

RELATIVE GROWTH AND DISTRIBUTION OF FLORIDA'S EUROPEAN BORN

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Florida's fame as an immigrant state rests largely on the fact that in the past twenty-five years it has absorbed hundreds of thousands from the Caribbean, particularly Cuba. Few are aware that coincident with the Caribbean migration there was a quickening of the flow of the European born into the state. Whereas in 1950 there were only 75,123 residents of the state born in Europe, in 1980 their numbers had risen to 309,362. The European born constituted 3.1 percent of the state's population in 1980, which was larger than the percentage that European born constituted of the population of the United States as a whole, 2.3 percent.

Unlike the majority of immigrants who arrived from the Caribbean to live in Florida, most of the European born did not come directly to the state from their homelands. A large share spent their productive years in northern states, or Canada, but chose to retire to Florida. Since European immigration

Table 1

INDEX OF CONCENTRATION OF THE EUROPEAN BORN IN FLORIDA: 1850-1980

	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980
United Kingdom and Ireland														
United Kingdom	.47	.20	.15	.22	.44	.35	.38	.54	.57	.73	1.08	1.49	1.75	1.92
England	.28	.28	.14	.25	.49	.37	.43	.60	.73	.88	1.19	1.62	1.80	1.80
Scotland	.68	.41	.14	.21	.39	.24	.37	.47	.42	.54	.81	1.27	1.78	1.90
Wales	.09	.02	.01	.00	.16	.20	.14	.16	.41	.58	.75	1.32	1.81	1.61
N. Ireland											.32	.55	.89	1.10
Ireland ¹	.24	.11	.07	.07	.09	.07	.09	.13	.14	.21	.33	.46	.62	1.58
Western Europe														
Belgium	1.09	.10	.13	.16	.18	.09	.12	.22	.28	.38	.65	.99	1.18	1.63
France	.45	.29	.22	.38	.39	.36	.30	.52	.55	.78	1.05	1.31	1.46	1.64
Netherlands	.29	.06	.03	.06	.08	.07	.09	.30	.30	.43	.64	.96	1.03	1.23
Central Europe														
Austria	3.04	.10	.11	.22	.09	.05	.02	.10	.18	.26	.61	.93	1.44	1.85
Czechoslovakia ²			.02	.01	.01	.02	ND	.06	.11	.15	.35	.67	.89	1.37
Germany	.20	.08	.07	.09	.09	.10	.12	.23	.28	.40	.62	.91	1.26	1.46
Hungary			.11	.13	.07	.04	.02	.11	.20	.35	.71	1.09	1.40	1.78
Switzerland	1.78	.05	.04	.09	.20	.14	.14	.33	.37	.49	.66	.94	1.17	1.29
Eastern Europe														
Lithuania								.01	.07	.15	.33	.63	.96	1.49
Poland		.77	.28	.10	.03	.01	ND	.04	.06	.14	.33	.57	.90	1.41
Romania						1.10	.60	.50	.36	.49	.94	1.08	1.39	1.46
USSR	.50	.43	.31	.17	.11	.07	.04	.10	.14	.37	.76	.95	1.71	2.00
Yugoslavia ³							.06	.06	.06	.07	.16	.33	.40	.58
Scandinavia														
Denmark	3.11	.47	.28	.73	.12	.19	.19	.33	.42	.50	.78	1.18	1.41	1.48
Finland					.09	.08	.22	.17	.24	.61	1.45	1.98	2.72	
Norway	.36	.05	.02	.08	.16	.08	.09	.18	.18	.26	.38	.63	.99	1.12
Sweden	.35	.37	.06	.23	.09	.12	.13	.24	.29	.39	.58	1.06	1.55	1.82
Southern Europe														
Greece	.00	2.04	1.57	1.69	3.07	1.65	1.06	.87	.72	.69	.91	.94	.90	.85
Italy	3.93	1.59	.67	.32	.36	.51	.41	.32	.24	.22	.31	.47	.61	.82
Portugal	4.79	.71	.81	.94	.35	.14	.08	.36	.14	.10	.17	.28	.20	.19
Spain	8.08	4.12	3.05	3.31	10.11	21.42	23.19	9.07	5.84	4.73	3.70	2.80	4.94	4.22

