



Fact Sheet

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BUILDING AN AMERICANIZATION MOVEMENT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY: A REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES FROM THE TASK FORCE ON NEW AMERICANS

The report, “*Building an Americanization Movement for the Twenty-first Century: A Report to the President of the United States from the Task Force on New Americans*” is the result of more than two years of research by the *Task Force on New Americans* into immigrant integration efforts across all sectors of society in the United States. The report provides an overview of successful integration initiatives observed in many sectors and prescribes recommendations to launch a coordinated national campaign to promote the assimilation of immigrants into American civic culture.

In its findings, the *Task Force* reaffirms two fundamental notions about the nature and success of integration in the United States:

Diversity within Unity: Diversity makes America strong, but unity keeps America successful. In advocating patriotic assimilation, the Task Force refers to a unifying civic identity that respects diversity, including individual religious and cultural traditions, but does not use these elements to define the identity of the political community. American identity is political and is composed of three key elements: 1) embracing the principles of American democracy; 2) identifying with U.S. history; and 3) communicating in English.

Citizenship Is an Identity: Citizenship is an identity and not simply a benefit. Feeling and being perceived as part of the political community is an important indicator of a person’s integration into a society.

The *Task Force on New Americans* offers the following 10 recommendations, which stem from these foundational concepts about integration.

1. An Americanization Movement for the Twenty-first Century: The *Task Force* calls for a national effort involving federal, state, and local governments, community and faith-based organizations, public libraries, adult educators, business and the private sector, foundations and philanthropies, and civic organizations and service clubs to promote immigrant integration. Recognizing diversity within unity and that citizenship is an identity, the federal government should use its resources to coordinate and facilitate efforts among different societal sectors to create a welcoming literacy campaign, promote fundamental political principles and patriotism, and enhance the celebration of citizenship.

2. Viewing Integration as a Two-way Street: Immigrant integration builds community, but the community must also embrace American political principles in order to receive and successfully assimilate immigrants. This mutual understanding and appreciation opens communities to receiving immigrants and should be fostered with strengthened civics education.

3. Improved Legislation on Integration and Citizenship: Integrating immigrants is a community undertaking. As called for in the 2007 U.S. Senate compromise immigration reform bill, the *Task Force* supports the creation of State Integration Councils and other legislative measures to develop and coordinate integration initiatives in communities.

4. Federal Celebration of Citizenship: The *Task Force* calls for continuing and enhancing the celebration of citizenship and American civic identity through public awareness and by highlighting the contributions of immigrants.

5. Federal Leadership on Integration: A federal institutionalization of integration will lend credibility and support to efforts throughout all levels of government and in other sectors. The federal government should incorporate integration into existing programs serving immigrants and build on the initiatives of the *Task Force on New Americans*.

6. Enhanced E-learning Tools for Adults: The *Task Force* recognizes the continued demand for high-quality English language educational services for immigrant adults in the United States and recommends a particular focus on promoting e-learning and distance learning capabilities.

7. Encouraging the Private Sector to Promote Integration: The vast majority of immigrants contribute significantly to the American economy, and the businesses that hire them play a key role in fostering integration through the workplace by sponsoring language and civics program and promoting opportunities for immigrants to engage in their communities.

8. Mobilizing the Volunteer Community: Volunteering is a way to build social bridges and foster integration on a person-to-person level. Building on the work of the *New Americans Project*, the *Task Force* encourages citizens and immigrants alike to engage in community-based volunteer projects that both impart political principles and help immigrants learn English.

9. Increasing Integration Stakeholders: The previous Americanization movement engaged a wide variety of societal players. As assimilation again enters our public discourse, a broader cohort of stakeholders should be ready to fully engage in integration efforts. Foundations and philanthropies can play a powerful role by making policy research and funding for immigrant integration efforts a priority. Traditional civic organizations and service clubs should make immigrant integration part of their community-building efforts.

10. Broadened Analysis and Evaluation of Integration: The topic of immigration receives significant analysis and study. Fewer research institutions focus on the issue of political integration and civic attachment. Enhanced contributions in this area, such as indicators and attitudinal studies, would further the policy-making process with regard to assimilation both at the community and national level with a special focus on qualitative aspects of attachment and political identity.

For more information about the Task Force, visit <http://www.dhs.gov/ximgtn/committees/details.shtm>.