly changed for the worse since the 1950s, while 4-in-10 (40%) believe it has changed for the better. Ohioans are significantly more likely than Americans overall to say things have gotten worse (67%), while about 3-in-10 (29%) say American culture and way of life have changed for the better. Arizonans and Floridians closely resemble Americans overall, with roughly half of each state's residents (52% and 50%, respectively) believing things have changed for the worse since the 1950s and about 4-in-10 (39% and 44%, respectively) reporting things have changed for the better.

A slim majority (53%) of Americans agree that the American way of life needs to be protected against foreign influence, while close to half (45%) disagree. Ohio residents are significantly more likely than Americans overall to agree that the American way of life needs protecting (66%), compared to just 33% who disagree. Arizonans and Floridians have similar profiles on this question to Americans overall, with a majority of the residents from each state (56% and 51%, respectively) agreeing that the American way of life needs to be protected from foreign influence.

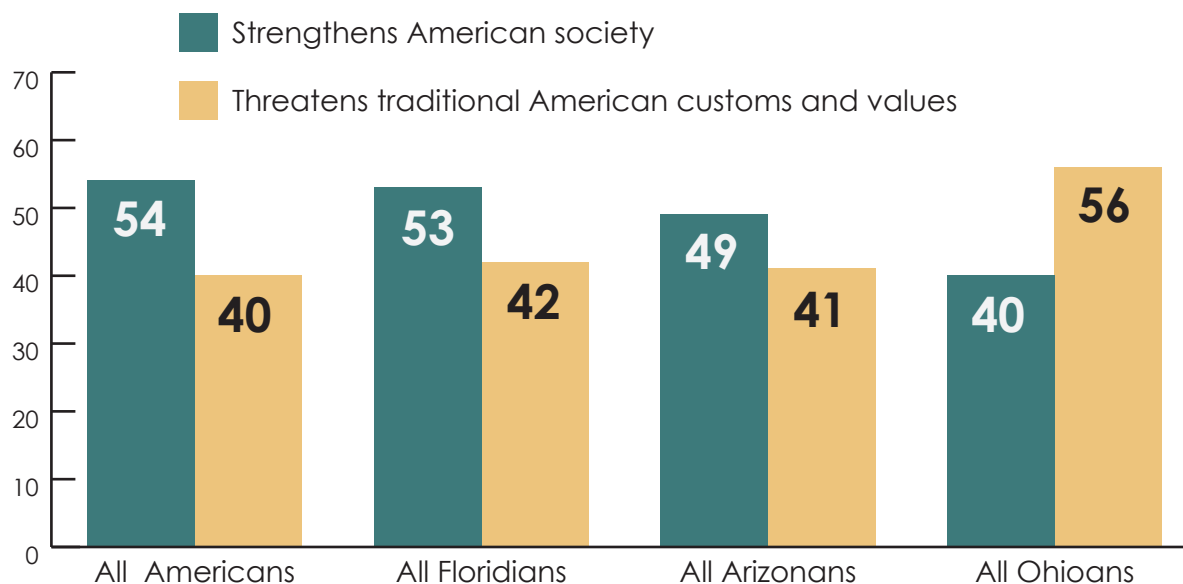
In the focus groups, participants expressed concerns over changes in their communities, often citing feelings of displacement and discomfort, or even stronger feelings that their communities were being "invaded." An evangelical woman in Orlando, Florida, expressed her experience this way:

There's these little communities. There's like grocery stores that I don't feel comfortable going into, because I know that's not my grocery store, because I am white, I'm American, I'm not Hispanic. They're going to look at me when I walk into that store like, 'Why am I there?'

