

# Why Community-Based Participatory Research on the Effects of Unauthorized Immigrants Matters

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# Introduction: From Shadows to Strategies

- Increasing concern during the 1990s regarding how immigrants – especially unauthorized Mexican and other foreign-born residents – impact local communities and their residents
- Myopic, expert-driven “community-placed research”
- Longer-term, resident-driven “community-based participatory research”

# Need for Systematic Scientific “Facts”

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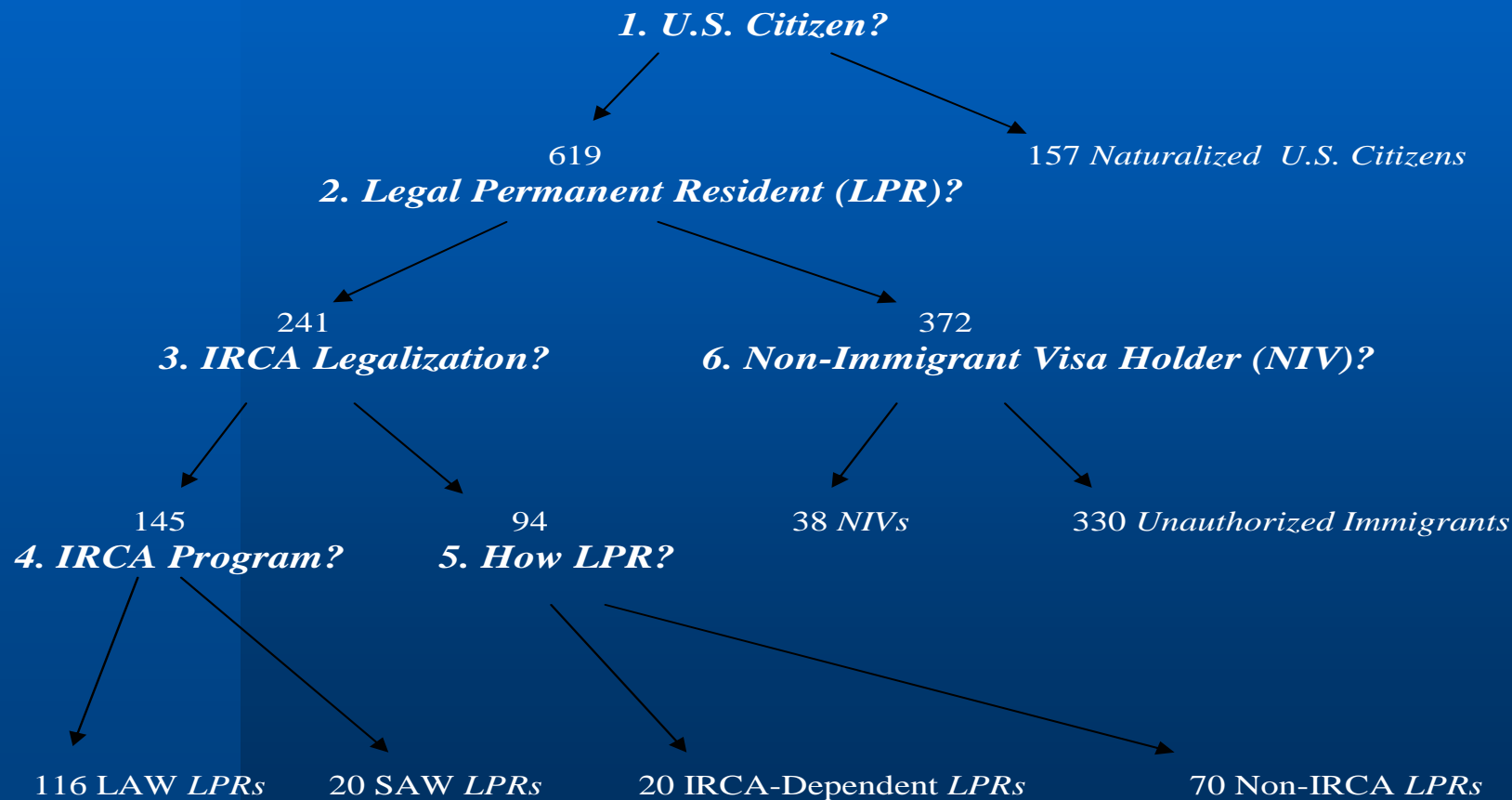
- **Challenge:** discussion of the (1) costs and benefits of unauthorized immigration has been accompanied by (2) a paucity of credible estimates
- **Task:** to estimate (1) the number and characteristics of unauthorized Mexican and other Latino residents in California during 1990s; (2) their impact on U.S.-born workers' earnings and employment; (3) their health and use of illicit drugs; and (4) their use of public health care and other social service programs

# Data and Methodology

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- 1994 and 2001 Los Angeles County Mexican Immigrant Residency Status Surveys (LAC-MIRSS)
- $UMI = f(\text{AGE, SEX, EDUC, YEARS})$
- 1995-2001 February and March CPS
- 1990 5% PUMS

