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New Hudson Study: America's Patriotic Assimilation System is Broken

Quantitative analysis of Harris Interactive Survey reveals that the patriotic assimilation of immigrants to American identity is weak and ambivalent.

WASHINGTON — As Congress debates immigration reform legislation many argue that “our immigration system is broken and needs to be fixed.” In a [new quantitative analysis](#) of Harris Interactive survey data, Hudson Senior Fellow **John Fonte** and consultant **Althea Nagai** suggest that our patriotic assimilation system is also broken and needs to be fixed.

The authors have found that a large “patriotic gap” exists between native-born citizens and immigrant citizens on issues of patriotic attachment and civic knowledge. Despite what some may believe, native-born citizens have a much higher degree of patriotic attachment to the United States than naturalized citizens.

Below are some additional findings:

- By 21 percentage points (65% to 44%), native-born citizens are more likely than naturalized immigrants to view America as “better” than other countries as opposed, to “no better, no worse.”
- By about 30 points (85% to 54%), the native-born are more likely to consider themselves American citizens rather than “citizens of the world.”
- By 30 points (67% to 37%), the native-born are more likely to believe that the U.S. Constitution is a higher legal authority for Americans than international law.

- By roughly 31 points (81% to 50%), the native-born are more likely than immigrant citizens to believe that schools should focus on American citizenship rather than ethnic pride.
- By 23 percentage points (82% to 59%), the native-born are more likely to believe that it is very important for the future of the American political system that all citizens understand English.
- By roughly 15 points (77% to 62%), the native-born are more likely to believe that there is a unique American culture that defines what it means to be an American.
- By 15 points (82% to 67%), the native-born are more likely than immigrant citizens to support an emphasis in schools on learning about the nation's founding documents.

Click [here](#) to download the full report.

Hudson's John Fonte is available to comment on this new report. He can be contacted at johnf@hudson.org.

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