

2016

2016 FIU Cuba Poll: How Cuban Americans in Miami View U.S. Policies Toward Cuba

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2016 FIU Cuba Poll

How Cuban Americans in Miami View U.S. Policies Toward Cuba

FIU

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Steven J. Green
School of International
& Public Affairs

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FOREWORD

On December 17, 2014—a date now remembered as D17—President Barack Obama shocked the world when he announced the reestablishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba and the beginning of a series of policy shifts to expand U.S. political, social, economic and cultural engagement with Cuba. Since then, U.S. policies toward Cuba have changed substantially, from diplomatic and economic isolation to greater contact and support for increased trade, travel, communication and remittances between the two countries. On May 20, 2015, President Obama removed Cuba from the U.S. Department of State’s list of state sponsors of terrorism. The United States and Cuba restored diplomatic ties and reopened embassies in their respective capitals on July 20, 2015. On March 20, 2016, Obama became the first sitting U.S. president to visit Havana since 1928. Reporters, pundits and scholars rushed to analyze these extraordinary diplomatic events, anticipating a new era in U.S.-Cuba relations.

The 2016 FIU Cuba Poll is the first one conducted following these historic events. The events following the D17 announcements have had a great impact on the way Cuban Americans view relations between the United States and Cuba. This year’s poll reveals a major shift towards a more pro-engagement attitude among Cuban-American residents of Miami-Dade County, Florida. That shift in public opinion is driven primarily by demographic changes within the community, particularly based on year of arrival to the United States, as well as age and place of birth. More recent arrivals and second-generation Cuban Americans are more likely than earlier and older exiles to oppose the continuation of the embargo and support unrestricted travel to Cuba.

This latter group, the “historic” exiles, is losing ground as the later immigrant waves, along with U.S.-born Cuban Americans, increase their weight in the population. Such demographic and ideological transformations are reshaping Cuban-American attitudes regarding U.S. policy toward Cuba.

Various departments and centers within Florida International University contributed to funding the 2016 FIU Cuba poll. Led by the Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs, these units include the Office of the President, the Cuban Research Institute, the Kimberly Green Latin American and Caribbean Center, the Division of External Relations and the College of Communication, Architecture and the Arts. We appreciate their generous support of the poll.

Finally, we would like to recognize the co-principal investigators, Drs. Guillermo J. Grenier and Hugh Gladwin, for two decades of research and analysis on the public opinions of the Cuban-American community in South Florida. We would also like to acknowledge the collaboration of the staff of the Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs, especially Pedro Botta, Amy Ellis, and John Lee as well as Aymee Correa and Paola Salavarría of the Cuban Research Institute.

John F. Stack, Jr., Ph.D.

Founding Dean, Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs

Jorge Duany, Ph.D.

Director, Cuban Research Institute

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- A majority of Cuban-American residents of Miami-Dade County oppose continuing the U.S. embargo of Cuba. Sixty-three percent of the respondents who express an opinion oppose continuing the embargo. This position remains the majority opinion even when nonresponses are included in the calculations (54%). Opposition to the embargo rises to 72% among Cuban Americans ages 18 to 59. Similarly, 79% of those arriving since 1995 oppose continuing the embargo. Among registered voters, 58% oppose the continuation of the embargo (**Figure 3 Cluster**).

- A majority of the respondents favor increasing economic relations with the island. The expansion of business ties receives support from 57% of the sample and 90% of new arrivals support the expansion or maintenance at current levels of economic activity between the two countries (**Figure 4 Cluster**).

- A large majority (69%) supported the decision to open diplomatic relations with Cuba, with younger respondents strongly backing the policy shift (87%). Support for the reestablishment of diplomatic ties maintains a solid majority among all age groups up to age 76 and above, after which it drops to 43% of the population supporting the policy. Those arriving since 1995 favor the policy shift by 91%. A majority of registered voters express support—61%. This figure balloons to 87% among nonregistered voters (**Figure 6 Cluster**).

- A large majority of respondents (74%) favor the lifting of travel restrictions impeding all Americans from traveling to Cuba. A majority of respondents in all age cohorts support opening up travel except for the 76 and above group (49%), as do the most recent arrivals (93%). Approximately 69% of registered voters also favor unrestricted travel by all Americans (**Figure 10 Cluster**).

Support for the reestablishment of diplomatic ties maintains a solid majority among all age groups up to age 76 and above.

- Similarly, 75% of respondents support the continuation of “people-to-people” travel opportunities currently endorsed by U.S. policy, with all age cohorts expressing majority support. Sixty percent of registered voters favor the policy as well (**Figure 11 Cluster**).

- The Cuban Adjustment Act receives strong backing from respondents. Sixty-one percent strongly or mostly support the policy that has been applied to Cuban arrivals on U.S. soil since 1966. Eighty-four percent of post-1995 arrivals favor the policy while 40% of the pre-1980 arrivals support the policy. Fifty-three percent of registered voters support the policy (**Figure 7 Cluster**). Support for the policy has declined rapidly in recent years. The 2014 poll measured an 80% support for the Cuban Adjustment Act among Cuban Americans in Miami-Dade County.

- Sixty-five percent of respondents support changes in the Cuban Adjustment Act, requiring entrants to provide proof of political repression before becoming eligible for government assistance. The post-1995 arrivals express the most support for this change in the existing law (71%) as do 61% of registered voters (**Figure 9 Cluster**).

- A large majority of respondents favor the “wet foot/dry foot” immigration policy although those coming after 1980 and younger respondents support it considerably more than those coming before 1980 (**Figure 8 Cluster**). Sixty-one percent of registered voters favor the policy.

INTRODUCTION

In the two and a half years since President Barack Obama made his historic pronouncement on December 17, 2014, much has changed and much has stayed the same in the ongoing drama between the United States and Cuba. It is now easier for Americans to travel to Cuba than any time since hostilities began between the two countries after the 1959 Revolution. Selected industries have an easier time engaging the Cuban bureaucracy in the hopes of beginning fruitful business relations, while a coterie of state and municipal business leaders from all over the United States have traveled to Cuba to gauge the depth of the commitment of Cuban authorities to engage in economic as well as political relations with the United States.

All of these changes, President Obama affirmed, would ultimately benefit the Cuban people. And many Cubans on the island believe that as well. Their welcome of Obama during his March 20–22, 2016 visit was spontaneous and warm. Most Cubans considered his speech on March 21, broadcast throughout the island, to have been outstanding and promising.

How much the daily life of Cubans on the island has changed since then is a matter of debate. What we do know is that thousands of Cubans keep coming to the United States and continue to transform the social, political, economic and cultural landscape of South Florida.

When we initiated the FIU Cuba Poll in 1991, our intention was to take a snapshot of the Cuban-American community in Miami-Dade County (Dade County back then) at a time of significant geopolitical changes in the world. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the transitions occurring in Eastern Europe had a direct impact on the Cuban state. We were curious to see what impact these global changes would have on the Cuban diaspora's view of the future of U.S.-Cuba relations. We are facing a similar period of change and expectation at present. This FIU Cuba Poll is the first measure of the attitudes of Cuban Americans in Miami-Dade County after D17.

Two decades of polling have taught us a great deal. The Cuban-American population is far from homogenous and its heterogeneity spans social, cultural, economic and political dimensions. There are Cubans and there are Cubans. The more recent arrivals are poorer, more racially diverse, and, like the second and third generations, more inclined to support policies of engagement with the island. The more conciliatory voices are expressing their desire to promote change just as much as those advocating isolationist policies.

Many of the findings from the first polls over 20 years ago have remained significant in the form of trends. Those exiles who experienced the seismic changes brought about by the 1959 Revolution are more likely to express support for the isolationist policies codified in U.S. policy toward Cuba. This wave of exiles is diminishing in number and influence. Most members of this cohort left Cuba at a young age and have lived most of their lives outside of the island. Their opinions are a product of the hopes they have for Cuba in the context of the longstanding policies governing the relationship between the United States and Cuba. Subsequent waves of immigrants have increased their demographic significance within the community and their members express more of a willingness to increase contact between Cubans here and there.

Time has also seen a slow weakening of the Republican Party's hold on registered Cuban-American voters. From a dominance of 70% in the early 1990s, registered Republicans have declined to approximately 53% of the population in the current poll.

To clarify the trends and changes in the Cuban-American population of South Florida, in this poll we divide the respondents into three main immigrant waves: before 1980, from 1980 to 1994, and from 1995 to the present. We also report the results by place of birth (Cuba/U.S.-born), age and voter registration status. In some questions, we include the category of "Don't Know" to ensure that we do not undervalue ambivalence or indecision among respondents. Our purpose is to understand, not obscure, the opinions of the surveyed population.

This poll continues a tradition started 25 years ago. We remain curious about how the Cuban-American community views U.S.-Cuba relations. We are aware of the heterogeneity of the community and are becoming more accustomed to hearing its many voices. This survey shows that members of the Cuban diaspora in Miami-Dade County have diverse views about how they would like the U.S. government to deal with the Cuban state. Some remain convinced that the changes they desire will come to Cuba only by isolating it from its diaspora and the U.S. government. But a growing majority support at least some elements of the new course charted since D17.

What remains clear is that Cuba inspires debate and passions in all Cubans. Those who came to the United States immediately after the Revolution comprise an increasingly smaller percentage of the population, but their influence remains strong even as their ideas are transformed and reinterpreted by newer migrants from the island. Our poll preserves a record of the continuity and change occurring in the Cuban-American community in South Florida. It is a record of a transition as dramatic and far-reaching as the transitions occurring on the island. This is our South Florida transition and it is happening daily, whether a poll is taken to witness its dynamics or not. Whatever is to come, the bell signaling the beginning of the future of U.S.-Cuba relations has rung. It is likely that it cannot be unring—at least, if the growing Cuban diaspora has anything to say about it.

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Professor

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ABOUT THE POLLSTERS



Dr. Guillermo J. Grenier is Professor of Sociology and former Graduate Program Director in the Department of Global and Sociocultural Studies at Florida International University. Born in Havana, Cuba, Dr. Grenier is one of the founders of the Miami school of social analysis, and has authored or coauthored seven books and dozens of articles on labor, migration, immigrant incorporation, and Cuban-American ideological profiles, particularly in the Greater Miami area. His books include *A History of Little Havana*, with Corinna J. Moebius (2015); *This Land Is Our Land: Newcomers and Established Residents in Miami*, with Alex Stepick, Max Castro, and Marvin Dunn (2003); *The Legacy of Exile: Cubans in the United States*, with Lisandro Pérez (2002); *Newcomers in the Workplace: Immigrants and the Restructuring of the U.S. Economy*, with Louise Lamphere and Alex Stepick (1994); and *Miami Now! Immigration, Ethnicity, and Social Change*, edited with Alex Stepick (1992). Dr. Grenier has been a Fulbright Fellow and a Faculty Fellow of the University of Notre Dame's Institute of Latino Studies, as well as Director of the Florida Center for Labor Research and Studies. He lectures nationally and internationally on his research. He received his Ph.D. in Sociology and his M.A. in Latin American Studies from the University of New Mexico at Albuquerque.



Dr. Hugh Gladwin is the past director of the Institute for Public Opinion Research and Associate Professor in the Department of Global and Sociocultural Studies at Florida International University. His major area of research is the application of survey research and GIS tools to understand large urban settings of high cultural and demographic diversity. Within that framework, a particular interest is to better model the interactions between the human population and natural systems such as the South Florida ecosystem and natural events like hurricanes and climate change. He is a coeditor (with Walter Gillis Peacock and Betty Hearn Morrow) and contributor to the book *Hurricane Andrew: Ethnicity, Gender, and the Sociology of Disaster* (1997) and author of numerous publications and presentations on disaster mitigation, public health, and public opinion, especially among Cuban Americans. Along with Arthur Heise, he directed the FIU/Florida Poll, which tracked public opinion statewide from 1988 to 2006. He is a research scientist in the Florida Coastal Everglades Long-Term Ecological Research project (FCE-LTER). In Miami-Dade County, Dr. Gladwin serves as a member of the Steering Committee of the Local Mitigation Strategy and was appointed by the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners to be on the county's Climate Change Advisory Task Force. He is also a member of the Socioeconomic Working Group of the NOAA Hurricane Forecast Improvement Project. He holds a Ph.D. in anthropology from Stanford University.

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

This survey examines how Cuban-American residents of Miami-Dade County, Florida, view current U.S.-Cuba policy. To appraise trends in the community we ask many of the same questions we have asked for 25 years. We measure support for the embargo as well as changing individual interests associated with U.S.-Cuba policy, such as travel restrictions, trade and investment opportunities, diplomatic engagement, and U.S. immigration policy. We also measure support for political candidates who might be willing to propose changes in the embargo in exchange for policies that favor the strengthening of small businesses and human rights on the island. The poll carefully documents the respondents' demographic characteristics and how they relate to their attitudes toward U.S.-Cuba relations.