# Residency Status Determination in the 1994/2001 LAC-MIRSS Data

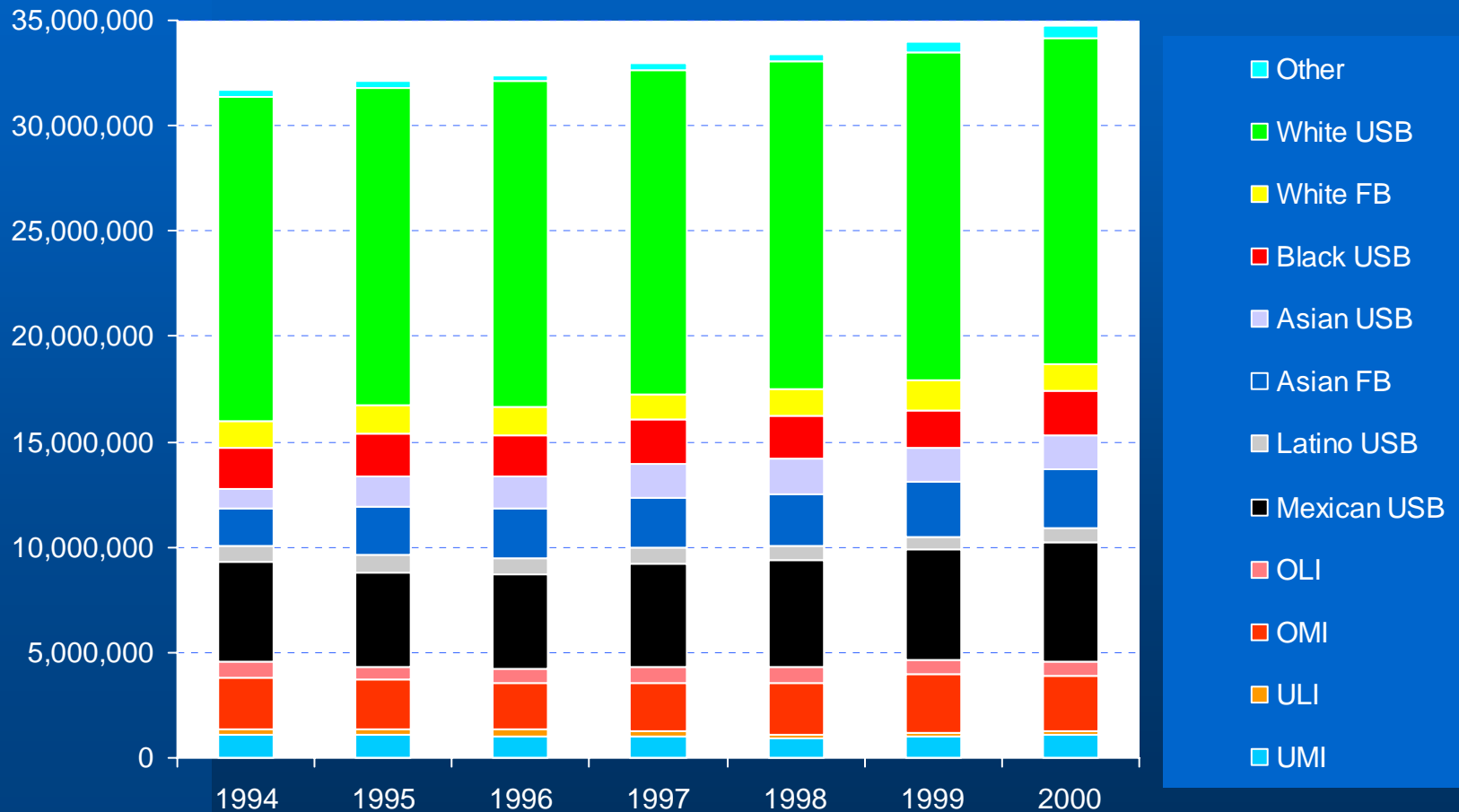


# Definitions

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- **USB:** U.S.-Born
- **FB:** Foreign-born
- **UMI:** Unauthorized Mexican immigrant
- **ULI:** Unauthorized other Latino immigrant
- **AMI:** Authorized Mexican immigrant
- **ALI:** Authorized Other Latino immigrant

