



BNA, Inc. Labor Relations Week  
August 5, 2010

24 LRW 1303  
Immigration

## Report Says New York City Immigrants Have Lower Jobless Rate Than U.S.-Born

ALBANY, N.Y.—The unemployment rate for immigrant workers in New York City is slightly lower than the rate for city residents born in the United States, according to a report from the Fiscal Policy Institute released Aug. 2.

The report, *New York City Immigrants in the Great Recession*, found that unemployment rates for immigrant workers in New York City increased to 8.8 percent in the first half of 2010 from 4 percent in the first half of 2008. By contrast, the unemployment rate for U.S.-born workers climbed to 10.9 percent from 5.3 percent during the same period, according to the report.

The overall unemployment rate for the city rose from 4.7 percent in the first half of 2008, which is just before the recession, to 9.9 percent this year.

“There are two main explanations for the lower unemployment rates,” David Dyssegaard Kallick, director of the Institute's Immigration Research Initiative, said in a statement. “First, immigration is generally sensitive to labor market demand—immigrants go where the jobs are, and when there aren't any jobs, immigration slows in response.

“And second,” he said, “there is less of a safety net for immigrants, so they are more likely to work at whatever jobs they can get, while U.S.-born workers may be able to wait to find jobs that better match their skill level.”

Immigrants constitute 37 percent of New York City's population and 48 percent of its workforce, according to the report.

The report found that New York City's “real” unemployment rate—the combination of the unemployed plus those who are no longer looking for work—is 16.5 percent overall, but 15.9 percent for immigrants and 17.1 percent for U.S.-born workers.

A copy of the report may be accessed at <http://op.bna.com/dlrcases.nsf/r?Open=kpin-87xryq>.