Perceptions of the impact of recent immigrants differ substantially among the three states. Most Americans (54%) report that the growing number of newcomers from other countries strengthens society, while 4-in-10 (40%) say the growth of the new immigrant population threatens traditional American customs and values. Ohioans again stand out from Americans overall in their concern about the cultural impact of recent immigrants. Four-in-ten (40%) of Ohioans say newcomers strengthen society, compared to a majority (56%) who believe the growing number of newcomers threatens traditional American customs and values. Arizonans and Floridians also look similar to Americans overall on this question. Roughly half of Arizonans (49%) and a majority of Floridians (53%) believe that newcomers strengthen American society, while about 4-in-10 in each state (41% and 42%, respectively) report that the growing number of newcomers threatens traditional American customs and way of life.

Perceptions of Cultural Threat Among Selected States

The growing number of newcomers from other countries...



Source: Public Religion Research Institute/Brookings Institution, Religion, Values, and Immigration Reform Survey, March 2013 (N= 4,465)

Along with these concerns, however, many participants in the focus groups expressed admiration for the work ethic of immigrants and gratitude for their contributions. An evangelical man in Orlando, Florida, cited his experience working with a Mexican roofing crew:

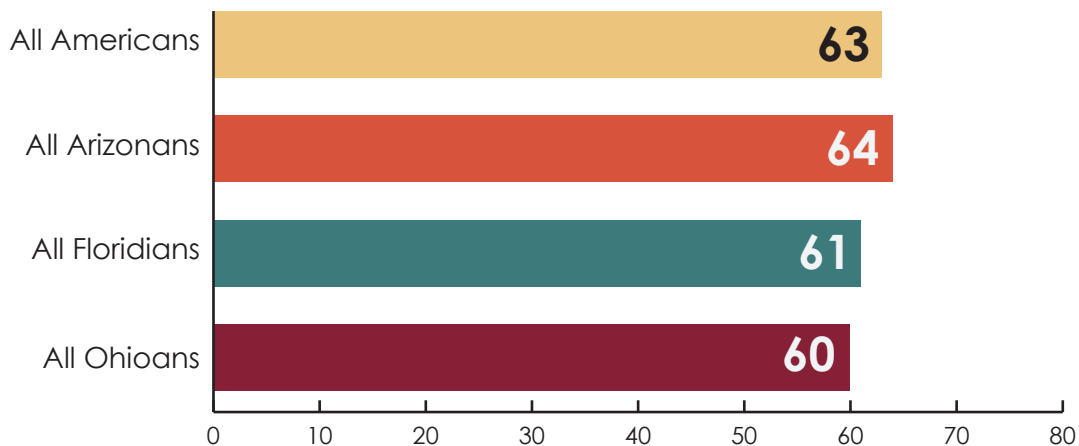
One of my first experiences working directly with immigrants was when I had a roof done on my house and it was a Mexican crew. The thing is, though, they were some of the best, hardest workers I'd ever met. Out in the broiling sun, they did an excellent job. Didn't have to come back to redo anything, which has not been the case with other people I knew that have had their roofs done.

Americans are generally more likely to say that immigrants are changing American culture and way of life for the better (38%) than to say they are changing it for the worse (28%), though nearly one-quarter (26%) say immigrants are not having an impact one way or the other. Ohio residents are much more likely than Americans overall to say immigrants are changing American culture and way of life for the worse (42%), and less likely to say they are changing it for the better (26%); about one-quarter (24%) say immigrants are having no real impact. Arizona residents are twice as likely to say immigrants are changing American culture and way of life for the better (49%) as they are to say they are changing it for the worse (22%); about one-quarter (27%) say immigrants are having no real impact. Florida residents responded similarly to Americans overall, with 41% saying immigrants are changing American culture and way of life for the better, one-quarter (25%) saying they are changing it for the worse, and 27% reporting immigrants are not having any real impact.