# Slight Rise in California's Proportion of Unauthorized Latino Immigrants Between 1994 and 2000



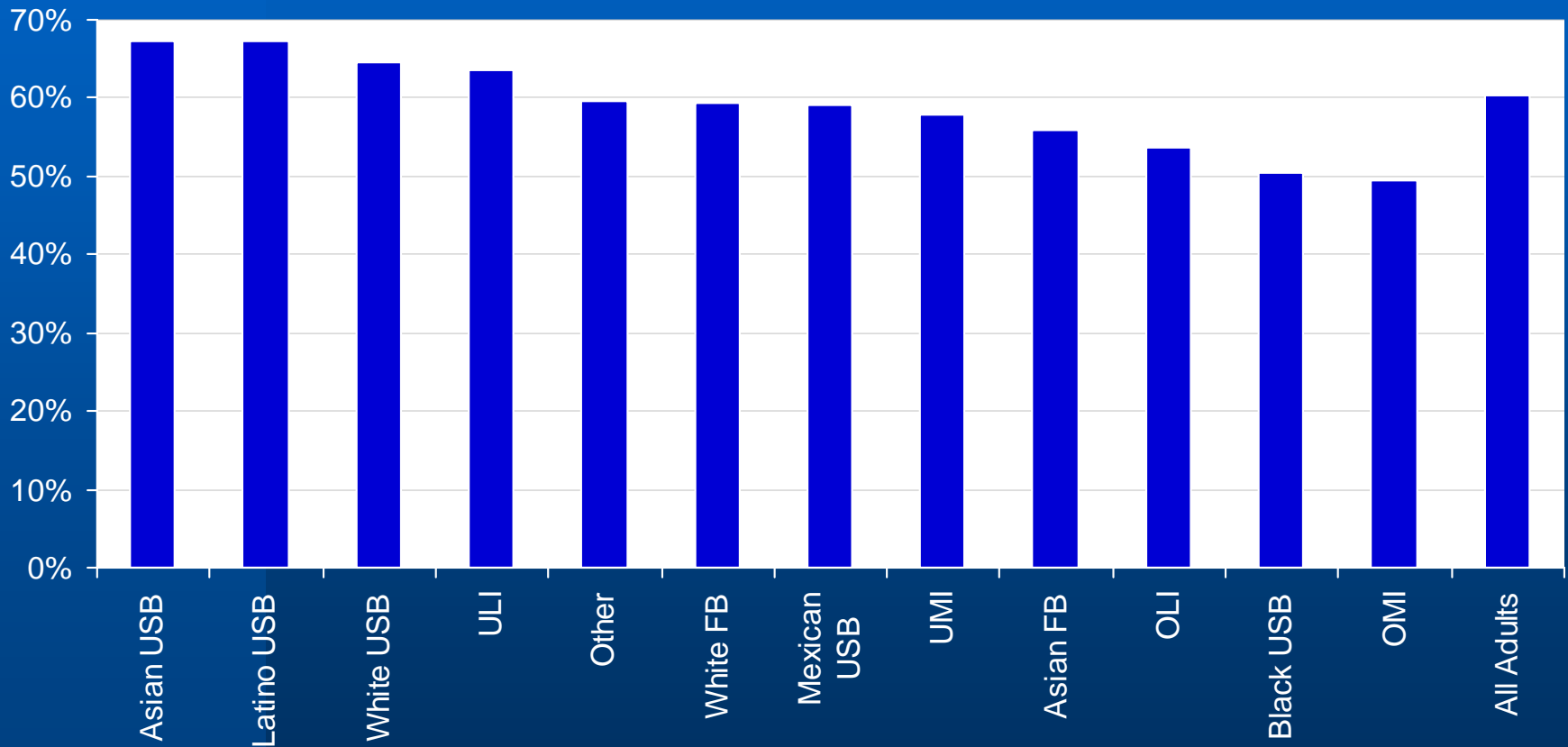
# Negligible Effects on Other Workers' Employment and Earnings, Los Angeles County, 1990

- 1% rise (fall) in the number of weeks worked by higher (lower) skilled US workers
- 1.4% (2.5%) rise in the hourly wages of higher (moderately) skilled US workers

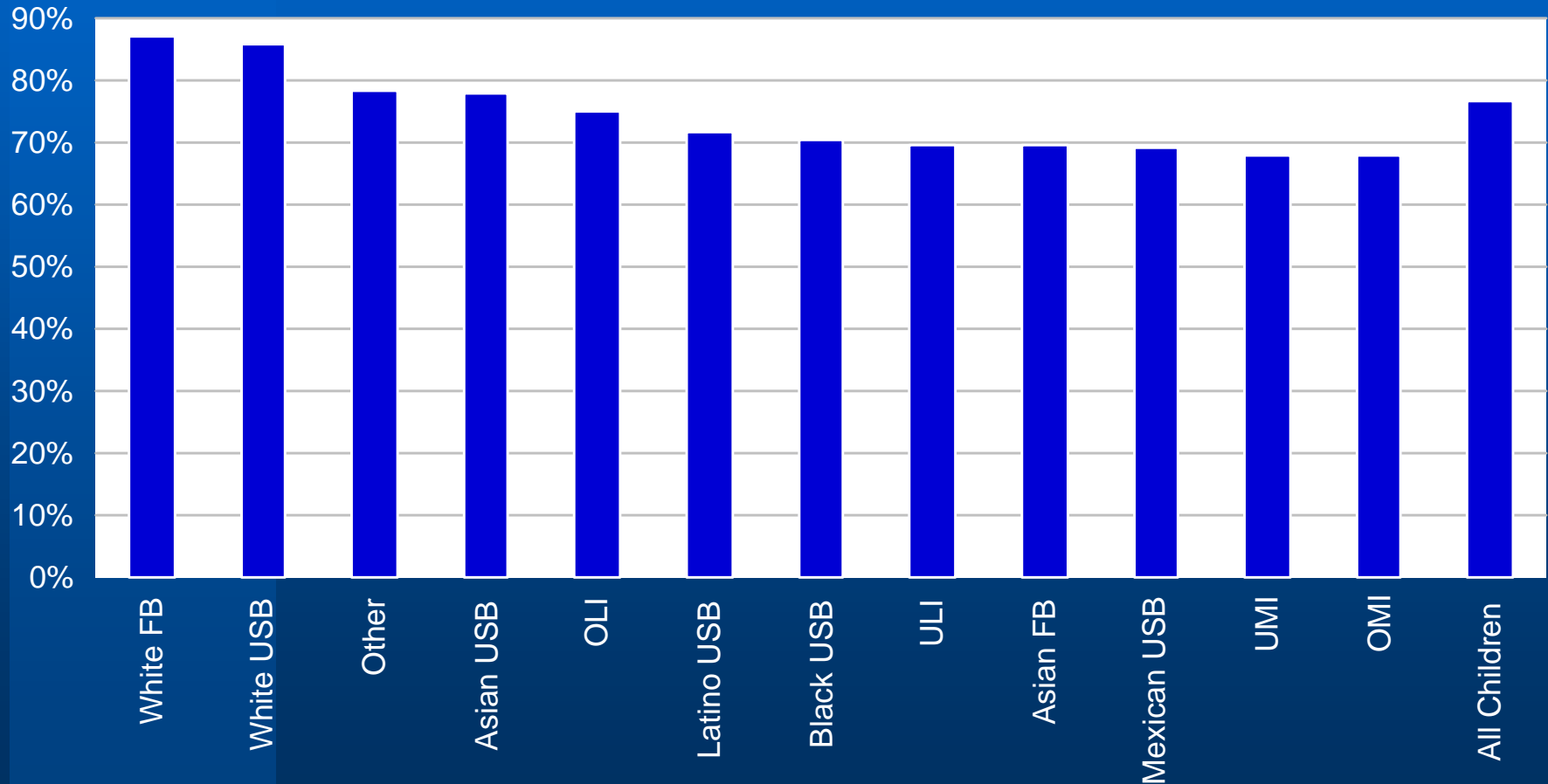
Source: Marcelli, E.A., M. Pastor, Jr. and P.M. Joassart. 1999. "Estimating the Effects of Informal Economic Activity: Evidence from Los Angeles County," *Journal of Economic Issues* 33(3): 579-607.