The 2016 FIU Cuba Poll was conducted between July 11 and August 12, 2016. It was administered to a random sample of 1,000 Cuban-American residents of Miami-Dade County, age 18 and over. The sample was generated from telephone exchanges using standard random-digit-dialing procedures to ensure that each phone number has an equal chance of being chosen for the sample. Interviews were conducted with respondents either by landline or cell phones (329 by landline, 671 by cell phone). Bilingual interviewers conducted the survey in Spanish and English, depending on the respondents' preference (81% of the interviews were done in Spanish). The countywide margin of error is plus or minus 3.1% at the 95% confidence level. For more methodological details, see Appendix 1.

MAIN FINDINGS

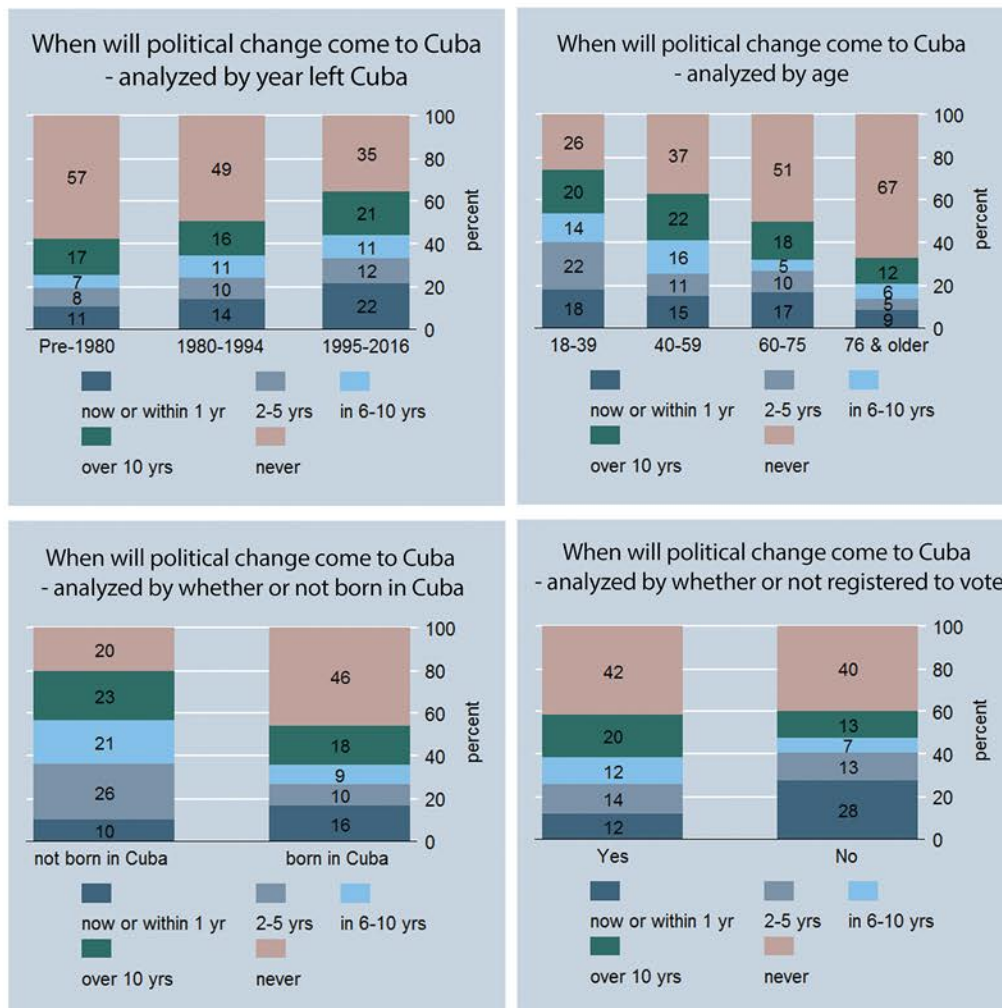
This section presents the responses to key questions of the poll. The exact wording for selected questions, along with the Spanish version, is included in Appendix 2.

When asked when major political changes were likely to occur in Cuba, 41% of respondents said that changes would never occur in Cuba, while 15% believe that changes are occurring now or will within one year.

Approximately 57% of pre-1980 arrivals said that changes would never occur, as did 49% of the 1980–94 cohort and 35% of the post-1995 cohorts. The most optimistic respondents were the new arrivals. About 22% of the latter believe that changes are occurring now or will within one year.

Now or Within 1 Year	15.4%
2–5 Years	13%
6–10 Years	11.5%
Over 10 Years	19.1%
Never	41%

FIGURE 1 CLUSTER



The Embargo and Economic Relations

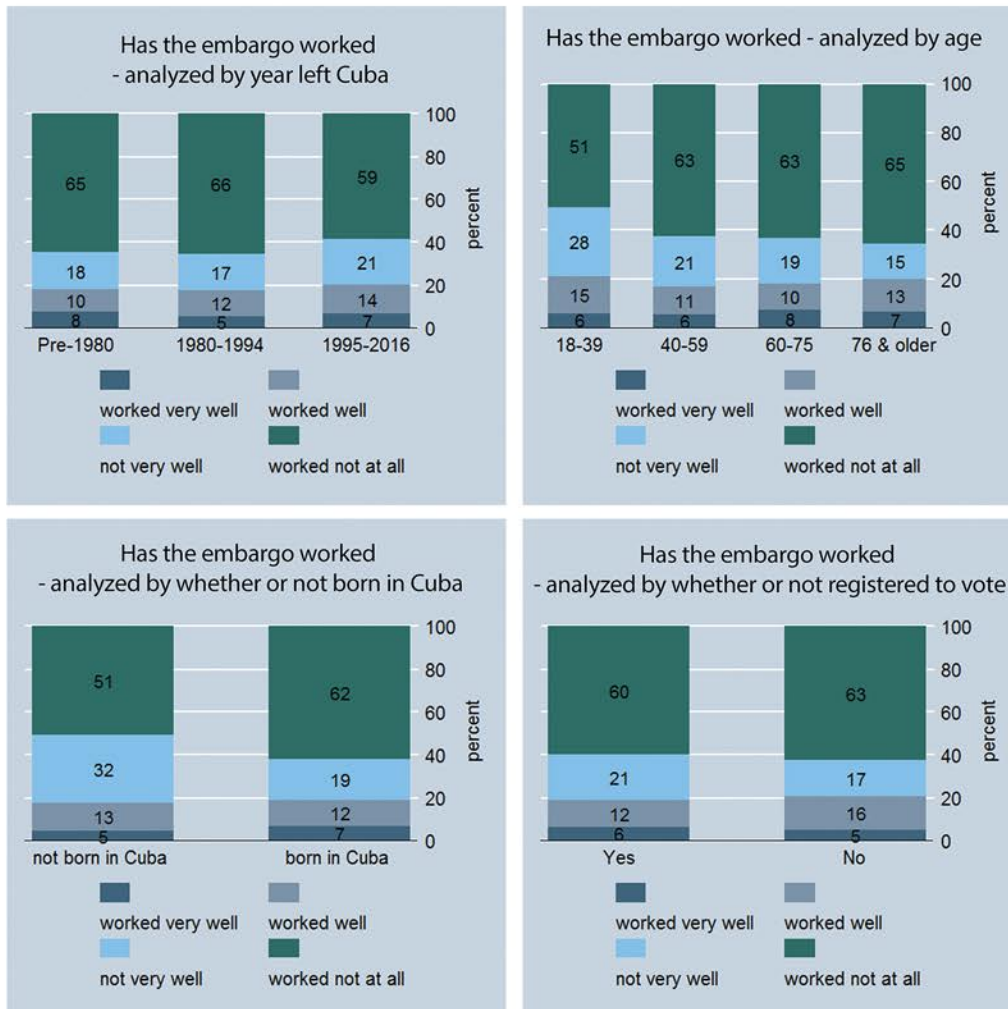
Almost three-quarters of Cubans living in Miami-Dade County believe the embargo has not worked.

Respondents were asked how well they thought the U.S. embargo of Cuba was working. An overwhelming majority, 81%, expressed the view that the embargo was “not working at all” or “not very well.”

The disenchantment with the embargo is reflected across all age categories. Approximately 63% of respondents aged 60–75 and 65% of those over 75 feel that the embargo has not worked at all, while 51% of younger respondents (18–39) and 63% of 40–59 year-olds express the same opinion. Similarly, 60% of registered voters feel that the embargo has not worked at all and 62% of those born in Cuba express that opinion as well.

Worked Very Well	6.3%*	5.8%**	* expressed opinion ** includes nonresponses
Worked Well	12.3%	11.4%	
Not Very Well	21.3%	19.4%	
Worked Not At All	60.2%	55%	
Don't Know		7.4%	
NR		1.2%	

FIGURE 2 CLUSTER



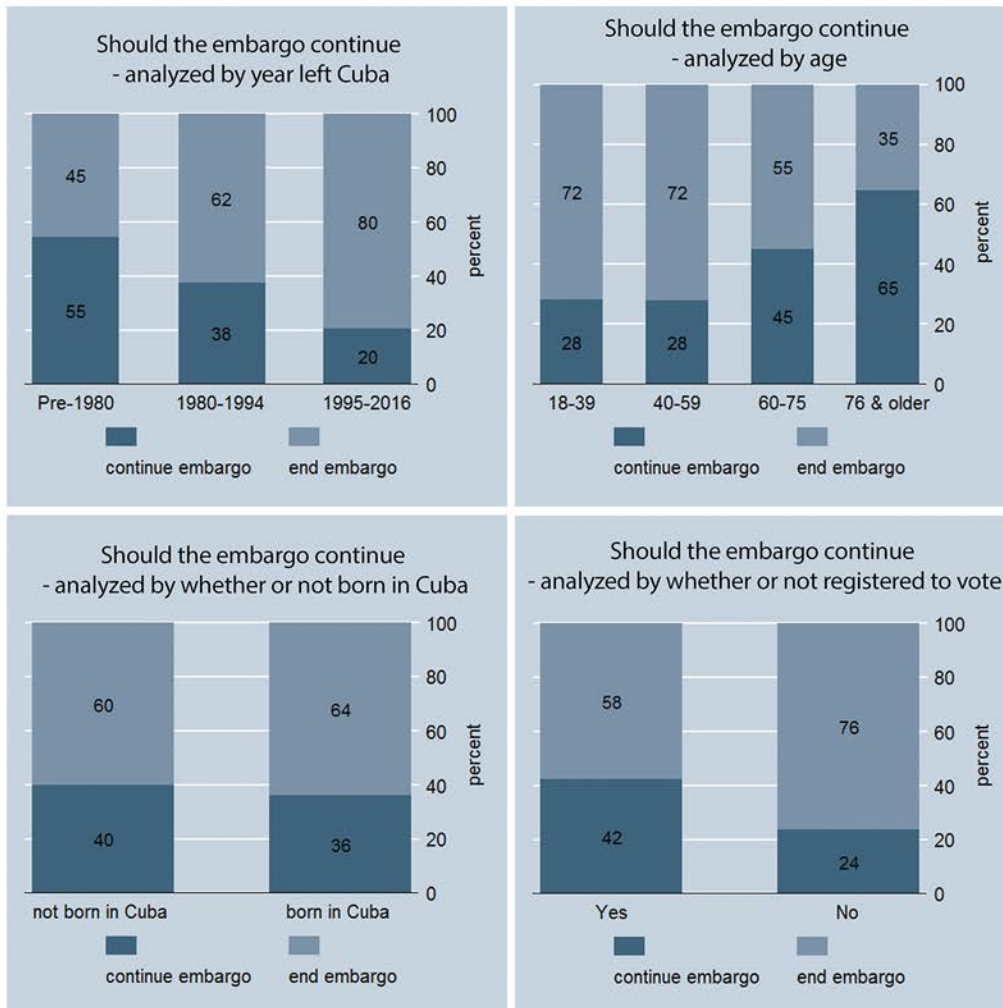
Sixty-three percent of respondents oppose the continuation of the embargo.

A large majority of Cuban-American residents of Miami-Dade County oppose continuing the U.S. embargo of Cuba. Countywide, 63% of the respondents who expressed an opinion oppose continuing the embargo. This is the largest measure of opposition to the embargo in our 25 years of asking this question. The percentage of respondents opposing a continuation of the embargo remains above 50% if nonresponses are included in the calculations (54%).

The number of respondents opposing the embargo rises among younger Cuban Americans ages 18 to 59, 72% of whom oppose continuing the embargo. Similarly, 80% of those arriving since 1995 oppose continuing the embargo, while less than half of those arriving before 1980 do (45%). Respondents born in Cuba and those born outside of Cuba are similarly inclined to oppose the embargo (64% and 60% respectively). Among registered voters, ending the embargo is supported by 58% of those expressing an opinion.