Consistent Support for Path to Citizenship, DREAM Act Across States

Despite significant differences in the local social contexts and perceptions of cultural threat, there is broad agreement across the three states in support for immigration reform policy that includes a path to citizenship for immigrants currently living in the United States illegally. As previously noted, more than 6-in-10 (63%) Americans favor allowing immigrants a way to become citizens provided they meet certain requirements, while 14% prefer allowing them to become permanent legal residents but not citizens, and roughly 1-in-5 (18%) say immigrants living in the United States illegally should be identified and deported.¹¹ On this question, there are few regional differences, and residents of Ohio, Florida, and Arizona look nearly identical to Americans overall. Roughly 6-in-10 Ohioans (60%), Floridians (61%), and Arizonans (64%) favor a path to citizenship for immigrants currently living in the United States illegally.¹²

Support for a Path to Citizenship for Immigrants Living in the U.S. Illegally Among Selected States



Sources: Public Religion Research Institute/Brookings Institution, Religion, Values, and Immigration Reform Survey, March 2013 (N= 4,465); Public Religion Research Institute, Ohio Values Survey, September 2013 (N= 1,001)

There are also few differences in views about a policy commonly known as the DREAM Act, which would allow immigrants brought illegally to the United States as children a way to attain legal resident status by joining the military or going to college. More than 6-in-10 (61%) Americans favor this policy, while 34% are opposed. The profiles of Ohio (60% favor, 34% oppose), Arizona (64% favor, 36% oppose), and Florida (64% favor, 33% oppose) residents look nearly identical to all Americans on this question.

¹¹ Results for Arizona and Florida residents are from the Religion, Values, and Immigration Survey, conducted by PRRI in partnership with the Brookings Institution in March, 2013.

¹² Results for Ohio residents for a path to citizenship and the DREAM Act are from the Ohio Values Survey, conducted by PRRI in August 2013.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Survey Methodologies

This report contains results from four national surveys, one state-level survey conducted in Ohio, and twelve focus groups conducted in Arizona, Florida, and Ohio. All research was conducted between March and November 2013. For convenience, full methodologies of all surveys are included in this appendix.

Religion, Values, and Immigration Reform Survey (March 2013)

The survey was designed and conducted by Public Religion Research Institute in partnership with the Brookings Institution. The survey was made possible by the Ford Foundation with additional support from the Nathan Cummings Foundation and Four Freedoms Fund/Public Interest Projects. Results of the survey were based on bilingual (Spanish and English) telephone interviews conducted between January 28, 2013 and February 24, 2013, by professional interviewers under the supervision of Directions in Research. Interviews were conducted by telephone among a random sample of 4,465 adults 18 years of age or older in the entire United States (1,774 respondents were interviewed on a cell phone). The landline and cell phone samples were provided by Survey Sampling International, and the final sample was weighted to ensure proper representativeness.

The weighting was accomplished in two stages. The first stage of weighting corrected for different probabilities of selection associated with the number of adults in each household and each respondent's telephone usage patterns. In the second stage, sample demographics were balanced by form to match target population parameters for gender, age, education, race and Hispanic ethnicity, region (U.S. Census definitions), population density and telephone usage. The population density parameter was derived from Census 2010 data. The telephone usage parameter came from an analysis of the January-June 2012 National Health Interview Survey. All other weighting parameters were derived from an analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2011 American Community Survey.

The sample weighting was accomplished using Sample Balancing, a special iterative sample-weighting program that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables. Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on the final results. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the target populations.

The margin of error for the national sample is +/- 1.7 percentage points for the general sample at the 95% confidence level. In addition to sampling error, surveys may also be subject to error or bias due to question wording, context, and order effects. The margins of error for Arizona, Ohio, and Florida are listed in the table below.

State	Sample Size	Margin of Error
Arizona	N=98	+/- 11.3 points
Ohio	N=149	+/- 9.2 points
Florida	N=228	+/- 7.4 points

Religion & Politics Tracking Survey (April 2013)

The survey was designed and conducted by Public Religion Research Institute, in partnership with the Brookings Institution. Results of the survey were based on bilingual (Spanish and English) RDD telephone interviews conducted between April 5, 2013 and April 14, 2013 by professional interviewers under the direction of Social Science Research Solutions (SSRS). Interviews were conducted among a random sample of 2,018 adults 18 years of age or older in the entire United States (784 respondents were interviewed on a cell phone).

