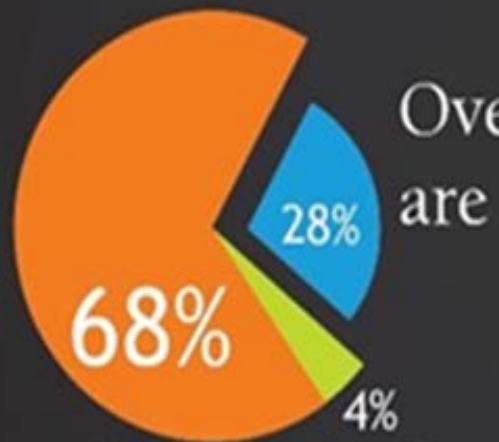


# Immigration Myths Busted

Most immigrants are here illegally



- citizens or legal residents
- legal temporary workers
- undocumented

Over **72%** of immigrants are in the U.S. legally.

**40.2 million** immigrants in the U.S.

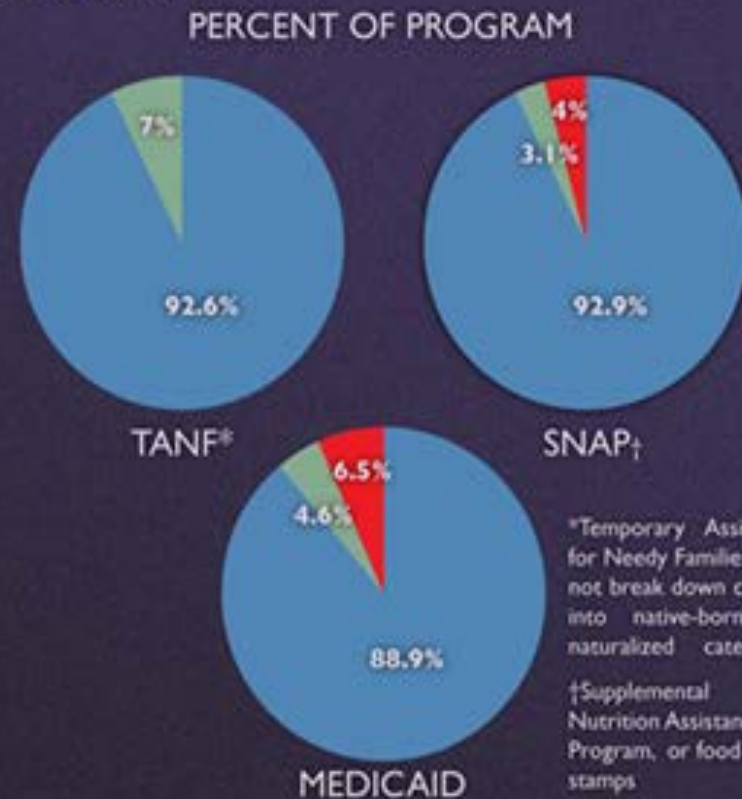
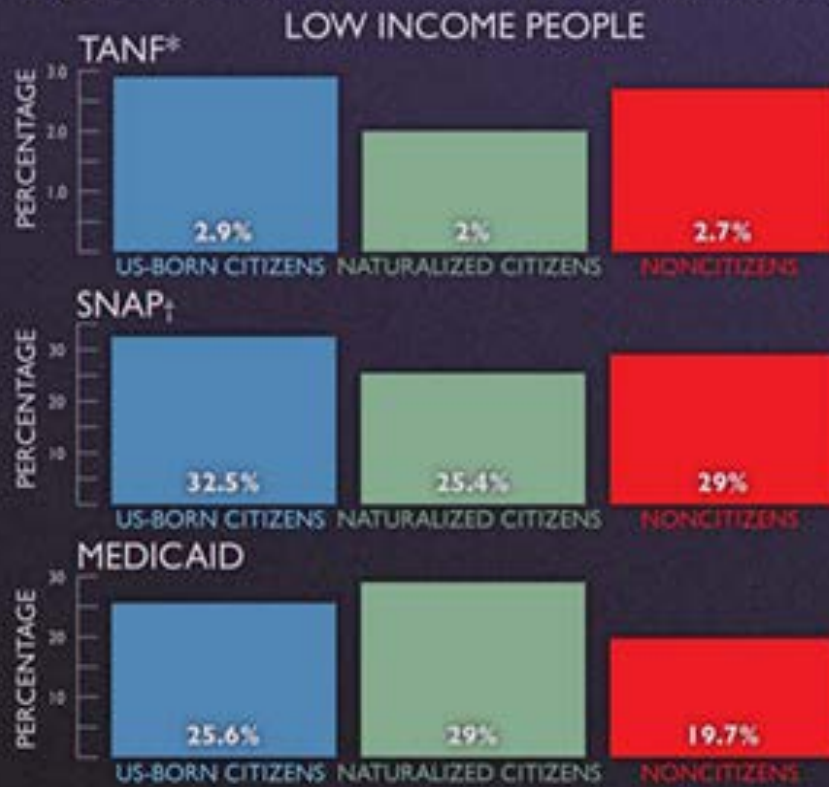


Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service

[lirs.org/mythbuster](http://lirs.org/mythbuster)

# MYTH: IMMIGRANTS DRAIN THE PUBLIC BENEFITS SYSTEM

Low-income people and naturalized citizens enroll in government programs at lower rates than US-born citizens, and face higher restrictions. Undocumented immigrants do not qualify for public benefits.



\*Temporary Assistance for Needy Families – did not break down citizens into native-born and naturalized categories.

†Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or food stamps

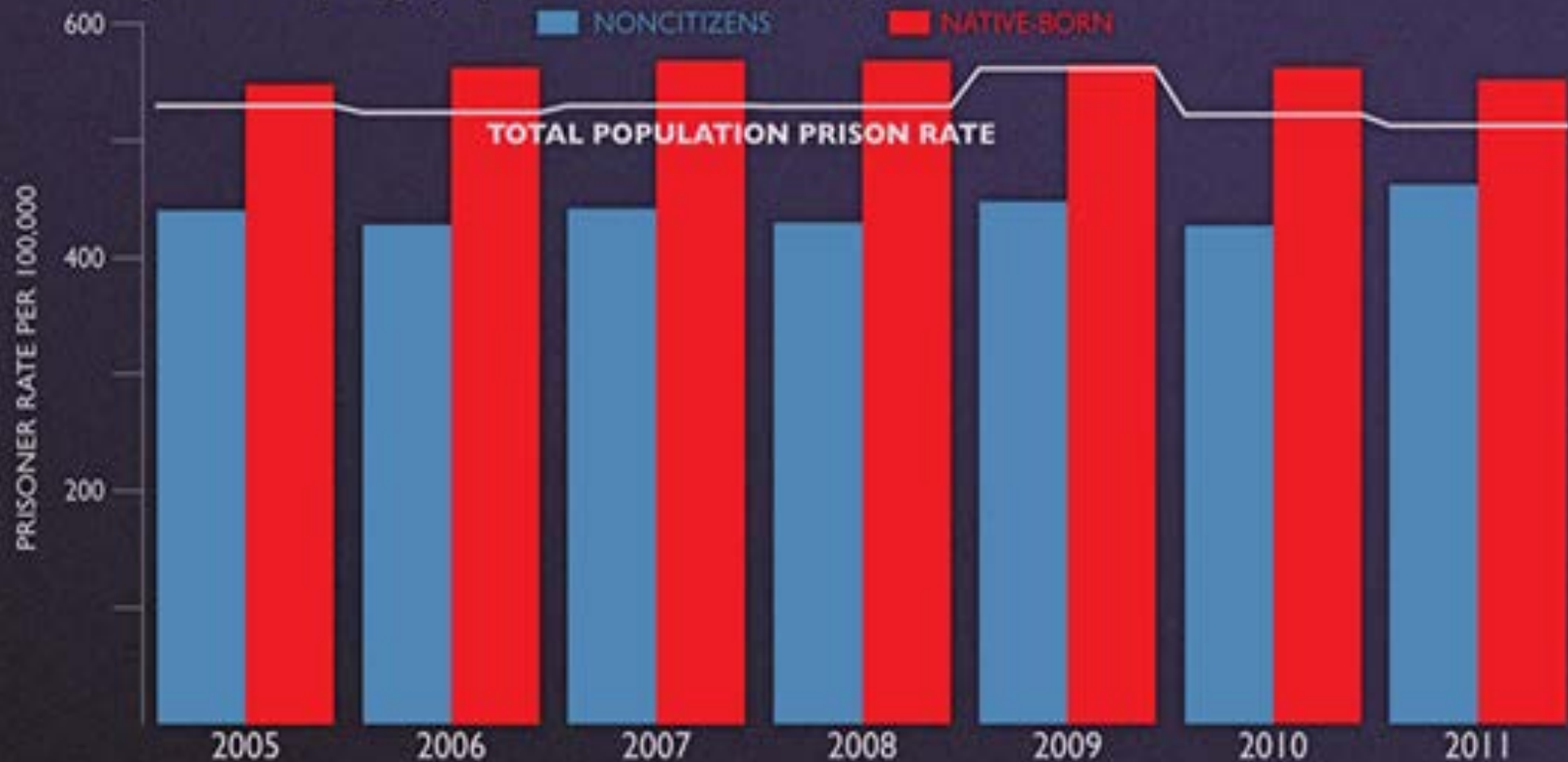
Sources: Cato Institute, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Agriculture

Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

MYTH

# IMMIGRANTS ARE MORE LIKELY TO COMMIT CRIMES

Native-born citizens are imprisoned at higher rates than immigrants, contrary to popular stereotypes. Immigrants make up roughly 6 percent of the entire prison population.