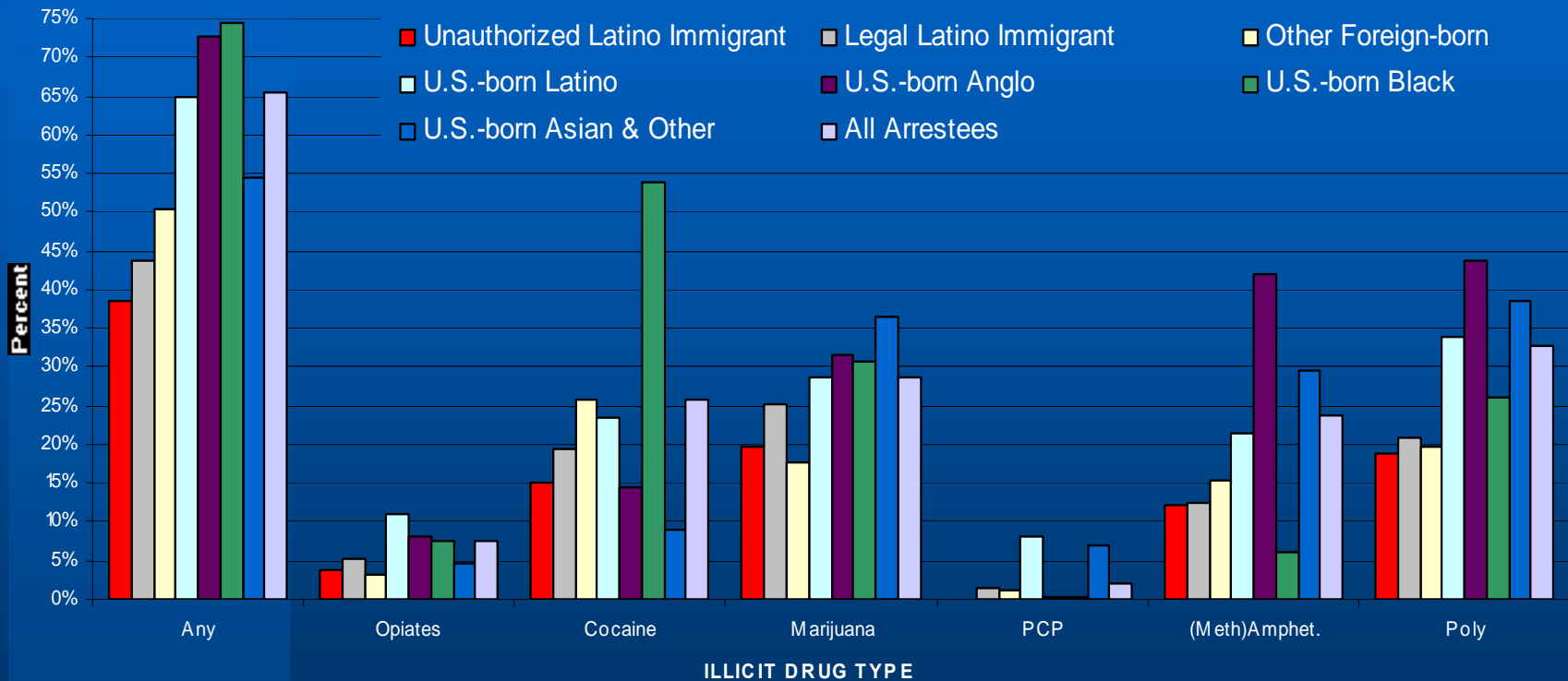
# Lower Reported Health Status among Unauthorized Latino Adults in California, Average, 1995-2000