The final sample was weighted by form to five different parameters—age, sex, geographic region, education, and telephone usage—to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the total adult population. Weighting by form controls for natural sampling variation between each group and ensures that each group closely resembles the general population on each of these five parameters.

The margin of error for the entire survey is +/- 2.3 percentage points and the margin of error for each of the subgroup forms is +/- 3.9 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. In addition to sampling error, surveys may also be subject to error or bias due to question wording, context and order effects.

Religion & Politics Tracking Survey (August 2013)

The survey was designed and conducted by Public Religion Research Institute. Results of the survey were based on bilingual (Spanish and English) RDD telephone interviews conducted between August 21, 2013, and August 25, 2013, by professional interviewers under the direction of Social Science Research Solutions (SSRS). Interviews were conducted among a random sample of 1,006 adults 18 years of age or older in the entire United States (401 respondents were interviewed on a cell phone).

The final sample was weighted to five different parameters—age, sex, geographic region, education, and telephone usage—to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the total adult population.

The margin of error for the survey is +/- 3.1 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. In addition to sampling error, surveys may also be subject to error or bias due to question wording, context and order effects.

Ohio Values Survey (August 2013)

The survey was designed and conducted by Public Religion Research Institute. Results of the survey were based on telephone interviews conducted between August 8, 2013, and August 15, 2013, by professional interviewers under the supervision of Princeton Survey Research Associates. Interviews were conducted by telephone among a random sample of 1,001 adults 18 years of age or older currently living in the state of Ohio (401 respondents were interviewed on a cell phone). The landline and cell phone samples were provided by Survey Sampling International and the final sample was weighted to ensure proper representativeness. The survey was made possible through generous funding from the Evelyn and Walter Haas Jr. Fund.

The weighting was accomplished in two stages. The first stage of weighting corrected for different probabilities of selection associated with the number of adults in each household and each respondent's telephone usage patterns. In the second stage, sample demographics were balanced to match target population parameters for gender, age, education, race and Hispanic ethnicity, density of the population, and telephone usage. The telephone usage parameter is based on projections from the most recent account in the CDC's National Health Interview Survey (NHIS). All other weighting parameters were drawn from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2011 American Community Survey (ACS).

The sample weighting was accomplished using Sample Balancing, a special iterative sample-weighting program that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables. Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on the final results. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the target populations.

The margin of error for the entire sample is +/- 3.7 percentage points at the 95% confidence interval. The margin of error for the registered voter subsample is +/- 3.9 percentage points at the 95% confidence interval. In addition to sampling error, surveys may also be subject to error or bias due to question wording, context, and order effects.

Religion & Politics Tracking Survey (November 2013)

The survey was designed and conducted by Public Religion Research Institute. Results of the survey were based on bilingual (Spanish and English) RDD telephone interviews conducted between November 6, 2013, and November 10, 2013, by professional interviewers under the direction of Social Science Research Solutions (SSRS). Interviews were conducted among a random sample of 1,005 adults 18 years of age or older in the continental United States (405 respondents were interviewed on a cell phone).

The final sample was weighted to six different parameters—age, sex, geographic region, race, education, and telephone usage—to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the total adult population.

The margin of error for the survey is +/- 3.1 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. In addition to sampling error, surveys may also be subject to error or bias due to question wording, context, and order effects.

Immigration Policy Focus Groups (August 2013)

Twelve focus groups were conducted among a total of 110 participants in three states: Arizona, Florida, and Ohio. The Columbus, Ohio, focus groups were conducted on August 3-4, 2013, and the Orlando, Florida, and Phoenix, Arizona, focus groups were conducted on August 10-11, 2013. Four groups were conducted for approximately one hour and fifteen minutes per group.

The focus participants included two target groups: self-identified white non-Hispanic evangelical Protestants and white, non-Hispanic Catholics. In addition to religious identity, participants were screened on age (ages 18 to 64), religious salience (reporting that religion is either somewhat or very important to their lives), and political ideology (identifying as politically moderate or conservative).