1. Republic of Ireland from 1930. 2. Bohemia until 1920 3. Serbia until 1920. ND No Data

to the United States in the past twenty years has been greatly reduced from earlier years, populations from European countries who live in the United States have been aging rapidly. Although imprecise, and with several exceptions, in 1980 the degree to which European-born group's total United States population has chosen to reside in Florida can serve as an indication of how well the group has established itself economically within the nation. This study first seeks to examine the growth in the relative importance of Florida as the home of the European born, and second to establish where in 1980 within the state people from individual European nations have concentrated beyond what would be predicted from knowing the total population of the place.

The statistic used in this study to determine the level of concentration of individual European-born groups in Florida between 1850 and 1980 is the index of concentration, also known as the location quotient. The index of concentration here compares the state's or an individual city's share of the nation's population of an individual European group with the state's or individual city's share of the nation's total population. In 1980, for example, there were 51,073 people born in the United Kingdom living in Florida, or 8.266 percent of the group's United States population. In that year Florida's share of the nation's total population was 4.303 percent. By dividing Florida's share of the total United States population into Florida's share of the United States population of people born in the United Kingdom, the index of concentration is derived (1.92). Any index above 1.00 signifies that in that year a group was overrepresented in the state (or city). Below that figure the group was underrepresented. Indexes of concentration were calculated for twenty-six European countries for the years 1850 to 1980 (Table 1).

Florida's immigrant history between 1850 (the first census which enumerated the foreign born by state) and 1900 was typical of other southern states. People came in the belief that Florida was as much an economic frontier as the nation's west. The migrants were mainly from elsewhere in the nation, and not from Europe. Southern Europeans, notably the Greeks and the Spaniards, were the only European born who before 1900 normally attained indexes of concentration in Florida above 1.00. Even before the establishment of the Greek community in Tarpon Springs, people from that nation were settling in relatively large numbers along Florida's coasts, where they mainly fished. The Spaniards who arrived primarily came from Cuba, refugees from the long civil war that raged on that island throughout the last half of the nineteenth century. Most Spaniards concentrated in Tampa, and to a lesser degree in Key West, where many worked in the cigar industry. In the nineteenth century, the Portuguese and the Italians were better represented in the state than most other European-born groups, though neither group produced indexes as large as either the Greeks or Spaniards. Portuguese mainly lived in coastal towns and were engaged in fishing, while a disproportionately large number of Italians lived in the interior (Marion and Orange counties) and worked on railroad and drainage projects.

Florida's importance as a home for the European born did not really grow until after World War II, when the state's total population also began a rapid numerical increase. Although the census does not report the European born by age, strong circumstantial evidence supports the belief that many of those Florida residents who were born in Europe came to retire from productive lives in other parts of the nation. The 1980 census does indicate the year that the foreign born immigrated to the United States. In Florida in that year, 58 percent of all European-born residents had immigrated to the United States in 1950 or earlier, compared to 44 percent for the nation. Among the twenty-six individual European countries for which census data are available only the Spanish had a more youthful population living in Florida than did the entire nation. Spanish immigration to the United States in recent years has been among the largest in Europe, and many who have come have chosen to go directly to Florida.

Further support for the belief that a high proportion of Florida's European born are retirees is found in identifying where they live. Those counties with the highest percentage of people 65 years of age and older in

their white populations usually have percentages of European born in their white populations far above the national average. In the case of Broward (Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood), Palm Beach (Boca Raton-West Palm Beach) and Pinellas (St. Petersburg-Clearwater), over twice the national average. On the city level, there is a close association of the European born and retirement communities on Florida's Gold Coast.