# Lower Reported Health Status among Unauthorized Mexican and Other Latino Children in California, Average, 1995-2000

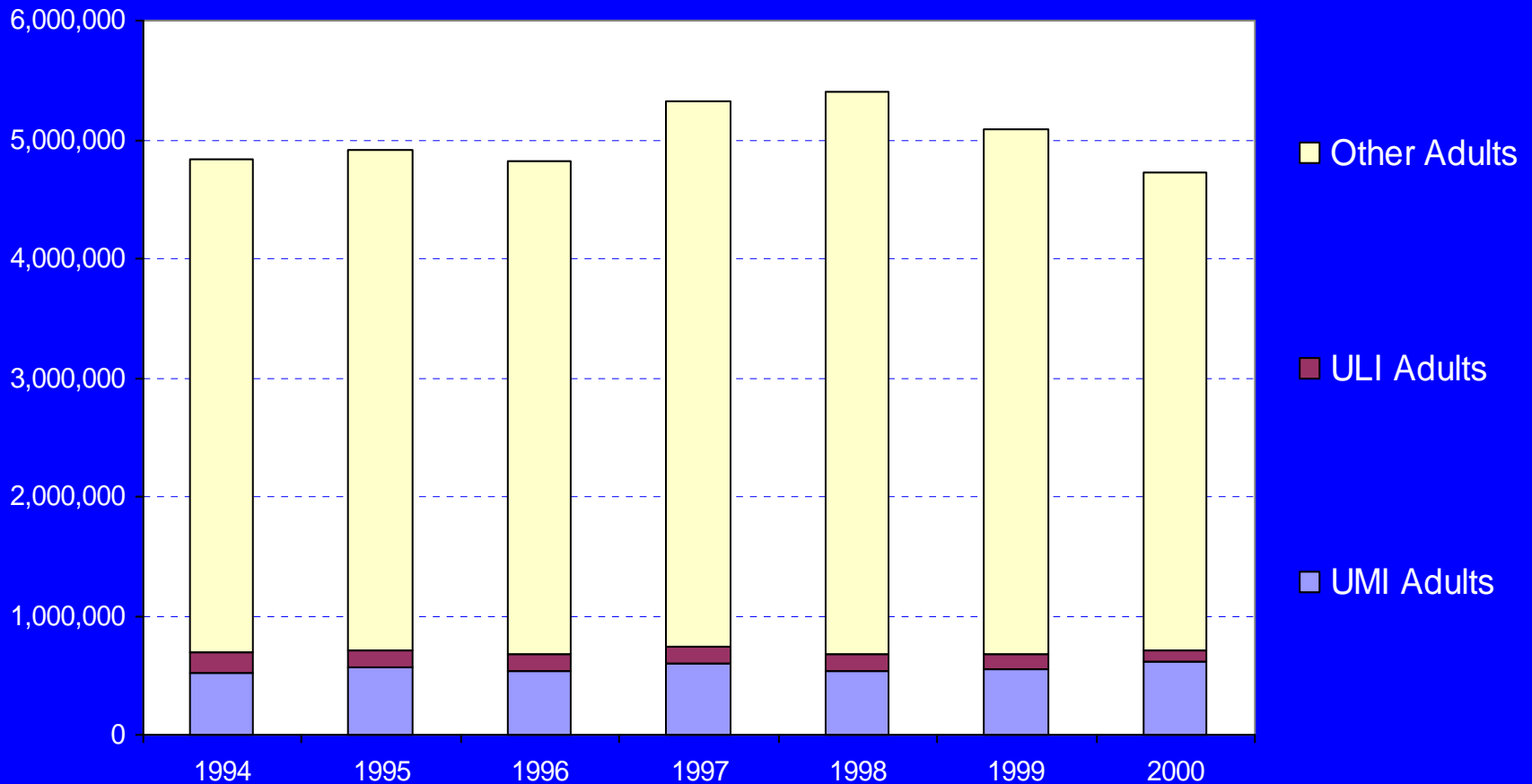


# Unauthorized Latino Arrestees Less Likely than Others to Have Tested Positive for Illicit Drug Use, California, 1994-1996