Continue Embargo	36.8%*	31.6%**	* expressed opinion ** includes nonresponses
End Embargo	63.2%	54.3%	
Don't Know		9.4%	
No Response		4.7%	

FIGURE 3 CLUSTER



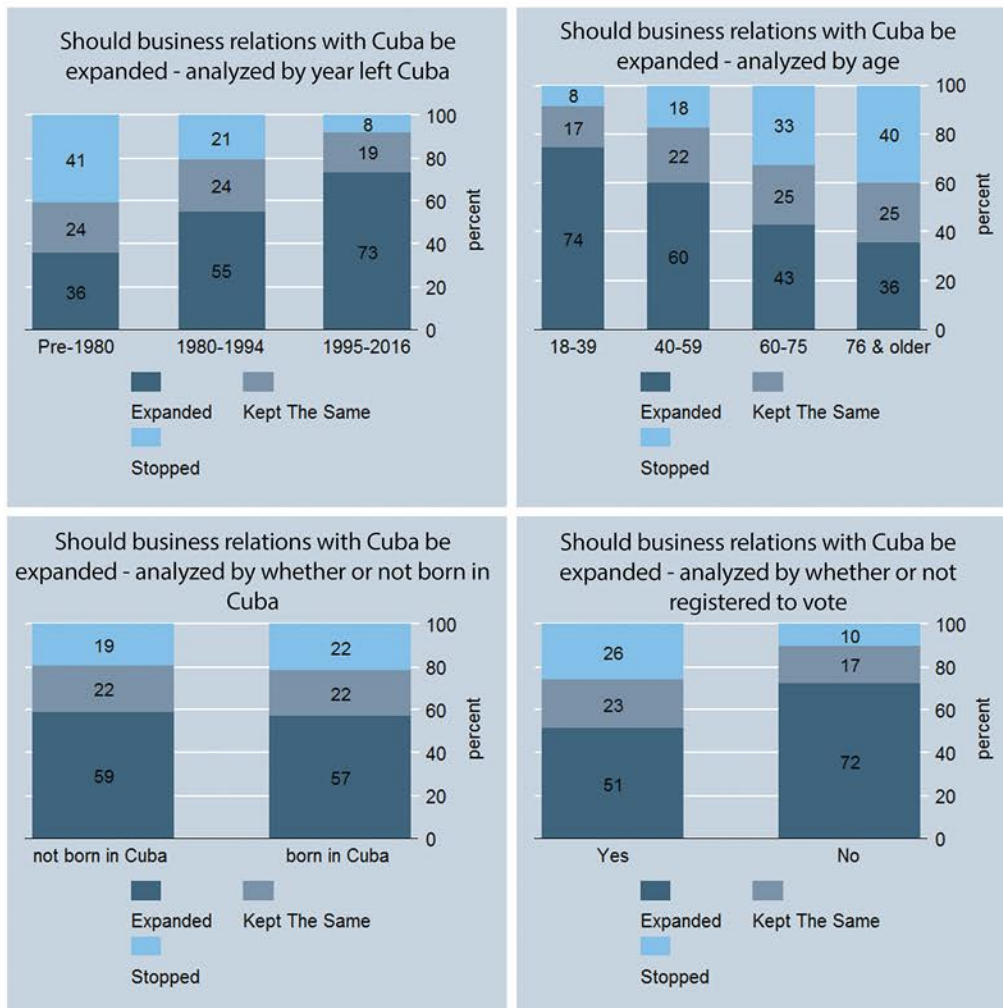
Most respondents favor expanding economic relations between companies in the United States and the island.

A majority of Cuban Americans in Miami-Dade County (57%) support the expansion of business relations with Cuba by U.S. companies. Newer arrivals do so in greater numbers than pre-1980 arrivals and younger respondents are more supportive than older respondents. Although a slight majority of registered voters support an increase in economic relations, those who have not registered to vote are overwhelmingly in favor (51% to 72%). As has been the case for many years, an overwhelming majority of respondents endorse the selling of medicine (85%) and food (81%).

Expanded	57.0*	54.0**
Kept the Same	21.7	20.6
Stopped	21.3	20.1
Don't Know		5.3

* expressed opinion
 ** includes nonresponses

FIGURE 4 CLUSTER



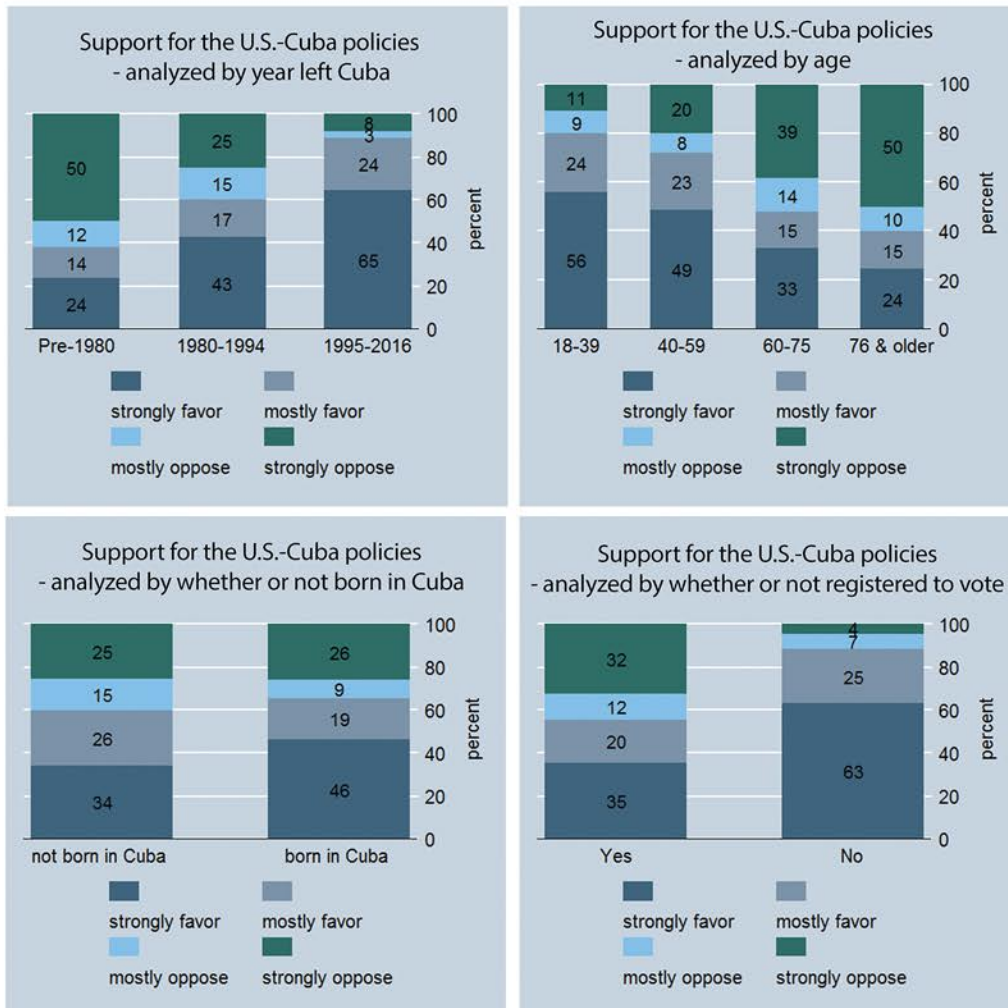
Policy Changes and Continuity

Sixty-four percent of Cuban Americans in Miami-Dade County support the new policies initiated by the U.S. government toward Cuba.

While not all Cubans are in favor of all the policy initiatives toward Cuba, a majority are generally in favor of the new U.S. orientation towards the island nation. Younger Cuban Americans are more supportive than older Cuban Americans, and the newest arrivals are more in favor than the pre-1980 cohort (38% to 89% respectively). Respondents born in Cuba (65%) are more likely to support the new policies than those born outside of the island (60%). Approximately 55% of registered voters are in favor of the new policies while 89% of those not registered to vote are in support.

Strongly Favor	44.0%*	38.2%**	
Mostly Favor	20.3%	17.6%	* expressed opinion
Mostly Oppose	9.8%	8.6%	** includes nonresponses
Strongly Oppose	25.9%	22.5%	
Don't Know		6.5%	
No Response		5.2%	

FIGURE 5 CLUSTER

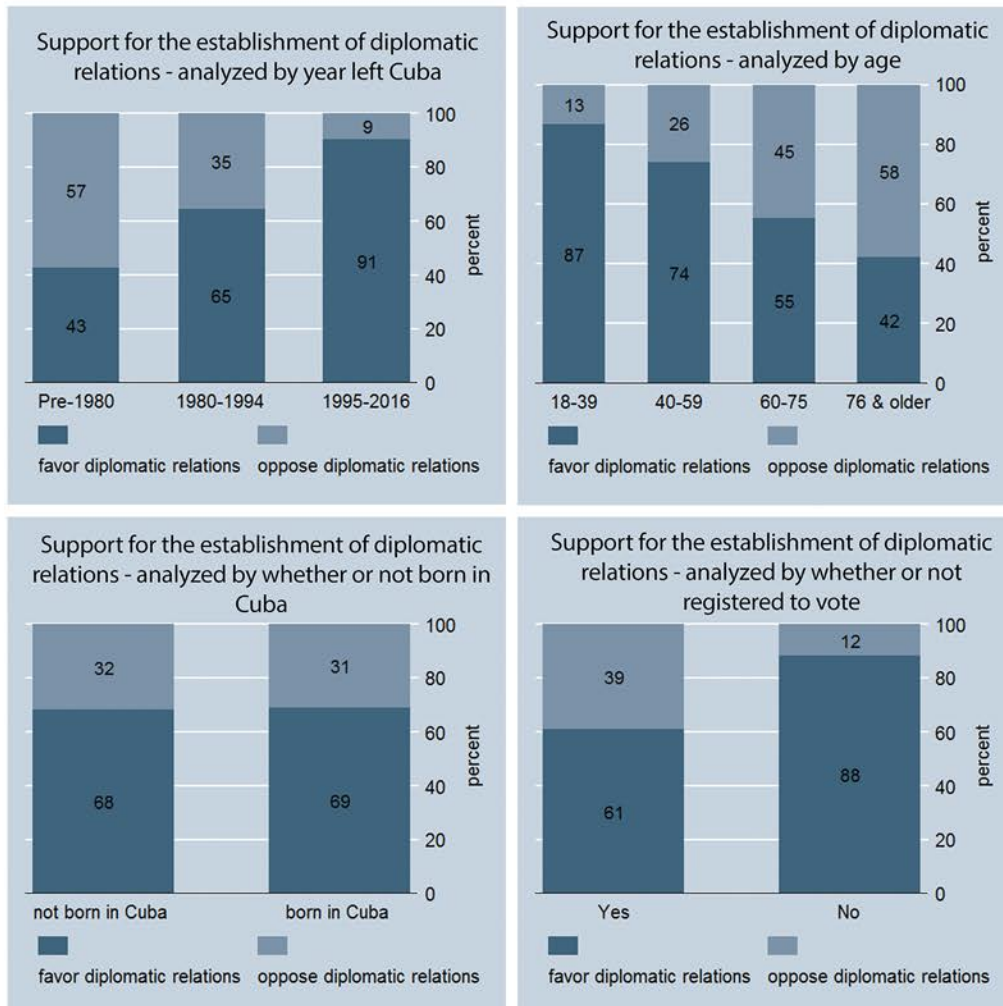


Sixty-five percent of Cubans living in Miami-Dade County expressed support for the establishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba.

A large majority of the respondents favor the policy shift reestablishing diplomatic relations with Cuba, with younger respondents (18–39) very strongly backing the policy shift (87%). Support for the reestablishment of diplomatic ties maintains a solid majority among all age groups up to age 76, after which it drops to 42% of that cohort favoring the policy. Cubans arriving after 1995 are the most likely group to endorse the reestablishment of relations (91%). But substantial support is found in the 1980–94 cohort (65%). The pre-1980 arrivals fall below 50% in their support for the policy change (43%). A majority of registered voters, 61%, express support for the policy change. This figure balloons to 87% among nonregistered voters. Those born in and outside of the island express equal support for the policy (69% and 68%).