If one accepts the circumstantial evidence that many of Florida's European born are retirees, changes in the index of concentration within Florida of most European-born groups provides a measure of the ability of their members to retire to Florida from elsewhere in the United States or Canada. In 1940 Spaniards were highly overrepresented in the state, greatly inflating the average index of concentration of the Southern European group of nations. Excluding the Southern European group, the United Kingdom group of countries in 1940 had the highest indexes of concentration, followed by those born in Western Europe and Scandinavia. After 1950 the flow to Florida of people born in Europe greatly increased. The fastest rate of growth of the indexes was among the Scandinavians, followed by the Eastern Europeans. Among the Scandinavians the Finns and Swedes experienced the most rapid increase in their indexes, while among the eastern Europeans the rise was general, except for the Yugoslavians. Jews have constituted the majority of those who have come to Florida from Eastern Europe, but Yugoslavia has never had a large Jewish population, and the index for Yugoslavia is among the smallest of all nations.

Since 1950 the European-born populations whose concentration indexes in Florida have grown the slowest have been the Irish, Greeks, Italians, Yugoslavians and Portuguese. This cannot be attributed to their early settlement in sections of the nation remote from Florida. Like most of the other European born, their original areas of settlement in the nation were heaviest in the northeastern states. In great measure, it is due to the sustained large immigration of most of these groups from their homelands, even during the 1970s. The majority of new immigrants who have arrived have gone to the northeastern states, diminishing the relative importance of Florida's populations of these groups.

The European born who have settled in Florida have been selective in their choice of where to live. Table 2 provides the level of concentration above 2.00 in 1980 for seventeen European-born populations living in the urbanized areas of the state's Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSAs) or urbanized areas outside of SMSAs with populations 50,000 or larger. No European-born group in 1980 had attained an index of concentration of 2.00 or larger in any SMSA in the state's interior nor in Jacksonville. Furthermore, few groups had attained such high indexes in cities on the state's North Coast.

The high indexes of concentration have largely been confined to East Coast and West Coast cities, many closely identified with retirees. Central and Eastern Europeans (principally Jews) have become highly overrepresented in cities on the East Coast, particularly Miami and Fort Lauderdale. People born in the United Kingdom, in 1980 were highly overrepresented more frequently within West Coast cities than those on the East Coast. St. Petersburg in particular had exceptionally high indexes of all four groups from the United Kingdom, and was the only city in Florida with an index of concentration of the Irish above 2.00. More East Coast cities had high indexes of the French than did West Coast cities, but the reverse was true of the Dutch.

Data for two European-born populations, the Finns and the Spaniards, were available only for Florida's largest SMSAs. Sufficient data are available, however, to ascertain where they were most overrepresented in 1980. In that year Florida had an 11.7 percent share of the nation's Finnish born, the majority living in West Palm Beach SMSA, principally in the Lake Worth-Lantana area. The Spanish in 1980 were enormously overrepresented in the Miami SMSA, where their concentration produced an index of concentration of 17.58. In that SMSA lived 69 percent of all of Florida's Spaniards.