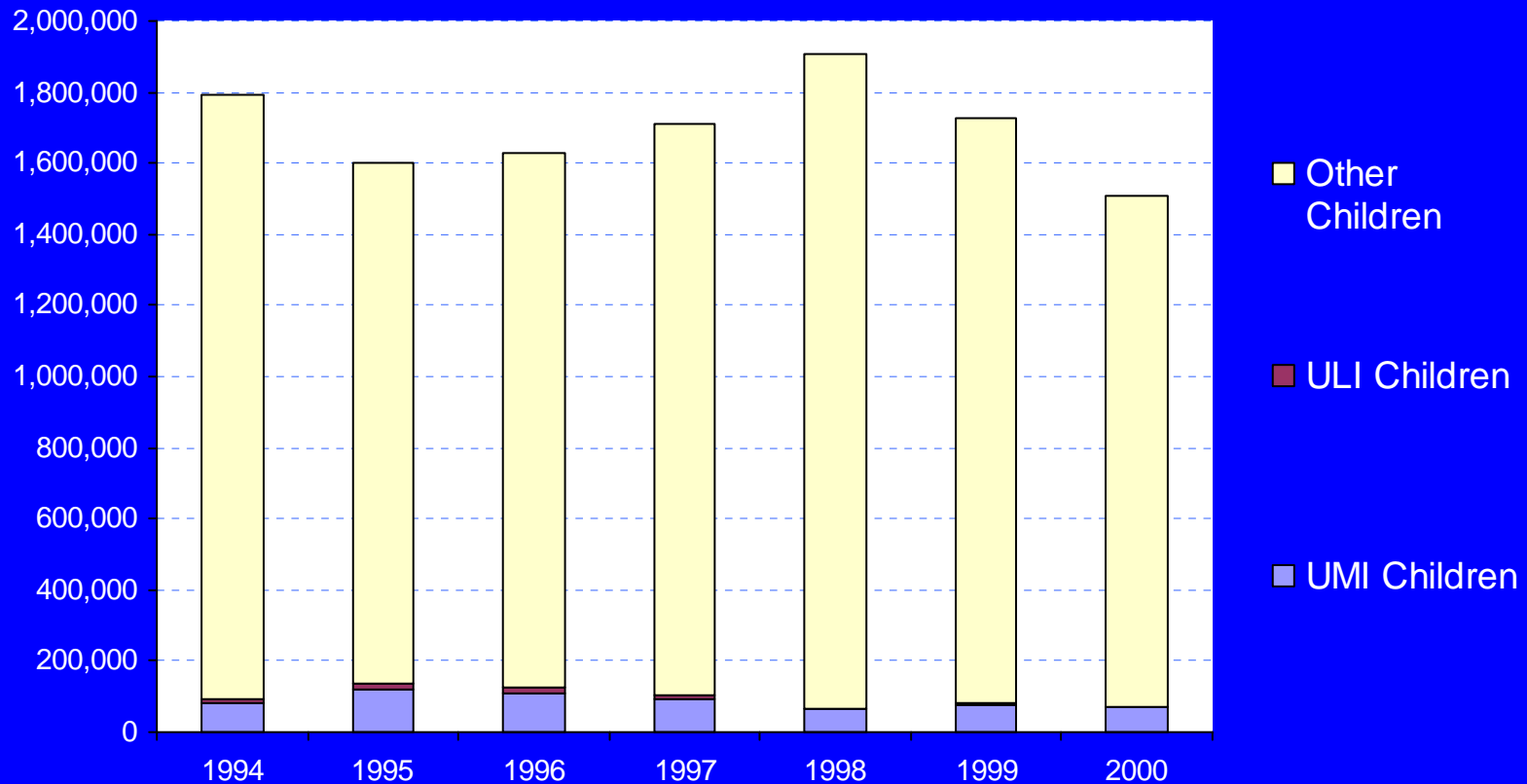


Source: Marcelli, E.A. 2001. "An Estimate of the Level and Determinants of Illicit Drug Use among Unauthorized Latino Immigrant Arrestees in California," *Journal of Drug Issues* 31(2): 487-516.

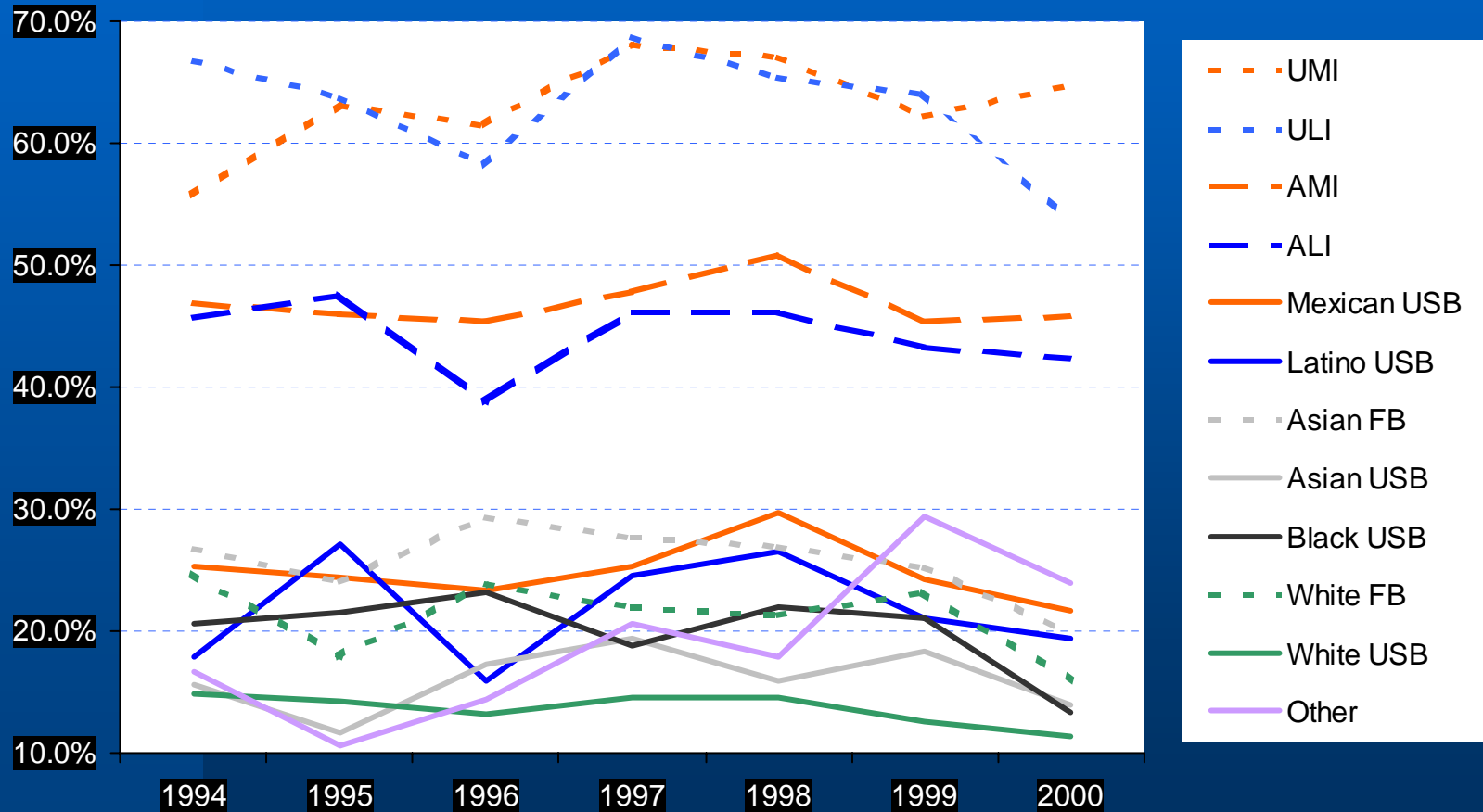
# Unauthorized Latinos Represent About Fifteen Percent of Non-Elderly Uninsured Adults in California, 1994-2000