Favor	65.3%
Oppose	29.4%
Don't Know	5.3%

FIGURE 6 CLUSTER

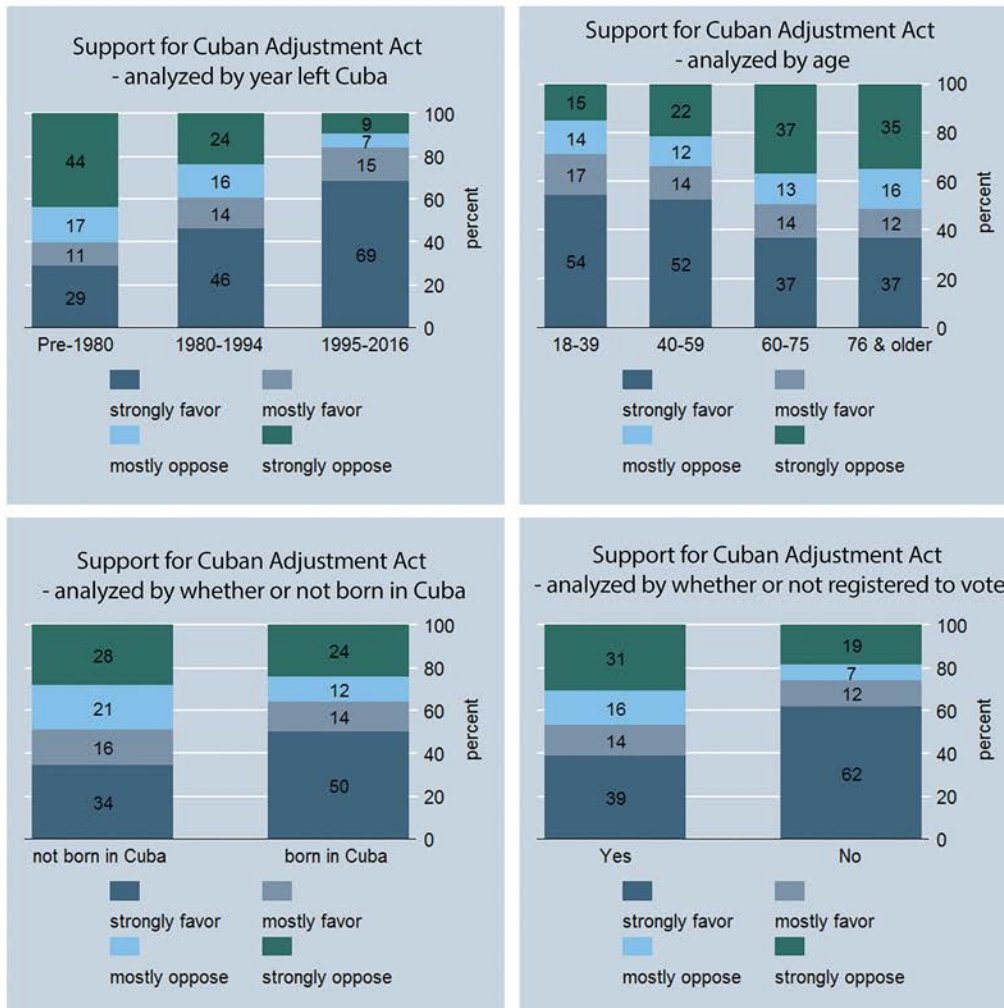


Sixty-one percent of the respondents support the Cuban Adjustment Act.

The Cuban Adjustment Act receives wide support from the post-1980 cohorts (60% and 84%) but minority support from the pre-1980 cohort (40%). This is a significant decline for support of this longstanding policy. The 2014 poll measured an 80% support for this policy. The older population (60 and above) is the least likely to support the policy. The Cuban-born respondents are more supportive than the non-Cuban-born respondents (64% to 50% respectively). A slight majority, 53%, of registered voters favor the policy.

Strongly Favor	47.3%*	46.2%**	
Mostly Favor	14.2%	13.9%	* expressed opinion
Mostly Oppose	13.4%	13.1%	** includes nonresponses
Strongly Oppose	25.0%	24.4%	
Don't Know		2.3%	

FIGURE 7 CLUSTER

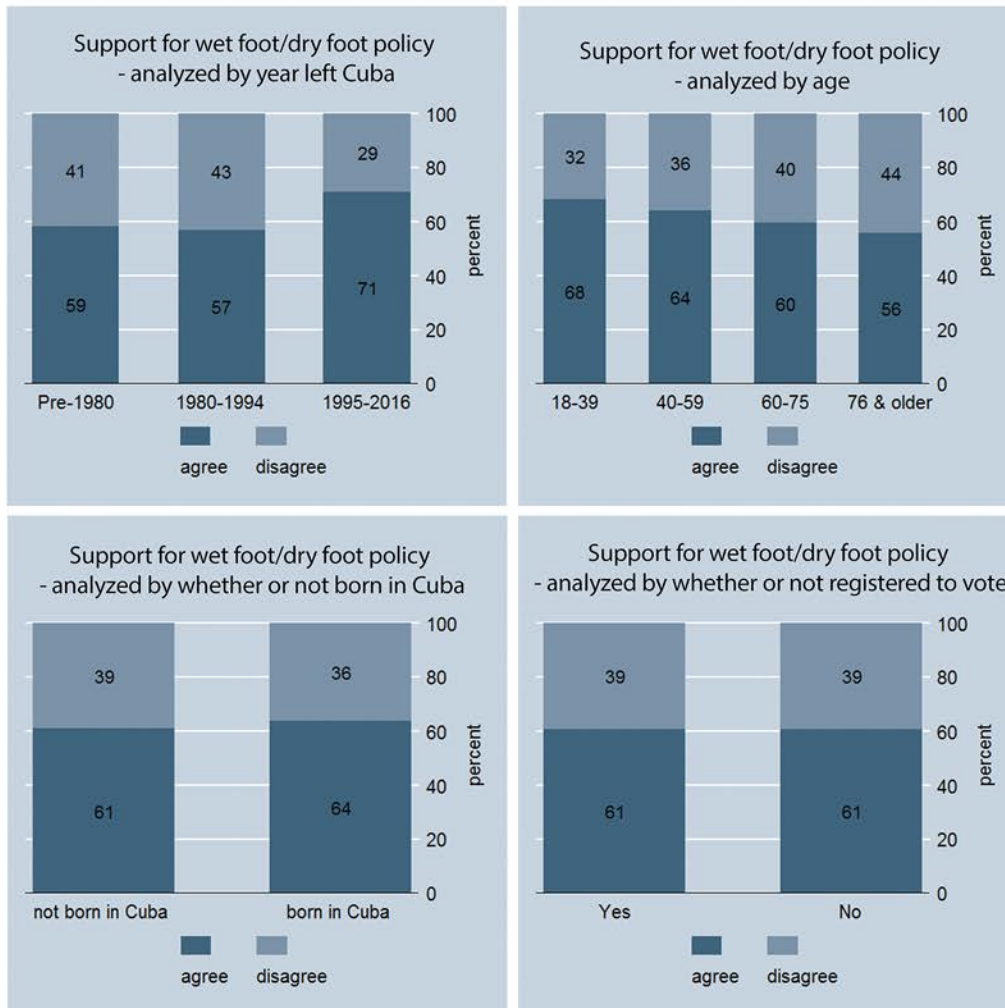


Sixty-three percent of Cubans in Miami-Dade County support the current “wet foot/dry foot” policy.

A large majority of the respondents favor the “wet foot/dry foot” immigration policy, a revision of the Cuban Adjustment Act initiated as a result of the 1995 immigration agreement between the United States and Cuba. All arrival cohorts express considerable support for the policy, with most support among the post-1995 cohort (71%). Younger respondents are most supportive but all age cohorts exhibit majority support for the policy. Similarly, place of birth has a small effect on support. Sixty-one percent support is found among registered voters.

Agree	63.3%*	60.7%**	* expressed opinion ** includes nonresponses
Disagree	36.7%	35.1%	
Don't know		3.3%	
No Response		0.9%	

FIGURE 8 CLUSTER

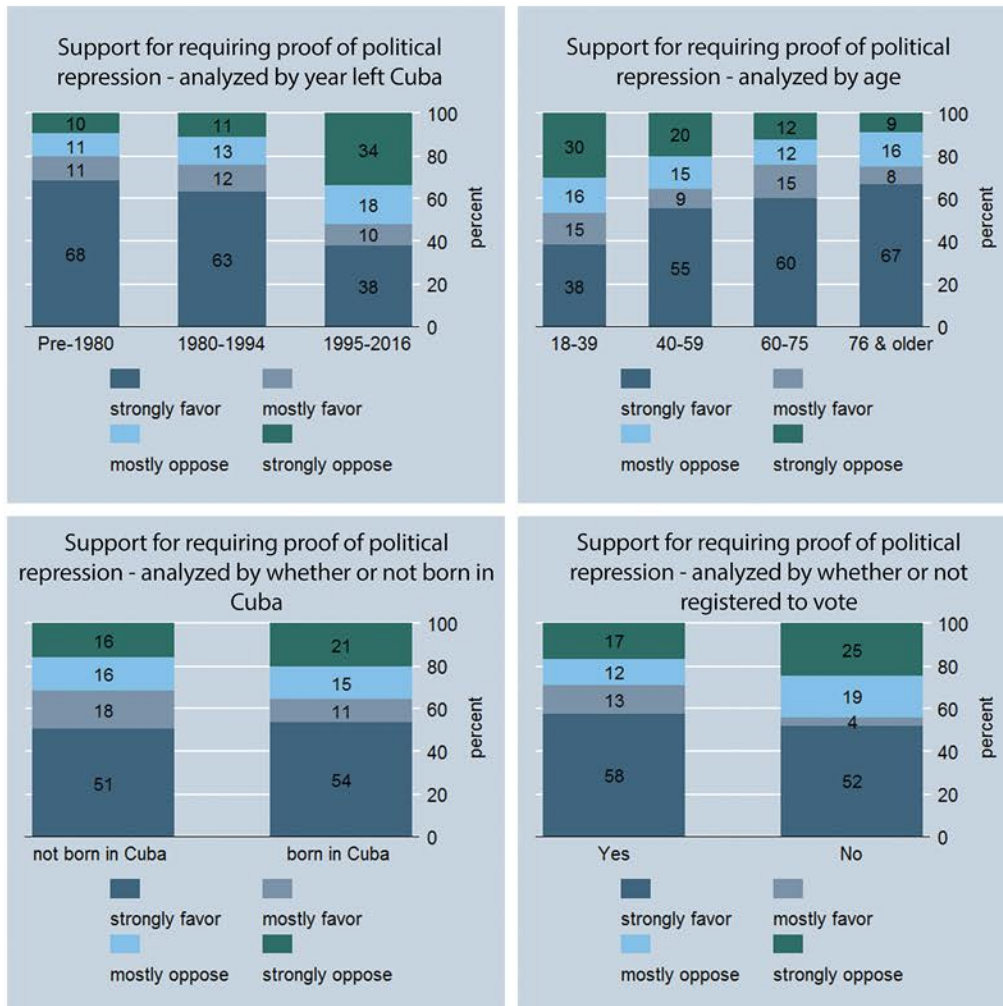


Sixty-five percent support a change in the Cuban Adjustment Act, requiring Cuban entrants to provide proof of political persecution before becoming eligible for government assistance.

This proposed policy, which would introduce an “adjustment” to the current interpretation of the Cuban Adjustment Act, received strong support among all categories of respondents presented in this report. Sixty-five percent of the sample supports the proposed change and the support is maintained across all age categories and arrival waves. The most recent arrivals (post-1995) express the least support for the proposed policy (48%). The earlier arrival cohorts and the older age cohorts are strongly in support—over 60%—of this proposed change. Those born in Cuba are slightly less supportive than those born elsewhere (65% to 69%). Seventy-one percent of registered voters signal approval for this change in the way that Cubans are received in the United States.

Strongly Favor	53.3%*	50.5%**	
Mostly Favor	12.1%	11.4%	* expressed opinion
Mostly Oppose	14.9%	14.1%	** includes nonresponses
Strongly Oppose	19.8%	18.8%	
Don't Know		4.7%	
No Response		0.5%	

FIGURE 9 CLUSTER



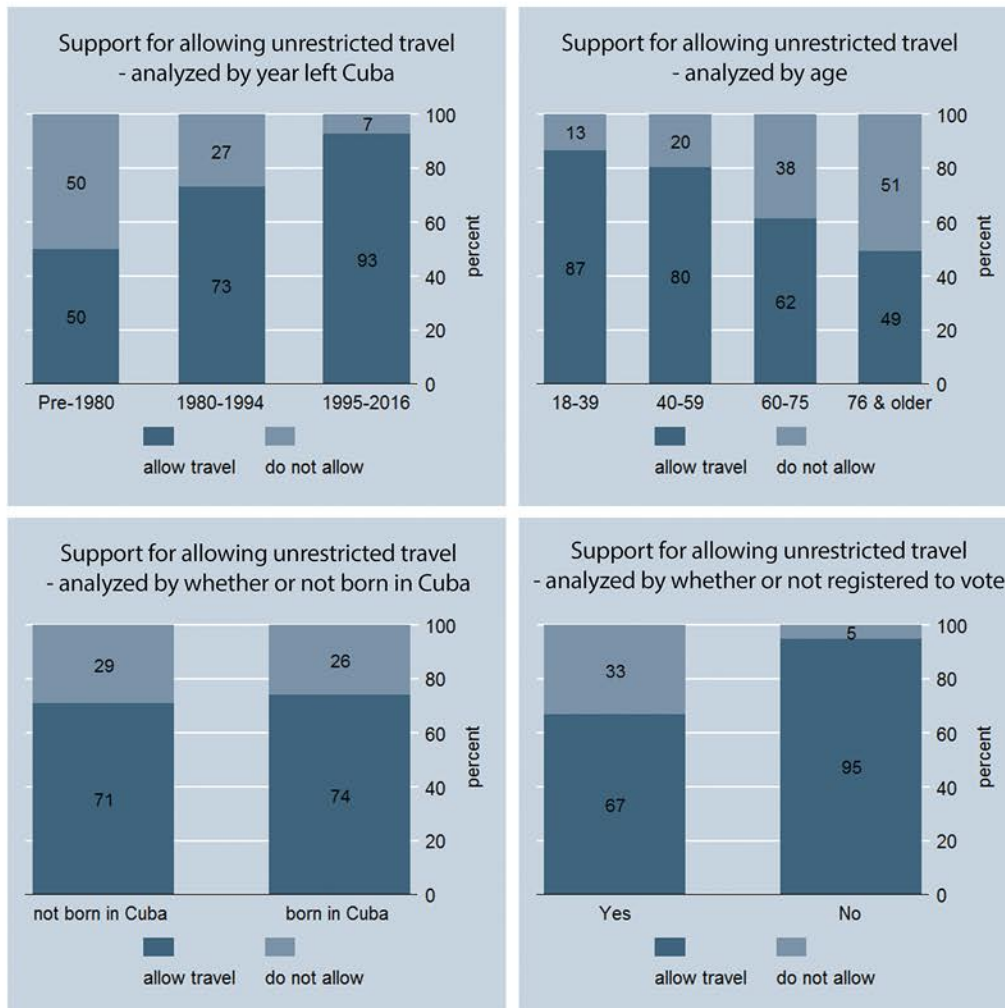
Personal Engagement

Seventy-four percent of the respondents favor unrestricted travel by all Americans to Cuba.