Appendix 2: State Comparisons of Arizonans, Floridians, and Ohioans

	All Americans	Arizona	Florida	Ohio
Which statement comes closest to your view about how the immigration system should deal with immigrants who are currently living in the U.S. illegally? The immigration system should...				
Allow them a way to become citizens provided they meet certain requirements	63	64	61	60*
Allow them to become permanent legal residents, but not citizens	14	16	20	12*
Identify and deport them	21	19	18	25*
None of these	1	1	0	1*
Don't know/Refused	1	0	1	2*
Allowing immigrants brought to the U.S. illegally as children to gain legal resident status if they join the military or go to college				
Strongly Favor/Favor	61	64	64	60*
Strongly Oppose/Oppose	34	36	33	34*
Don't know/Refused	4	0	3	5*
Do you think the current immigration system in the United States is...				
Generally working	7	6	6	4
Working but with some major problems	29	29	30	28
Broken but working in some areas	40	38	43	44
Completely Broken	23	23	20	24
Don't know/Refused	2	3	1	1
Should Reforming the nation's immigration system be the highest priority, high but not the highest, or a lower priority?				
Highest priority	24	35	24	21
High but not highest	47	46	51	50
Lower priority	27	17	24	28
Don't know/Refused	2	2	1	1

	All Americans	Arizona	Florida	Ohio
Over the last five or six years, do you think the number of illegal immigrants who were deported back to their home countries has increased, decreased or stayed about the same?				
Increased	28	43	28	27
Decreased	18	15	15	18
Stayed about the same	42	34	43	43
Don't know/Refused	12	8	13	12
Do you live in a community with many new immigrants, some new immigrants, only a few new immigrants, or almost no new immigrants?				
Many new immigrants	24	31	24	13
Some new immigrants	23	17	18	19
Only a few new immigrants	23	13	24	30
Almost no new immigrants	27	31	26	36
Don't know/Refused	3	9	8	2
How often do you personally come in contact with immigrants who speak little or no English?				
Often	50	60	60	31
Sometimes	26	23	21	33
Rarely	18	12	14	28
Never	5	3	5	8
Don't know/Refused	0	3	1	0
Since the 1950s, do you think American culture and way of life has mostly changed for the better, or has it mostly changed for the worse?				
Mostly changed for the better	40	39	44	29
Mostly changed for the worse	54	52	50	67
Both/Neither	3	2	4	2
Don't know/Refused	3	7	1	1
The American way of life needs to be protected against foreign influence.				
Strongly/Mostly Agree	53	56	51	66
Strongly/Mostly Disagree	45	41	45	33
Don't know/Refused	2	4	4	1

	All Americans	Arizona	Florida	Ohio
The growing number of newcomers from other countries...				
Threatens traditional American customs and values	40	41	42	56
Strengthens American society	54	49	53	40
Neither/Both equally	3	6	4	4
Don't know/Refused	3	5	1	0
Immigrants are changing American culture and way of life...				
For the better	38	49	41	26
For the worse	28	22	25	42
Not having any real impact	26	27	27	24
Mixed impact/Depends	4	1	3	5
Don't know/Refused	4	0	5	3

Sources: Public Religion Research Institute/Brookings Institution, Religion, Values, and Immigration Reform Survey, March 2013 (N=4,465);

*Public Religion Research Institute, Ohio Values Survey, September 2013 (N=1,001).

Appendix 3: About PRRI and the Authors

Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI)

Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to research at the intersection of religion, values, and public life.

PRRI's mission is to help journalists, opinion leaders, scholars, clergy, and the general public better understand debates on public policy issues and the role of religion and values in American public life by conducting high quality public opinion surveys and qualitative research. As members of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR), the American Political Science Association (APSA), and the American Academy of Religion (AAR), our research team follows the highest research standards of independence and academic excellence.