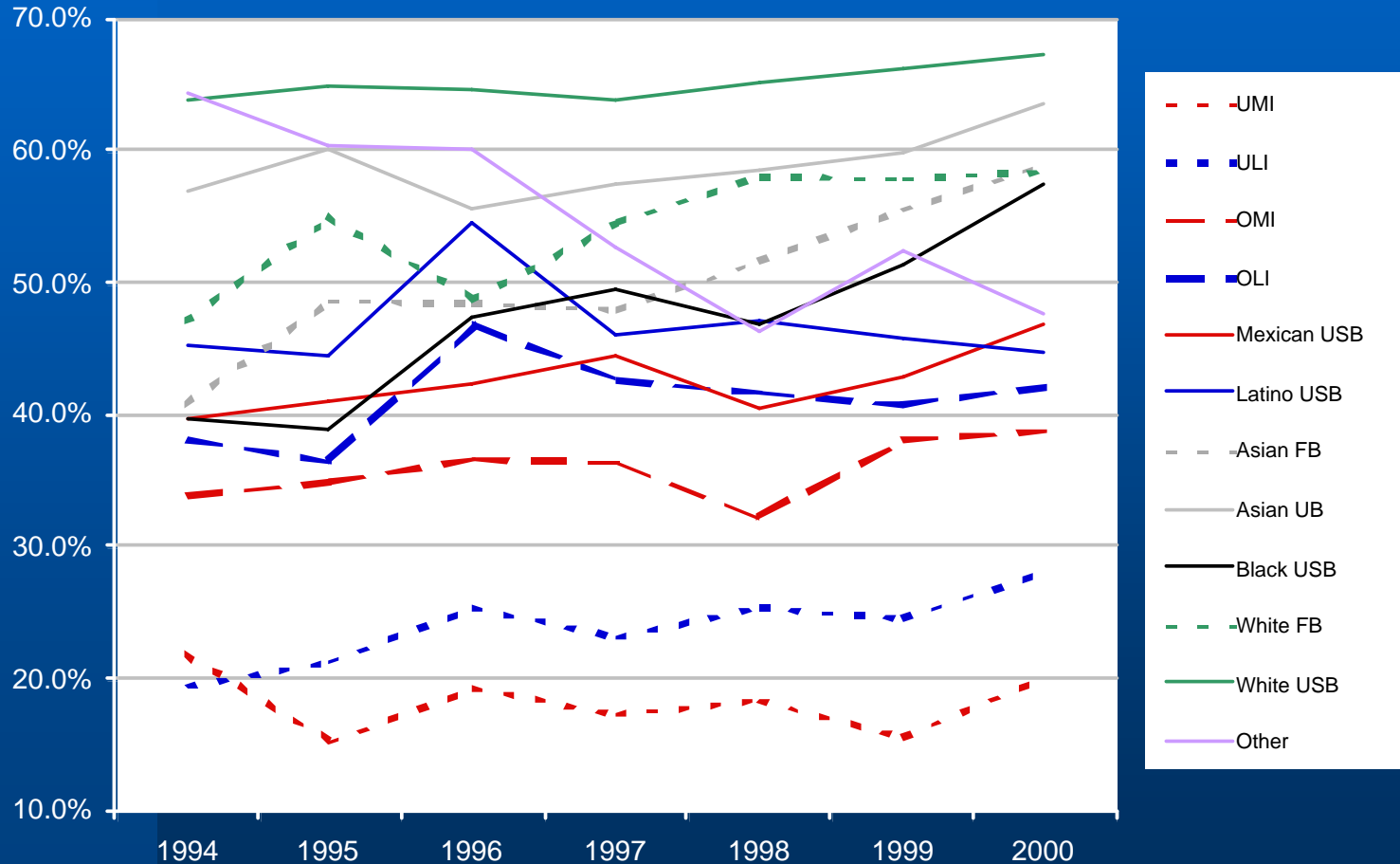
# Unauthorized Latinos Represent Less than Five Percent of Uninsured Children in California, 1994-2000



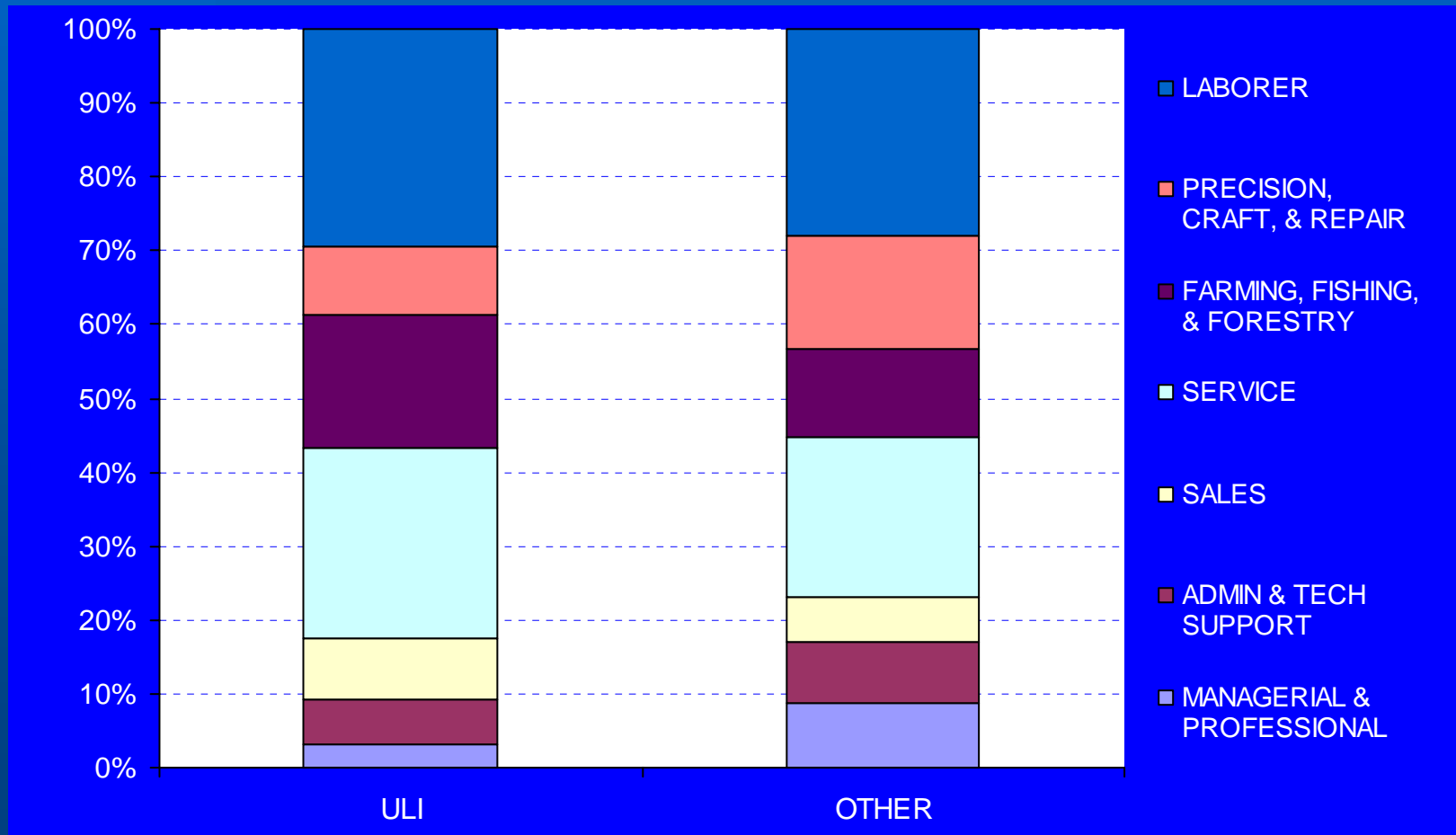
# Unauthorized Latinos Have Highest Uninsured Rates in California, 1994-2000