When asked if unrestricted travel by all Americans to Cuba should be allowed or not, 74% of the respondents answered affirmatively. The support for unrestricted travel is weakest among the pre-1980 cohort (50%) and strongest among the post-1995 cohort (93%). A majority of respondents in all age cohorts support opening up travel, except for the 76 and above group (49%). A small difference separates the island-born and those born outside the island (74% to 71%). Sixty-seven percent of registered voters endorse this type of policy shift.

Allow Travel	73.5%*	71.4%**	* expressed opinion ** includes nonresponses
Do Not Allow	26.5%	25.7%	
Don't Know		2.9%	

FIGURE 10 CLUSTER

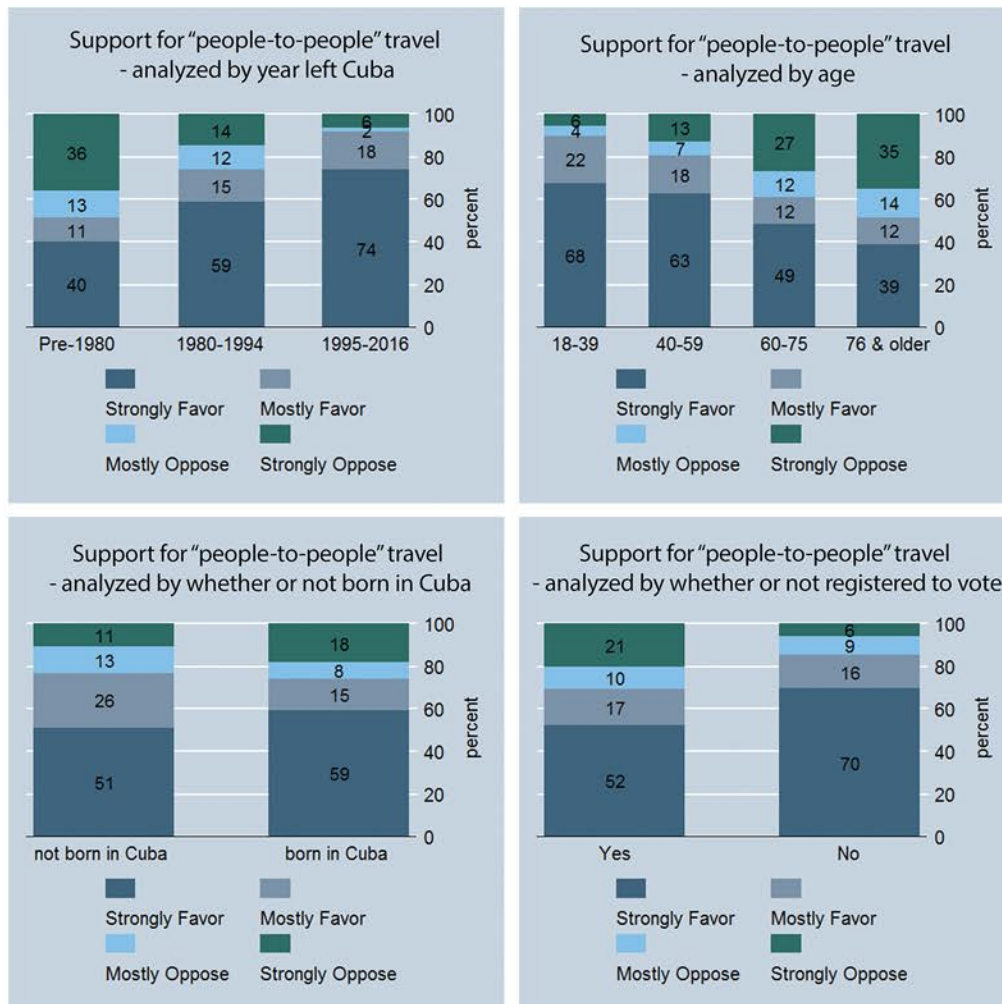


Seventy-five percent of the respondents support the continuation of “people-to-people” travel opportunities.

A large majority of the respondents favor the continuation of “people-to-people” educational travel opportunities currently endorsed by U.S. policy. The post-1995 arrivals do so overwhelmingly (92%) with a majority of all age cohorts, except the oldest, expressing their support. Strong support exists in the population regardless of place of birth. Sixty-nine percent of registered voters favor the policy as well.

Strongly Favor	57.8%*	56.1%**	
Mostly Favor	17.0%	16.5%	* expressed opinion
Mostly Oppose	8.5%	8.1%	** includes nonresponses
Strongly Oppose	16.7%	16.2%	
Don't Know		3.0%	

FIGURE 11 CLUSTER

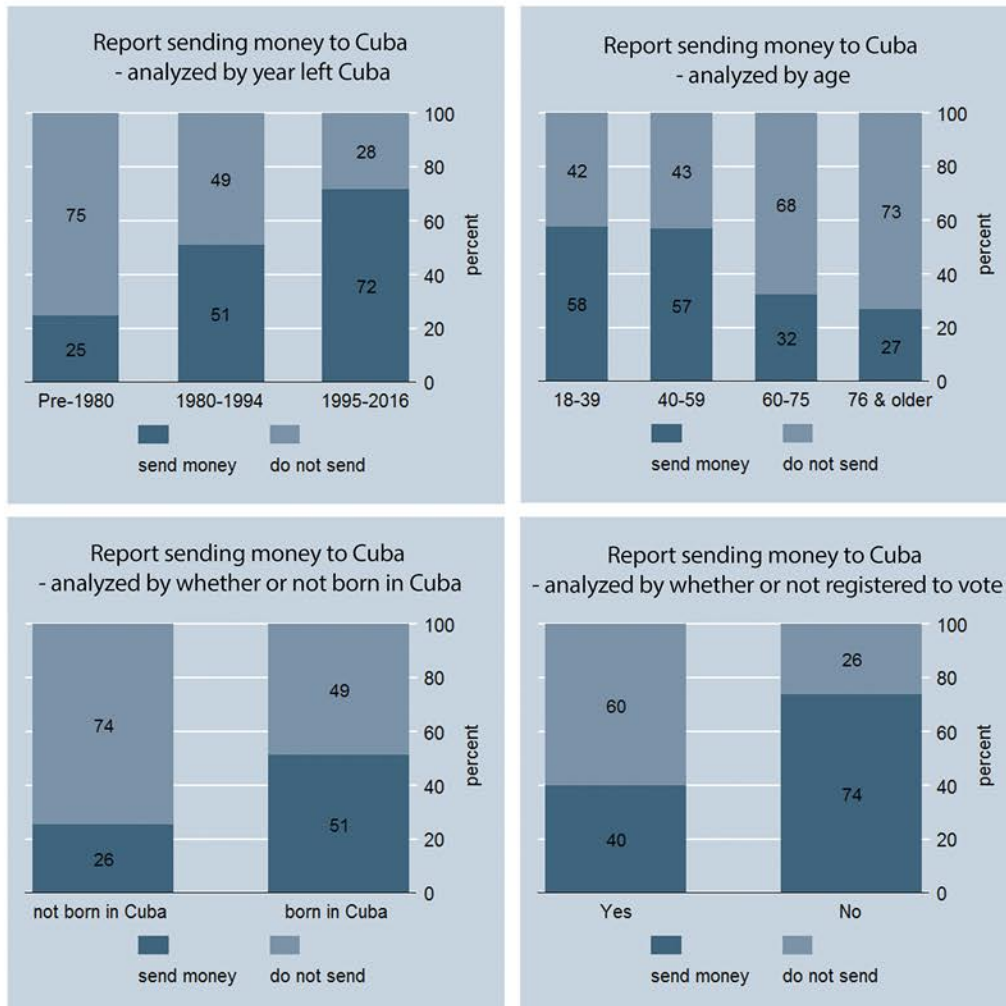


Forty-seven percent of Cuban Americans in Miami-Dade report sending money to friends or relatives on the island and 42% report sending other items. Fifty-four percent of respondents who send remittances report sending to the province of Havana.

Approximately 72% of the post-1995 cohort report sending money to relatives or friends on the island, while only 25% of pre-1980 migrants do. A majority of respondents 59 years old or younger send money while only a third of those 60 and over send remittances. A quarter of respondents not born on the island send remittances (26%). Almost three quarters (74%) of the respondents who send money are not registered to vote. Approximately 6% of respondents believe that some of the money or items they have sent to the island has been used to assist in the development of private small business in Cuba. Most remittances are sent to the province of Havana (54%), Villa Clara (10%), Camaguey (7%), and Pinar del Río (6%).

Send Money	46.9%*	46.6%**	* expressed opinion
Do Not Send Money	53.1%	52.7%	** includes nonresponses

FIGURE 12 CLUSTER

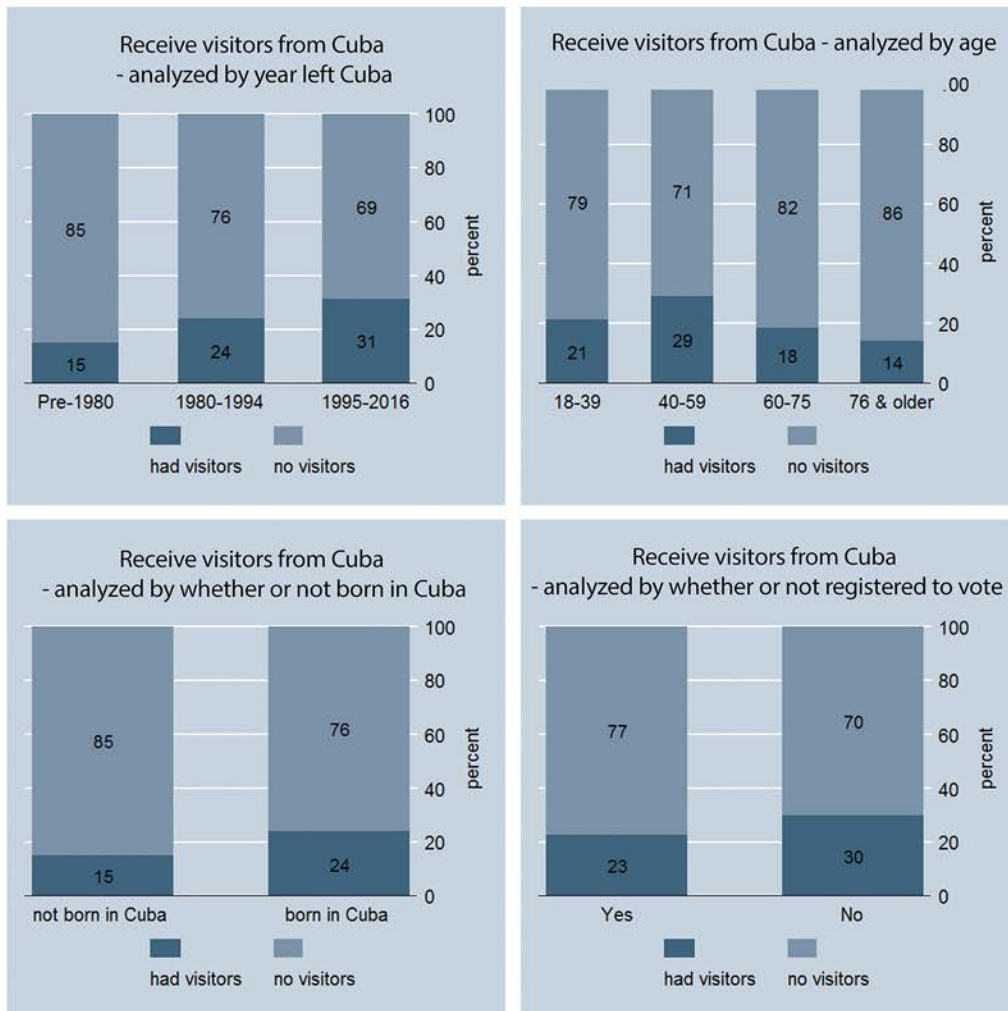


Twenty-three percent of Cuban Americans in Miami-Dade County report receiving at least one visitor from Cuba in 2015.

The post-1995 arrivals are more likely to have received visitors than previous cohorts (31%), as are those born in Cuba (24%). Forty-four percent received one visitor, 31% received two visitors and 11% received three visitors. For 57% of respondents who reported receiving visitors, the flow from the island was about the same as in the previous year, with 26% reporting a decrease and 16% reporting an increase from the normal flow.