PRRI is a member organization of the National Council on Public Polls, an association of polling organizations established in 1969, which sets the highest professional standards for public opinion researchers. PRRI is also a supporting organization of the Transparency Initiative at AAPOR, an initiative to place the value of openness at the center of the public opinion research profession.

As a research organization, PRRI does not take positions on, nor do we advocate for, particular policies. Research supported by its funders reflects PRRI's commitment to independent inquiry and academic rigor. Research findings and conclusions are never altered to accommodate other interests, including those of funders, other organizations, or government bodies and officials.

History

Since our founding in 2009, PRRI research has become a standard source of trusted information among journalists, scholars, policy makers, clergy, and the general public. PRRI research has been cited in thousands of media stories and academic publications, and plays a leading role in deepening public understanding of the changing religious landscape and its role in shaping American politics. In addition to our bimonthly PRRI/RNS Religion News Survey conducted in partnership with Religion News Service and our annual flagship American Values Survey, PRRI conducts a number of major national surveys focused on a range of issues at the intersection of religion, values, and public life. Each year, the PRRI research team also publishes peer review articles based on our research in leading academic journals and books.

For a full list of recent projects, see our research page:

<http://www.publicreligion.org/research/>

PRRI also maintains a lively online presence on Facebook and Twitter:

<http://www.facebook.com/publicreligion>

<http://www.twitter.com/publicreligion>

The Authors

Robert P. Jones, CEO

Dr. Robert P. Jones is the CEO of PRRI and a leading scholar and commentator on religion, values, and public life. He is the author of two academic books and numerous peer-reviewed articles on religion and public policy.

Dr. Jones writes a biweekly “Figuring Faith” column at the Washington Post’s On Faith section. Dr. Jones serves as the co-chair of the national steering committees for the Religion and Politics Section at the American Academy of Religion and is a member of the editorial board for “Politics and Religion,” a journal of the American Political Science Association. He is also an active member of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, the Society of Christian Ethics, and the American Association of Public Opinion Research. He holds a Ph.D. in religion from Emory University, where he specialized in sociology of religion, politics, and religious ethics. He also holds a M.Div. from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Before founding PRRI, Dr. Jones worked as a consultant and senior research fellow at several think tanks in Washington, DC, and was assistant professor of religious studies at Missouri State University. Dr. Jones is frequently featured in major national media such as CNN, NPR, The New York Times, The Washington Post, and Time Magazine, among others. Dr. Jones’ two books are *Progressive & Religious* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2008) and *Liberalism’s Troubled Search for Equality* (University of Notre Dame, 2007).

Daniel Cox, Director of Research

Mr. Daniel Cox is the Research Director of PRRI, specializing in survey research, youth politics, and religion. He has coauthored several academic book chapters on topics relating to religious polarization and gay and lesbian issues in the black Church. His work has been cited in numerous national news publications including the New York Times, the Christian Science Monitor, CNN, the Washington Post, and others. Mr. Cox holds an M.A. in American Government from Georgetown University and a B.A. in political science from Union College. Prior to joining PRRI, he served as Research Associate at the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, where he worked as part of the core research team. He is an active member of the American Association of Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) and the American Political Science Association (APSA).

Juhem Navarro-Rivera, Research Associate

Mr. Juhem Navarro-Rivera has an extensive and diverse research portfolio and significant experience in the field of religion and politics. Before joining the PRRI team, Mr. Navarro-Rivera was a research fellow at the Institute for the Study of Secularism in Society and Culture at Trinity College, where he served as the lead analyst for several national and international studies, including the landmark American Religious Identification Survey. He also taught political science and Latino Studies at the Puerto Rican and Latino Studies Institute (currently El Instituto: Institute of Latina/o, Caribbean, and Latin American Studies) at the University of Connecticut.

Mr. Navarro-Rivera earned a B.A. in political science from the University of Puerto Rico at Río Piedras and a M.A. in political science from the University of Connecticut, where he is currently completing his doctorate. His research interests include religion and politics, Latino public opinion, and political representation. He is an active member of the AAPOR, APSA, LASA.

Public Religion Research Institute

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