

**New Destinations in an
Old Gateway: The Interplay
between Public and Private
Actors in Shaping Local
Immigrations Policy**

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Our IPCE study examines civic engagement among citizens and non-citizens in six localities in the Chicago Metropolitan Area. This study is part of a multi-year, multi method research project analyzing how localities in the Chicago area have responded to high levels of immigration from Latin America over the last 30 years. Local government reactions to increased immigration range from integrative or inclusive policies to extremely restrictive and exclusionary—indeed often ruled unconstitutional—policies. This disparity in local immigration policy across the United States requires an analysis of the political process in order to understand why localities respond in a broad spectrum of ways to demographic changes brought on by immigration. In general, our study asks how, why, and when do new destinations adopt integrative or restrictive immigration policies? To understand the policy direction taken by localities, we raise the following interrelated questions: How do different kinds of new destinations (cities vs. suburbs vs. exurbs vs. rural) experience and deal with a rapid influx of immigrants? Do different localities experience similar or different local policy-making processes? How does proximity to a traditional gateway affect policy in new destinations? How do local, regional and national state and non-state actors engage in the local political process to shape policy in new destinations?

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Underlying the political processes that shape local policy is the issue of civic engagement by citizens and non-citizens.

In order to understand local immigration policy, our research team is taking a close look at local governance, particularly at the formal and informal ways in which policy is crafted. We are examining the role of non-state actors in defining, determining and implementing local policy. To address our research questions, we are working to identify and explain the roles played by public and private actors and the interplay between these actors in shaping local immigration related policy. We are particularly interested in examining how new political actors engage in the local political process. These new political actors include immigrants and immigrant-oriented institutions that develop to incorporate immigrants socially, economically and politically. With this study, we seek to understand how citizens and non-citizens engage as political actors, how their participation is facilitated or hindered by public and/or private institutions and organizations, and how the local context of immigrant reception affects their participation.

In this report, we provide a detailed summary of the research activities funded by IPCE as well as a summary of our data, findings, and analysis.