Had Visitors	22.6%
No Visitors	77.4%

FIGURE 13 CLUSTER

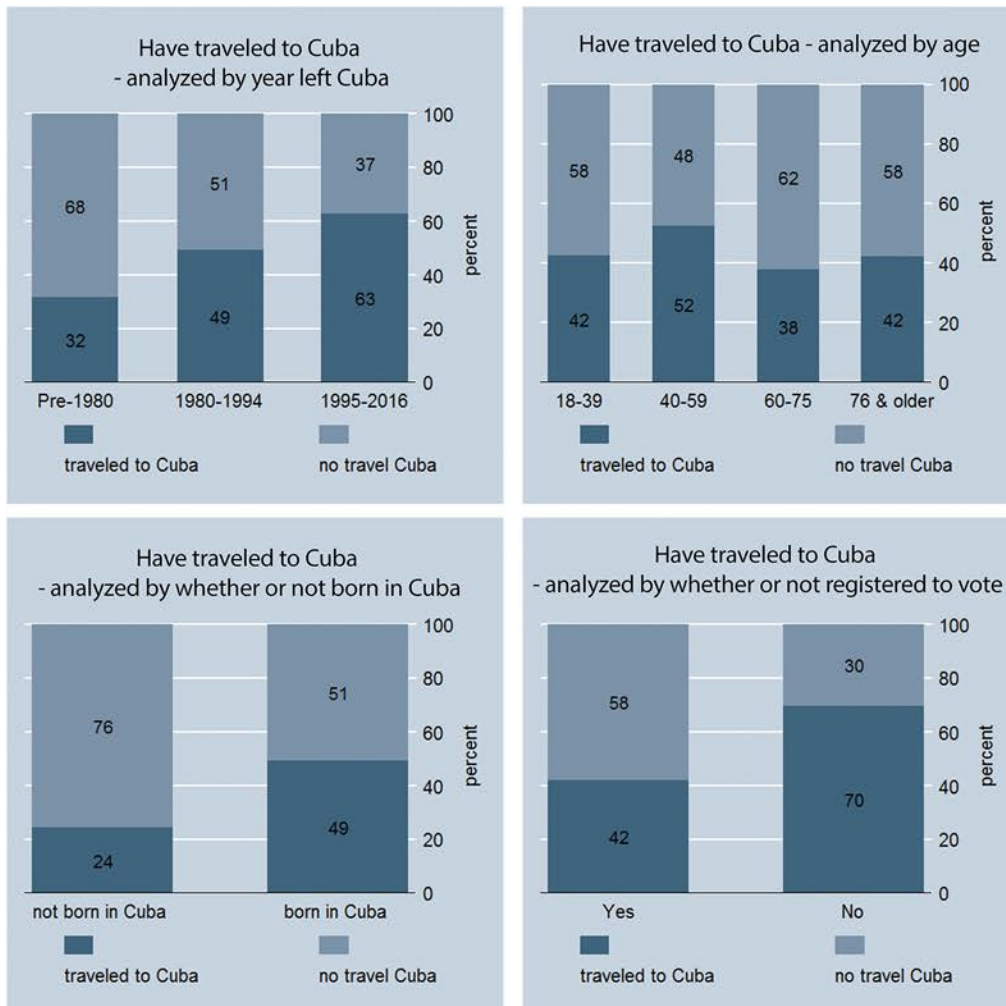


Forty-five percent of Cuban Americans in Miami-Dade County have traveled to Cuba after leaving the island.

All age cohorts report significant travel to Cuba. As many respondents within the youngest cohort report traveling as respondents belonging to the oldest cohort (42%). Over half of the 40–59 cohort has traveled to Cuba since leaving (52%). Sixty-three percent of post-1995 arrivals have traveled while only 32% of pre-1980 migrants have done so. A sizable minority of registered voters have visited the island since leaving (42%).

Have Traveled to Cuba	44.9%
Have not Traveled to Cuba	55.1%

FIGURE 14 CLUSTER

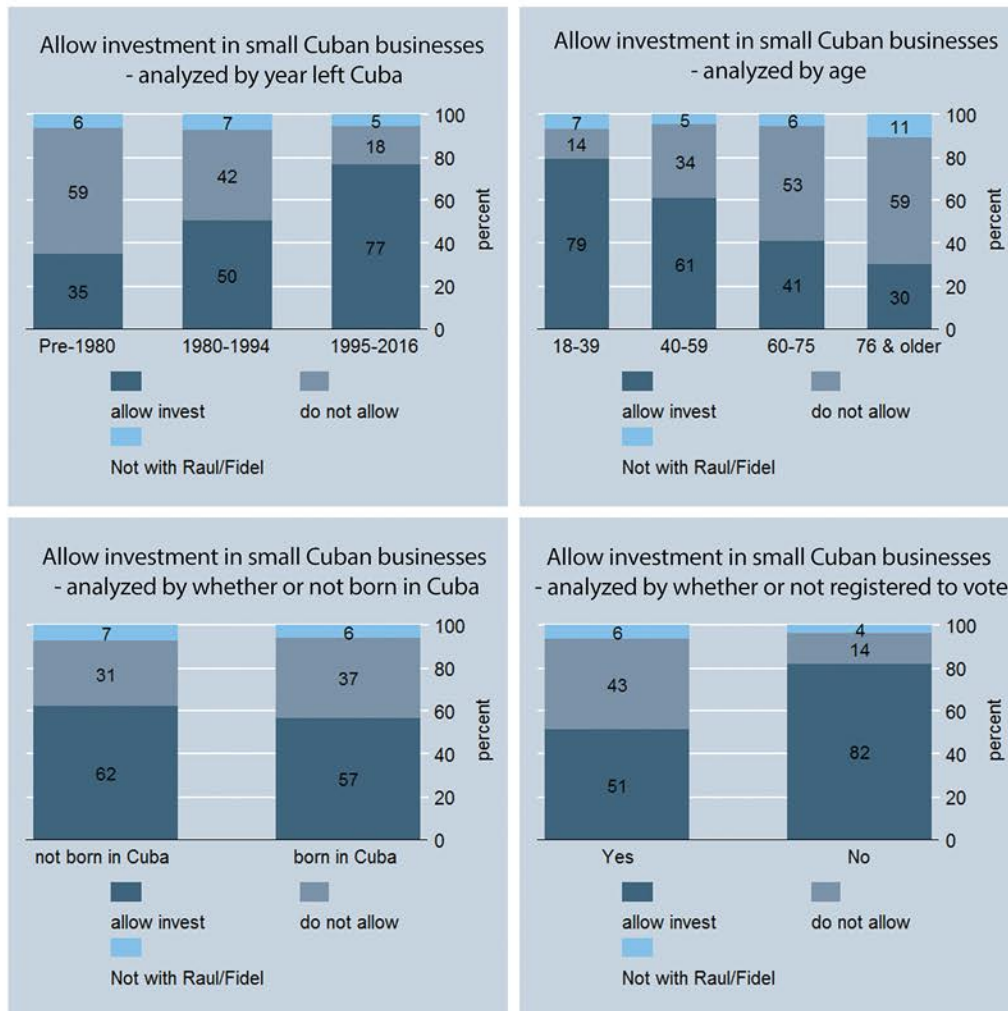


Fifty-seven percent of respondents would allow people living in the United States to invest in small businesses in Cuba.

Support for investment options in Cuba shows a marked increase from the responses recorded in the 2014 Cuba Poll (40% support). The more recent cohorts are the most supportive of the liberalization of investment opportunities; 35% of pre-1980 arrivals express support while 77% of post-1995 arrivals express support. The millennials (those between 18 and 39 years of age) are more supportive (79%) than older age cohorts (76 and older support is 30%). Cuban Americans born outside the island are slightly more eager to invest than those born in Cuba (62% to 57%). A slight majority of registered voters, 51%, express support for this type of initiative.

Allow Investment	57.4%*	54.7%**	
Do Not Allow Investment	36.4%	34.7%	* expressed opinion
Not with Raul/Fidel	6.2%	5.9%	** includes nonresponses
Don't Know		3.3%	
No Response		1.4%	

FIGURE 15 CLUSTER



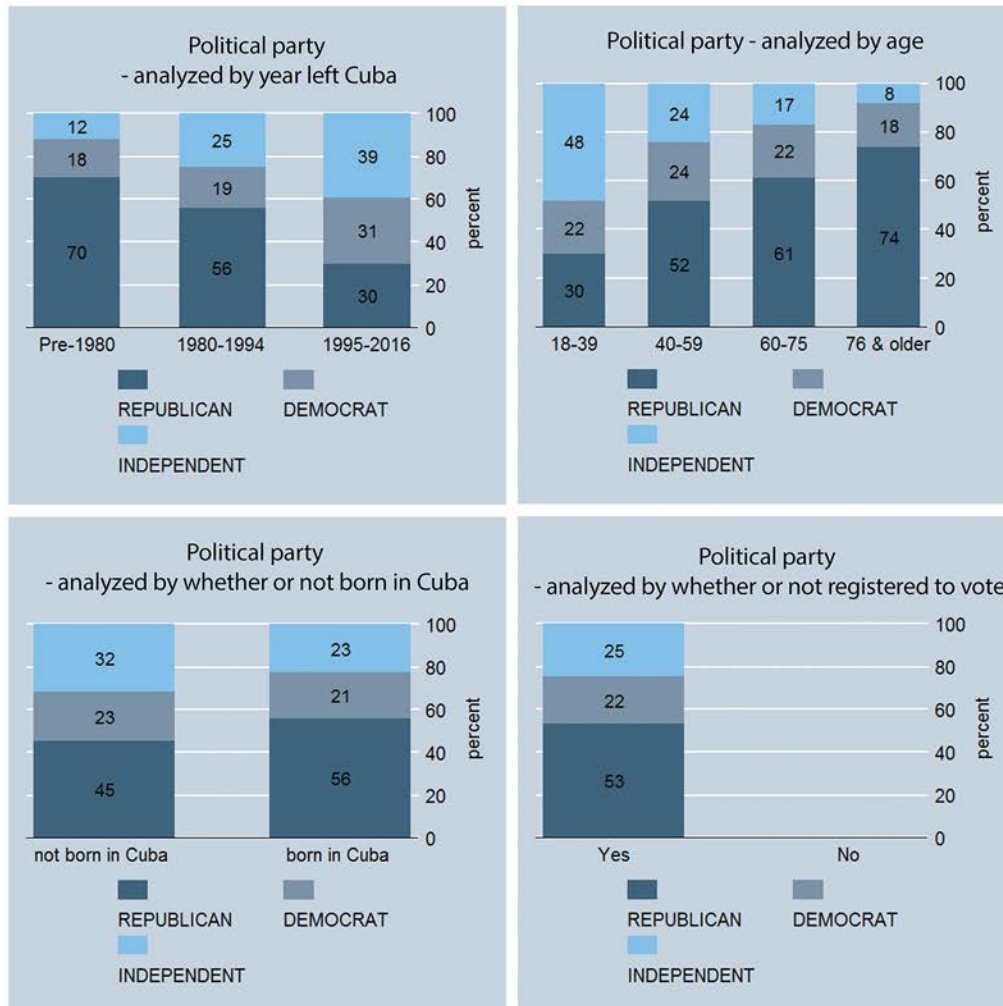
Politics

Fifty-three percent of respondents are registered Republicans, twenty-two percent are Democrats, and twenty-five percent are Independent.

The new arrivals are almost evenly split between the three political preferences; 30% are Republican, 32% Democrat, and 39% are Independent. A strong majority of pre-1980 and 1980–94 arrivals are Republicans (70% and 56%). An impressive 48% of 18–39 year-olds report being Independent. When we look at party affiliation by age category, we see that Democrats outnumber Republicans clearly in two age categories (18–39 and 40–59) and are within the margin of error in the 60–75 cohort. Only in the 76 and older category do Republicans hold a clear majority.