\*Rates calculated using total federal and state prison populations and total population per group. Previous studies show more divisive rates but focus on the male population ages 18 to 39.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, American Community Surveys (2005-11)

MYTH

# UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS DON'T PAY TAXES

TOTAL U.S. UNDOCUMENTED POPULATION: **11.2 M**

STATE AND LOCAL TAXES PAID, 2010: **\$10.6 B**

10 STATES WITH LARGEST IMMIGRANT POPULATIONS

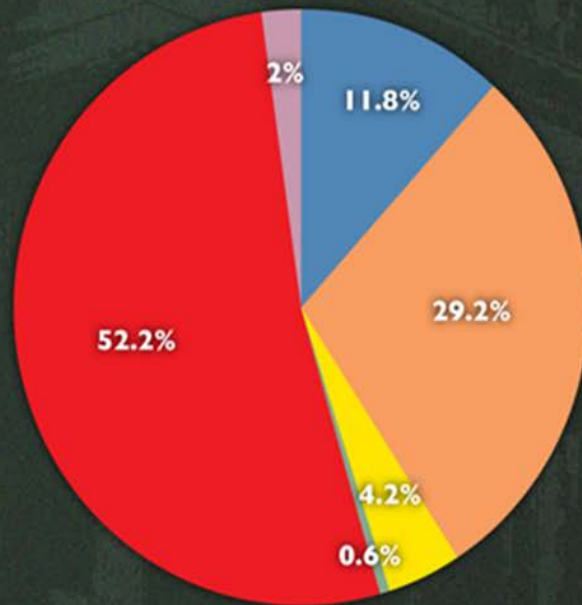


MYTH

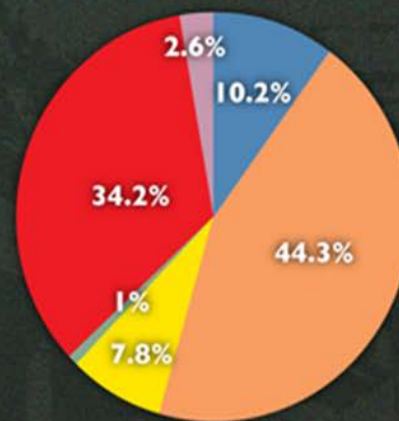
# MOST IMMIGRANTS COME FROM LATIN AMERICA

The largest population of immigrants in the US came from Mexico, but that population has decreased in recent years. The percentage of immigrants from Asia – particularly from China and India – now surpasses the percentage of immigrants from Latin America.

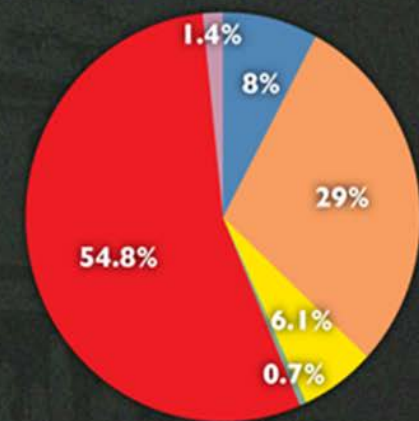
TOTAL FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION, 2012



FOREIGN-BORN ENTERED 2010 OR LATER



FOREIGN-BORN ENTERED 2000-09



EUROPE ASIA AFRICA  
OCEANIA LATIN AMERICA CANADA

Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Source: 2012 American Community Survey

MYTH

## IMMIGRANTS ARE LESS EDUCATED THAN NATIVE-BORN CITIZENS

Immigrants are less likely than native-born citizens to complete high school – 30.8 percent compared with 10.2 percent, respectively. However, immigrants are more likely than native-born citizens to have graduate or professional degrees.

### NATIVE-BORN POPULATION

MASTER'S OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE	10.8%
BACHELOR'S DEGREE	18.6%
SOME COLLEGE OR ASSOCIATE DEGREE	31.3%
HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA	29.2%
LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA	10.2%

### FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION

MASTER'S OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE	11.6%
BACHELOR'S DEGREE	16.4%
SOME COLLEGE OR ASSOCIATE DEGREE	19.1%
HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA	22.2%
LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA	30.8%

Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Sources: 2012 American Community Survey