Table 2

FLORIDA CITIES WITH HIGH CONCENTRATION INDEXES OF THE EUROPEAN BORN 1980

	East Coast				West Coast						North Coast				
	Miami	Fort Lauderdale	West Palm Beach	Fort Pierce	Melbourne	Daytona Beach	Naples	Fort Myers	Sarasota	Bradenton	St. Petersburg	Tampa	Panama City	Fort Walton B.	Pensacola
United Kingdom and Ireland															
United Kingdom															
England		2.54	2.58		2.12	2.35	2.02	2.21	2.08	2.52	2.40				2.57
Scotland		2.59	3.06		2.07	3.10	2.94	2.68	2.90	2.91	2.17		2.00		2.92
Wales						2.72		3.56	2.73	2.71	4.74	2.47			
Northern Ireland			2.31	3.23				4.03	2.99	2.39	3.99				3.25
Ireland											2.02				
Western Europe															
France	2.18	2.65	2.60		2.38										
Netherlands						2.00	2.01	2.16	2.19	3.34	4.81	2.05		3.13	
Central Europe															
Austria	3.81	3.70	3.53												
Czechoslovakia	2.86														2.39
Germany		2.10	2.00			2.09			2.08						2.79
Hungary	3.21	3.94	2.53			2.59			2.44						2.20
Switzerland			2.12			2.35									
Eastern Europe															
Poland	3.77	3.97	2.50												
USSR	5.64	5.23	3.41												
Scandinavia															
Sweden		2.41	3.00			2.62		2.34	2.73	2.65					
Southern Europe															
Greece															3.10
Italy															2.10

Urbanized areas of SMSAs

Data for a more reduced number of the European-born populations are available for towns with populations between 10,000 and 50,000, permitting an enlargement of the scale of the study. The Gold Coast (Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties) was chosen for detailed examination, since in 1980 the region contained 44 percent of the state's European-born (Table 3). The examination was limited to five groups, which together constituted a 66 percent share of the Gold Coast's European born; people in Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy, Poland and the USSR. The Poland and USSR born were combined since most were Jewish and were distributed in the same manner.

Communities with high indexes of concentration of people born in the United Kingdom are distributed quite evenly throughout the Gold Coast. Furthermore, there is little difference between communities in the degree of overrepresentation. Communities with high concentrations of those born in Germany are only slightly less evenly distributed than those where people from the United Kingdom are overrepresented. The combined Poland and USSR born, as well as those born in Italy, were overrepresented in much fewer communities

TABLE 3

COMMUNITIES 10,000 OR MORE ON THE FLORIDA GOLD COAST WHICH IN 1980 HAD AT LEAST ONE EUROPEAN BORN GROUP AMONG A SELECTED FOUR WITH AN INDEX OF CONCENTRATION OF 2.00 OR HIGHER

Communities Listed from South to North	Total Population	Percent 65 and Older	Index of Concentration				
			Total Eur Born	Germany	United Kingdom	Poland USSR	Italy
Dade County							
Cutler Ridge	20,886	8.5	1.26		2.40		
Cutler	15,593	4.2	1.32	2.26	2.04		
Lindgren Acres	11,986	2.2	1.11		2.79		
Kendall	73,754	6.6	1.39		2.34		
Coral Gables	43,241	16.8	1.92		2.61		
Miami	346,865	11.6	1.22			4.90	
Miami Beach	96,289	51.8	11.22	4.04	4.12	41.92	
North Miami	42,566	20.8	3.20	2.48	2.84	4.90	3.25
North Miami Beach	36,533	26.2	4.72		3.12	13.94	2.75
Sunny Isles	12,579	61.4	9.62	5.14	3.82	34.32	3.00
Scott Lake	14,154	3.4	.98		2.74	2.76	
Ojus	17,344	38.5	6.57			22.84	
Ives Estate	12,623	23.3	3.26		3.20	10.21	
Norland	19,471	9.9	1.70			3.72	
Broward County							
Miramar	32,813	11.4	1.74				3.74
Hallandale	36,511	49.8	6.25	3.49	4.76	18.26	3.74
Pembroke Pines	35,776	14.5	1.90	2.20		2.38	
Plantation	48,501	18.1	1.55			3.15	
Hollywood	121,323	25.1	3.46	2.67	2.57	6.05	4.14
Cooper City	10,140	9.1	2.13	2.24			4.00
Dania	11,811	20.3	2.63		3.36	3.38	2.61
Davie	20,877	7.1	1.24		2.61		
Fort Lauderdale	153,279	19.1	1.76		2.10		
Wilton Manor	12,741	19.8	1.82	2.23			2.48
Sunrise	39,681	25.9			2.32	10.81	2.90
Oakland Park	23,035	32.9	1.81		3.86		
Lauderhill	37,271	21.0	2.65		2.43	7.99	
Lauderdale Lakes	25,426	37.6	4.98	2.94	3.76	14.89	2.81
Tamarac	29,379	44.7	4.93	5.33	3.92	12.03	3.11
North Lauderdale	18,474	7.4	1.59	2.53		2.34	
Pompano Beach	52,618	29.8	1.86	2.60	2.83	2.34	
Margate	36,044	28.4	3.26	2.37	2.12	7.81	
Lighthouse Point	11,488	31.1	2.49	3.17	3.20		
Pompano Beach Highlands	16,154	16.8	2.22		4.06		
Deerfield Beach	39,193	41.3	4.43	2.68	3.04	14.15	
Palm Beach County							
Boca Raton	49,505	23.7	2.02	2.15	3.68		2.37
Delray Beach	34,324	29.9	1.59		3.33		
Boynton Beach	35,624	36.1	2.80	4.19	4.20		2.40
Lake Worth	27,048	32.6	4.23	2.40	2.72		
West Palm Beach	63,305	20.3	1.60		2.86		
Palm Beach Gardens	14,407	10.9	1.06		2.65		
Century Village	10,619	87.7	12.29	3.42	7.53	49.86	
Riviera Beach	26,473	15.4	1.06		2.02		
North Palm Beach	11,344	21.6	1.66	2.20	3.02		