Republican	53.5%
Democrat	21.9%
Independent	24.6%

FIGURE 16 CLUSTER

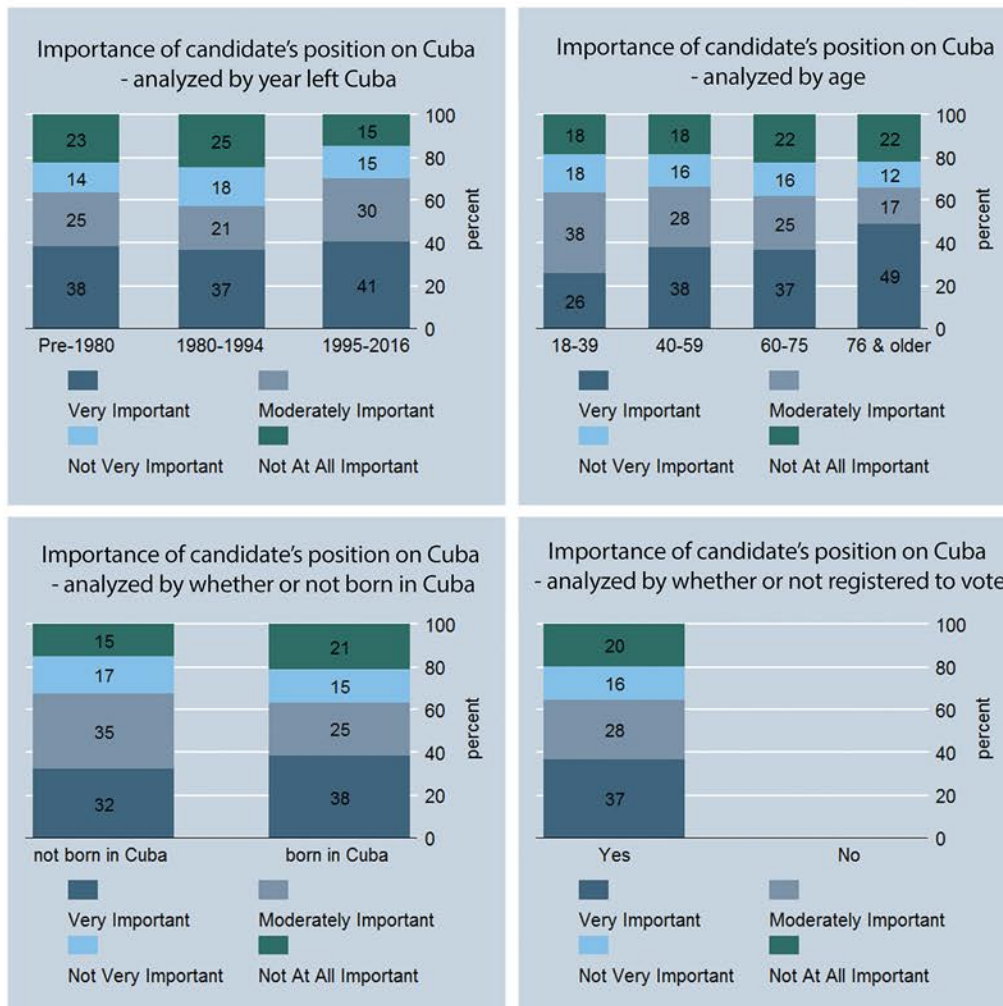


Sixty-five percent of registered voters consider a candidate’s position on Cuba to be important in determining their vote.

Even 57 years since the Revolution, the topic of Cuba maintains a high profile in South Florida’s social, economic, political, and cultural discourse. For Cuban Americans in the region, Cuba is never far away, in the physical or mental geographies of daily life. In the political arena, 65% of Cuban-American registered voters still consider a candidate’s position on Cuba to be important in determining their vote. The strong salience of Cuba in the political decision-making process of respondents is found across all age cohorts and arrival waves.

Very Important	36.8%
Moderately Important	27.7%
Not Very Important	15.7%
Not At All Important	19.8%

FIGURE 17 CLUSTER

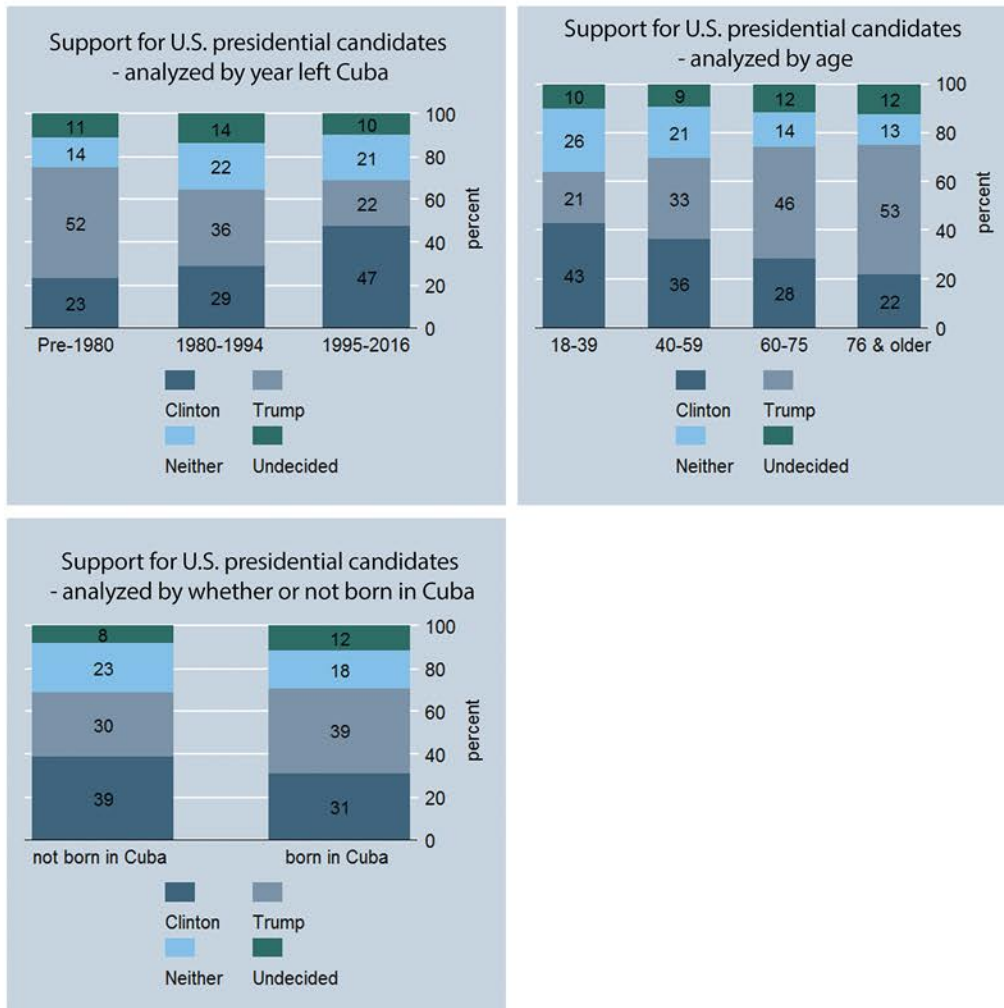


If the election were held today (the poll concluded on August 12, 2016), Donald Trump would receive 35% of the Cuban-American vote, while Hillary Clinton would receive 31%. Another 18% of respondents say that they would vote for neither of the two, while 10% remained undecided.

According to national polls measuring Latino voter preferences, Cuban Americans might have the distinction of being the only major Latino group supporting the presidential candidacy of Donald Trump. Our poll shows that while Trump does receive slightly greater support from respondents if the election were held in July/August, over a quarter of the Cuban-American electorate either holds the position that they will not vote for either candidate or are undecided, as of the date of the termination of the poll. These numbers may change as we approach Election Day.

Clinton	31.4%
Trump	35.5%
Neither	17.8%
Undecided	10.4%
Refused	5.2%

FIGURE 18 CLUSTER



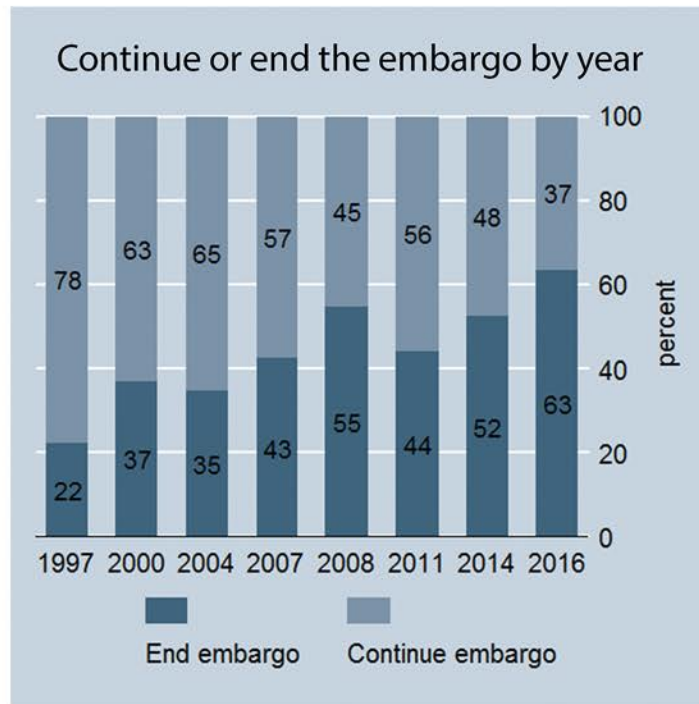
SELECTED TRENDS: HOW THIS POLL COMPARES TO PREVIOUS FIU CUBA POLLS

This section presents a comparison of the responses to key questions from this poll with our previous polls. Some of these comparisons highlight trends in opinions and behaviors of the Cuban-American population over the last 25 years.

Support for the Embargo

Support for the embargo has steadily decreased within the Cuban-American population in the Miami area. During the 1990s, the five polls we conducted tabulated an average of 84% support for maintaining the embargo. From 2000 to the present, the average support for the embargo has diminished to approximately 37%. This decline could largely be explained by the incorporation of post-1995 migrants into the population. Figure 19 presents the numbers.

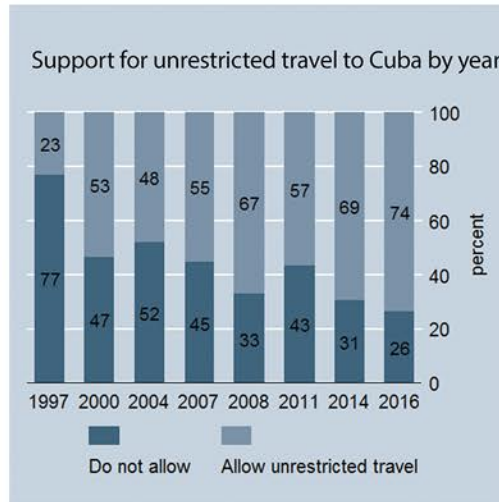
FIGURE 19



Support for Unrestricted Travel

Lifting the restrictions on travel to Cuba for all Americans has received increasing support over the years. The five surveys conducted in the 1990s averaged 43% support for lifting travel restrictions, while the seven post-2000 surveys averaged 60% support. The dramatic increase between the 1997 poll and the 2000 poll indicates that the opinions of the post-1995 migrants made a difference on this issue.

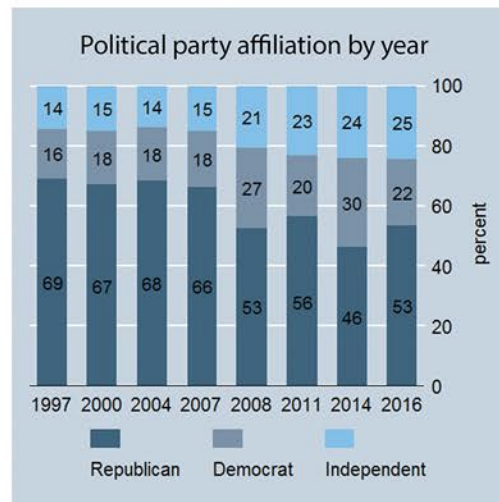
FIGURE 20



Political Party Registration

Although still a majority among Cuban-American voters in Miami, Republican Party registrations have declined over the years while the numbers of Independents and Democrats have increased. The largest gains have been within the ranks of Independent voters, which represented a quarter of registered voters in the 2016 poll.

FIGURE 21



DISCUSSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The major conclusion drawn from this poll is that most Cuban Americans in Miami-Dade County have welcomed the changes in U.S. policy towards Cuba since December 2014. The Cuban-American population continues its demographic and ideological transition—from one dominated by an exile agenda to one dominated by immigrants. The latter are leaving a country with limited opportunities, to settle in another country where opportunities are believed to abound. In addition, we have tapped into the opinions of second- and third-generation Cuban Americans, born in the United States, whose knowledge of Cuba is mediated by the experiences of their parents and grandparents. The present survey highlights the various dimensions of the changes taking place within the population of Cuban origin in the Miami area.

This transition is being fueled by continued migration from the island and the rising number of Cuban Americans born in the United States. Both of these groups—new arrivals and second- and third generations—are more likely to view the U.S. policies developed during the Cold War less favorably than earlier arrivals.

Older respondents and those leaving Cuba before 1980 as an aggregate are much more committed to the isolation of Cuba from U.S. citizens and businesses. The policy preferences upheld by these early migrants remain salient as forces that have shaped the experience of Cubans in exile, but those who hold them are diminishing in influence and number.

The more recent arrivals and new generations of Cuban Americans are much more likely to view engagement policies as the best form of bringing about change in Cuba. Many are personally engaged with contemporary Cuban society, especially by traveling to visit friends and relatives, sending remittances, fueling private sector investment, and desiring to do more, not less, on the island.

The mass migration of Cubans to Florida and the United States is likely to persist in the coming decades, due to the “push” factors operating on the island and the “pull” dynamics driven by the current enforcement of the Cuban Adjustment Act. The changes in the population of Cuban origin in South Florida and the changes in the Cuban population on the island are ineluctably intertwined. Significant segments of the future labor force of South Florida are now being trained in Cuban schools. Well-educated young people leaving the island’s economic uncertainty are contributing to the demographic crisis of an aging population facing Cuba. The changes in one population will have an impact on the other population for years to come. The South Florida Cuban diaspora and the Cuban population on the island are more than tied at the hip; they are part of the same hip.