# Unauthorized Latinos Have Lowest Rates of Job-Based Health Insurance among all Ethno-Racial Groups in California, 1994-2000



# Unauthorized Latino Workers Aged 18-64 in California Concentrated in Jobs Less Likely to Offer Health Insurance, 1995-2001





# Unauthorized Latino Workers Aged 18-64 in California Have Lower Offer and Eligibility Rates but Higher Take-Up Rates, 1995-2001

|                 | ULI   | ALI   | USBLAT | OTHER | ALL   |
|-----------------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| <b>OFFERED</b>  |       |       |        |       |       |
| 1995-1997       | 45.6% | 56.7% | 77.1%  | 84.1% | 78.3% |
| 1999-2001       | 49.0% | 61.8% | 81.8%  | 85.9% | 80.4% |
|                 |       |       |        |       |       |
| <b>ELIGIBLE</b> |       |       |        |       |       |
| 1995-1997       | 67.6% | 75.2% | 69.0%  | 69.8% | 70.3% |
| 1999-2001       | 61.3% | 66.2% | 68.5%  | 66.6% | 66.6% |
|                 |       |       |        |       |       |
| <b>TAKE-UP</b>  |       |       |        |       |       |
| 1995-1997       | 87.1% | 79.4% | 73.8%  | 68.4% | 70.1% |
| 1999-2001       | 84.1% | 82.8% | 71.9%  | 70.6% | 72.1% |

# Unauthorized Latino Workers Aged 18-64 in California More Likely to be Working One Full Time Job But Not to Have Been Employed More than One Year

|                        | ULI   | ALI   | USBLAT | OTHER | ALL   |
|------------------------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| <b>FULL TIME</b>       |       |       |        |       |       |
| 1995-1997              | 87.0% | 89.6% | 86.5%  | 84.7% | 85.5% |
| 1999-2001              | 92.9% | 90.5% | 86.1%  | 85.7% | 86.7% |
|                        |       |       |        |       |       |
| <b>LOW TENURE</b>      |       |       |        |       |       |
| 1995-1997              | 18.2% | 14.6% | 18.2%  | 19.6% | 18.7% |
| 1999-2001              | 14.6% | 14.6% | 23.3%  | 21.9% | 20.6% |
|                        |       |       |        |       |       |
| <b>CONCURRENT JOBS</b> |       |       |        |       |       |
| 1995-1997              | 0.4%  | 2.9%  | 6.3%   | 6.8%  | 6.1%  |
| 1999-2001              | 2.1%  | 2.6%  | 4.0%   | 6.6%  | 5.7%  |

# Unauthorized Mexicans Less Likely than Other Residents to Have Used Public Assistance, Los Angeles County, 1995

- **Citizenship status, unit of analysis, and definition of welfare**
- **Using own citizenship status, measuring own welfare use, and analyzing as many welfare programs as possible, shows that unauthorized Mexicans are less likely to access public assistance programs, and when they do to receive smaller amounts of assistance**

Source: Marcelli, E.A. and D.M. Heer. 1998. "Unauthorized Mexican Immigration and Welfare: A Comparative Statistical Analysis," *Sociological Perspectives* 41(3): 279-302.

# Summary

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- **Unauthorized immigration still increasing**
- **Unauthorized Mexicans complement most U.S.-born workers and benefit the US economy fiscally**
- **Health and Health Insurance**

# Summary

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- **A new conceptual architecture**
- **Separate immigration and immigrant policies, and align them with North American trends in investment and trade**
- **Unauthorized immigration ≠ terrorism or illicit drug trafficking**

# Estimates of the Economic Behavior and Effects of Unauthorized Mexican Immigrants in the United States

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