than either the Germany or United Kingdom born. The Jewish retirement communities of the Gold Coast, identified on Table 3 by communities with large percentages of people 65 years of age and older where people born in Poland or the USSR are heavily overrepresented, are mainly found in northern Dade County, Broward County, and one outlier in northern Palm Beach County (Century Village). It might be added that other communities where the European-born were highly overrepresented existed on the Gold Coast in 1980 but were not recognized in the census and their inhabitants were identified only in the county data.

The European-born population of Florida has grown rapidly since 1950. Whereas in 1950 the state, like most in the South, had few European-born groups that were overrepresented, by 1980 most were. Although the evidence is circumstantial, the growth in relative importance of so many European-born groups within the state is principally the result of the retirees from elsewhere in the nation or Canada. Some European-born groups have been more successful than others in establishing themselves in the state, but few groups today are underrepresented. Since the age distribution of the foreign born is not known, we can only surmise why there is such variation. It appears due to the degree of aging among the various European-born groups. Those which are aging, due largely to a lack of young replacements from the homeland, now frequently have disproportionately large numbers who have retired to Florida.

Most communities in which the European born have become overrepresented are situated along the east and west coasts of the southern half of the peninsula. Clearly Florida has not been a "melting pot" for the European born. Groups have tended to concentrate in certain communities. In most cases, however, their actual numbers have been insufficient for them to have an impact upon the landscape. Communities such as Masaryktown, a settlement in Hernando County with visible Czech elements (Stowers and Schaleman, 1982), are exceptional, and generally it would be impossible from the visual evidence to identify where European-born groups are situated. The European born who come to Florida generally have long been assimilated into the nation's culture. Although members of these groups tend to concentrate in certain cities, and in some cases even within certain sections of cities, except for their clubs and some ethnic commercial establishments, there is little evidence of their presence.

Since for years most European groups within the United States have not been able to replace their numbers, reduced by death through immigration from their homelands, their populations have steadily aged. As a European-born group ages many among the population select Florida as a retirement home. It is likely that by the 1990 census the state will be the home of a larger share of the members of most groups than in 1980. Nevertheless, because of the many European groups, although Florida's share of many will rise, the absolute numbers of those living within the state will decline, as will their role in shaping the state's cultural environment.

References

- Stowers, Dewey M., Jr., and Schaleman, Harry J., Jr. 1982. Masaryktown: a successful ethnic experiment. *The Florida Geographer*: 13-16.