As our surveys show, one of the dimensions of change within the Cuban-American population in the Miami area are attitudes associated with U.S.-Cuba policy. As recent arrivals have become integrated into the democratic processes of their adopted country, voices for changing the current policy have become louder. While it is difficult to predict how fast additional policy changes will occur, the Cuban-American population will probably increase its support for further engagement with the island.

The more recent arrivals and new generations of Cuban Americans are much more likely to view engagement policies as the best form of bringing about change.

The data presented in the current poll have far-ranging policy implications:

1. A large majority of Cubans who recently migrated to the United States would welcome further changes to U.S.-Cuba policy. Sixty-three percent of the Cuban-American population expressing a preference in the poll favors lifting the embargo. Younger Cuban Americans are more likely to be opposed to the embargo than the older population, suggesting that support for the embargo will continue to weaken with the increase of second- and third-generation Cuban Americans. The opposition to the embargo will also probably grow as immigration from the island continues at its current pace, since a large majority of those arriving in the last 20 years favor lifting the embargo (79%) and many of these are becoming integrated into the U.S. political system. Among registered voters, ending the embargo is supported by 58% of those expressing an opinion.
2. Cuban Americans express strong support for policies that increase contact between U.S. citizens, including Cuban Americans, and the Cuban people. Lifting the travel restrictions currently in place for non-Cuban-American citizens receives strong backing by the entire sample (74%), as well as among new arrivals and registered voters (93% and 69%). Similar support is expressed for the continuation of “people-to-people” educational travel options.
3. Cuban Americans express strong support for measures that increase commercial relations between U.S. businesses and Cubans on the island on specific ventures. As in previous polls, support for companies selling medicine and food spans all cohorts. Similarly, over 79% of the respondents would like to see the existing limited business relations between the U.S. and the island either expanded or maintained.
4. Current U.S. immigration policies directed at Cubans receive strong support from Cuban Americans but restrictive changes in the policy are also supported. Preserving the unique legal status of Cubans arriving in the United States receives strong backing from all cohorts, particularly the newer arrivals. The policies associated with the Cuban Adjustment Act and its “wet foot/dry foot” revision have been a focus of debate from both the right and the left in recent years. Clearly these policies have the broad support of those benefiting from them. Yet, the results suggest increasing support for changes in the law, making it more difficult for new arrivals to receive federal benefits. Requiring new arrivals to provide proof of political repression on the island before becoming eligible for government assistance in the United States received support from a majority of respondents.
5. Cuban Americans in Miami-Dade County continue to have strong ties to friends and relatives on the island. Forty-seven percent report sending money to friends and relatives; an average of nearly \$900 per respondent (for an estimated average of \$450 million per year from the entire Cuban-American population in Miami-Dade County). An additional 42% report sending other items. Sending remittances is strongest among new arrivals but traveling to the island is a broadly-based phenomenon. The growing economic relationships between Cubans on and off the island have strong resonance for Cuba’s economic development. Approximately 6% of respondents believe that some of the money or items they have sent to the island has been used to assist in the development of private small business in Cuba. If we extrapolate the results to the total population of Cuban-American adults in Miami-Dade County (using the 2014 American Community Survey as the database), we can postulate that 50,000 Cuban Americans are sending approximately \$45 million in monetary remittances to Cuba every year that might be contributing to the development of the private sector. This is a significant amount in an economic environment where fewer than half a million people are working on their own on the island.

APPENDIX I—METHODOLOGY

The FIU Cuba Poll has followed the same methodology over the two decades it has been conducted. Random digit dial (RDD) probability sampling is used to reach households, which are then screened for Cuban residents. No additional screening is done, although in earlier polls selection within the household for age and gender representativeness was done. Recently (including the current poll) the mix of landline and cell numbers makes that unnecessary. The questionnaire is always structured so that tracking questions occur in a similar context of questions asked before them year-to-year.

FIU contracted the services of NORS Surveys, Inc., to conduct telephone interviews among Cuban-American residents of Miami-Dade County. All calls were made from the NORS Surveys central phone location and were time-coded and maintained on a computer database. For the current poll, 36,000 phone numbers were dialed from RDD probability samples, resulting in 671 cell and 329 landline interviews. Approximately 11% of the calls reached a person in a household and 61% of those households responded to the screen for Cuban residents. Forty-nine percent of the households identifying as Cuban completed the interview. All interviewers from NORS Surveys in Miami were bilingual, with both English and Spanish questionnaire versions on the Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system. A total of 67% of the interviews were completed in Spanish.

Results were weighted by Miami-Dade 2014 American Community Survey (ACS) data on countywide age categories and gender for the Cuban population 18 years and older. This is standard practice in polling since men and women in different age groups have different probabilities of agreeing to be interviewed in a telephone survey. Younger males are somewhat more likely to complete a cell phone survey while the reverse is true for landline. The weights for the age and gender categories are shown below.

Sex and Age	2016 FIU Cuba Poll Sample Proportions	Proportion of Population Persons of Cuban Descent Miami-Dade County 2013–2014 American Community Survey	Weight
Men 18–29	0.034	0.073	2.149
Men 30–39	0.033	0.062	1.881
Men 40–49	0.066	0.095	1.443
Men 50–59	0.097	0.085	0.872
Men 60–69	0.083	0.062	0.744
Men 70–79	0.063	0.057	0.911
Men 80 and older	0.036	0.034	0.955
Women 18–29	0.027	0.071	2.619
Women 30–39	0.037	0.065	1.770
Women 40–49	0.096	0.093	0.967
Women 50–59	0.110	0.090	0.814
Women 60–69	0.129	0.081	0.626
Women 70–79	0.116	0.076	0.652
Women 80 and older	0.073	0.057	0.775

Sample Percent of Interviews by Cell vs. Landline Call by Gender and Age	MEN		WOMEN		
	AGE	Cell	Landline	Cell	Landline
	18–39	6.6%	0.2%	5.6%	0.9%
	40–59	14.4%	1.9%	16.5%	3.7%
	60–75	9.2%	3.1%	10.6%	10.2%
	76 & older	2.7%	3.3%	1.5%	9.7%

APPENDIX 2—HOW WERE THE QUESTIONS ASKED?

Many questions in our survey have been asked exactly the same way for many years. Here is the wording of the questions presented in this report, followed by their Spanish translations. The asterisk (*) signifies questions unique to this survey. All the others have a long history in the FIU Cuba Poll.

1. Should unrestricted travel by all Americans to Cuba be allowed or not?

Los viajes sin restricciones de todos los americanos a Cuba, ¿deberían ser permitidos o no?

2. Currently, any American can travel to Cuba in “people-to-people” trips designed to encourage communications among citizens of the U.S. and citizens of Cuba. These trips are usually organized for educational, religious, or research purposes. Do you strongly favor, mostly favor, mostly oppose or strongly oppose this type of “people to people” travel?

Actualmente, todo norteamericano puede viajar a Cuba por medio de viajes de pueblo a pueblo, organizados por agencias de viaje y diseñados para fomentar la comunicación entre los ciudadanos de los Estados Unidos y los ciudadanos de Cuba. ¿Está Ud. decididamente a favor, bastante a favor, bastante en contra, o fuertemente en contra de este tipo de viaje de pueblo a pueblo?

3. Overall, do you think the U.S. embargo of Cuba has worked very well, well, not very well, or not at all?

En términos generales, ¿cree usted que el embargo norteamericano a Cuba ha dado muy buen resultado, buen resultado, no muy buen resultado o ningún resultado?

4. Do you favor or oppose continuing the U.S. embargo of Cuba?

¿Está usted a favor o en contra de que continúe el embargo a Cuba?

5. Do you favor or oppose the U.S. reestablishing diplomatic relations with Cuba?

¿Está usted a favor o en contra del restablecimiento de las relaciones diplomáticas de los Estados Unidos con Cuba?

6. As it stands, Cubans who leave by raft or boat are sent back to Cuba if they are intercepted before they reach U.S. soil. If they do reach U.S. soil they are allowed to stay in the U.S. Do you agree or disagree with this policy?

En estos momentos, los cubanos que llegan por balsa o bote son devueltos a Cuba si se les intercepta antes de llegar a territorio norteamericano. Si llegan a territorio norteamericano, se les permite permanecer en los Estados Unidos. ¿Está Ud. de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con esta política?

7. Since 1966, the entrance of Cubans into the United States has been regulated by the Cuban Adjustment Act. This law stipulates that Cuban citizens and their accompanying spouses and children are immediately eligible to receive federal public assistance in the form of welfare, food stamps, and Medicaid, and can get a green card and become residents of the U.S. one year after arriving in the country. These benefits are not automatic for other immigrant groups. Do you strongly favor, mostly favor, mostly oppose or strongly oppose the current policy of accepting Cubans into the U.S.?

Desde 1966, la entrada de los cubanos a los Estados Unidos ha estado regulada por la Ley de Ajuste Cubano. Esta ley estipula que los ciudadanos cubanos y sus cónyuges e hijos acompañantes reciben acceso inmediato a beneficios del gobierno federal, como seguridad social, "food stamps" y Medicaid y pueden obtener una tarjeta verde y convertirse en residentes de los Estados Unidos después de un año de llegar al país. Estos beneficios no son automáticos para otros grupos de inmigrantes. ¿Está decididamente a favor, principalmente a favor, principalmente en contra, o fuertemente en contra de la política actual de aceptar a los cubanos en los Estados Unidos?

8. *Some members of Congress are promoting a law that changes the current policy towards the entrance of Cubans into the United States. The proposed law would require residents of Cuba entering the United States to prove political persecution before they can receive federal public assistance (such as welfare, food stamps and Medicaid). Would you strongly favor, mostly favor, mostly oppose or strongly oppose such a change in the current law?

Algunos miembros del Congreso están promoviendo una ley que cambiaría la política actual hacia la entrada de los cubanos en los Estados Unidos. El proyecto de ley requeriría que los residentes de Cuba que entren en los Estados Unidos demuestren evidencia de persecución política antes de que puedan recibir asistencia pública federal (como seguridad social, "food stamps" y Medicaid). ¿Estaría a favor, decididamente a favor, principalmente a favor, principalmente en contra o fuertemente en contra de este cambio a la ley actual?

9. In political elections, how important is a candidate's position on Cuba in determining your vote? Would you say it is very important, moderately important, not very important, or not at all important? (Asked only of registered voters)

En las elecciones políticas, ¿cuán importante es la posición sobre Cuba de un candidato al determinar su voto? ¿Diría Ud. que es muy importante, moderadamente importante, no muy importante o nada importante?

10. *If the election for President were held today with Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump as candidates, who would you vote for?

¿Por quién votaría si las elecciones fueran hoy para presidente de los Estados Unidos, Hillary Clinton o Donald Trump?

Florida International University

Florida International University (FIU) is Miami-Dade County's first and only public, four-year research university. With more than 56,000 students, 1,700+ full-time faculty members and more than 220,000 alumni, FIU is one of South Florida's anchor institutions and first in the nation in awarding bachelor's and master's degrees to Hispanics. Among the 10 largest public universities in the United States, FIU offers 194 bachelor, master, and doctoral degree programs in its colleges and schools. Recently, the university has achieved several notable milestones, including being classified in the top tier of research institutions by the Carnegie Foundation, being named a top producer of Fulbright Scholars by the U.S. State Department and being ranked second in Florida on the Forbes 500 list of America's Best Employers, first among the state's educational institutions.

Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs

The Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs brings together many of FIU's internationally oriented disciplines to provide cutting-edge research, first-rate teaching, and innovative training necessary for the globalized world of the 21st century. One of the largest schools of its kind in the world, the Green School enrolls more than 7,200 students, 31 percent of whom are international. The school has eight signature departments: Criminal Justice, Economics, Global and Sociocultural Studies, History, Modern Languages, Politics and International Relations, Public Administration, and Religious Studies. It also houses many of the university's most prominent international centers, institutes, and programs.

Cuban Research Institute

FIU's Cuban Research Institute (CRI) is dedicated to creating and disseminating knowledge about Cuba and Cuban Americans. The institute encourages original research and interdisciplinary teaching, organizes extracurricular activities, collaborates with other academic units working in Cuban and Cuban-American studies, and promotes the development of library holdings and collections on Cuba and its diaspora. Founded in 1991, CRI is the nation's premier center for research and academic programs on Cuban and Cuban-American issues. No other U.S. university surpasses FIU in the number of professors and students of Cuban origin.

Kimberly Green Latin American and Caribbean Center

The Kimberly Green Latin American and Caribbean Center was founded in 1979 to promote the study of Latin America and the Caribbean in Florida and throughout the United States. The center forges linkages across the Americas through high quality education, research and scholarship to better understand, identify solutions to, and address the most urgent problems confronting the region. LACC is designated by the U.S. Department of Education, funded by Title VI, as a National Resource Center on Latin America, recognizing it as one of the top Latin American and Caribbean academic centers in the world.

***The 2016 Cuba Poll would not be possible without the generous support
of the following units at FIU:***

Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs
Cuban Research Institute
Kimberly Green Latin American and Caribbean Center
Office of the President
Division of External Relations
College of Communication, Architecture and the Arts



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