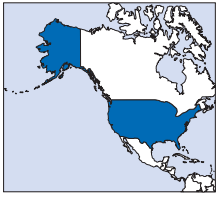


## United States



Permanent immigration to the USA rose again during the US Fiscal Year 2006 (1 October 2005 through 30 September 2006), with 1 266 000 people receiving lawful permanent residency status. This represents a 13% increase over FY (Fiscal Year) 2005 and the highest level since 1991. The increase mostly comprised humanitarian migrants, whose numbers increased sharply over the previous year from 143 000 to 216 000, and those migrating for family reunification, which rose from 649 000 to 803 000 – mainly the unrestricted class of immediate family members. Admissions under the employment-based preferences category, on the other hand, fell sharply from 247 000 to 159 000. The decline in employment-based immigration was largely due to administrative delays rather than a drop in demand or a change in the caps. More than half of the employment-based visas went to family members of the principal applicant.

Temporary H-1B visas for employment are the usual pathway from a temporary visa category to permanent residence. The number of H-1B visa holders has been steadily rising and reached 432 000 in 2006. Demand is much higher than availability: when 65 000 H-1B visas were made available in 2007, 150 000 applications were received on the first day alone.

The US continues to be the major global destination for international students, as enrolment rose 10%, to more than 580 000, in 2006-07. India (15%), China (12%) and South Korea (11%) are the main source countries. 20% of students are PhD level, and many of these acquire H-1B visas upon completion of their doctorates.

Estimates by both government and research bodies place the undocumented population in the US at between 11 and 12 million in 2006, representing a net inflow of about 400-500 000 undocumented immigrants annually since the last regularisation in the late 1980s. More than 7 million are estimated to be active in the labour force (about 5% of the labour force).

Temporary migration schemes for lower-skilled workers played a smaller role. While there is no cap for the category, fewer than 50 000 seasonal

agricultural workers (H-2A) entered in 2006. Temporary workers for other sectors (H-2B) face a cap of 66 000, but returning workers were exempted and reached 134 000 in 2006. Demand far exceeded available visas. The law exempting returning workers from the cap expired at the end of 2007 and by early March 2008 had not been renewed.

Fee increases in mid-2007, as well as concern about changes in the migration system and interest in political participation, led to a sharp increase in applications for naturalisation in the first part of 2007, reaching 1 million. Fee increases for “green cards” also led to a spike in applications.

A comprehensive immigration reform bill was introduced in the US Senate in 2007. The bill addressed five critical areas: securing the border; holding employers accountable for the workers they hire; creating a temporary worker program; resolving the status of the millions of illegal immigrants already in the country; finding new ways to help newcomers assimilate into society. The reform package failed to gain sufficient support. A subsequent attempt to pass reform of the seasonal agricultural worker programme (“AgJOBS”) was also defeated.

The continuation of the Diversity Immigrant Visa programme (the Green Card lottery) has been placed in doubt as during FY 2007 both chambers of the US Congress passed bills that would eliminate funding for the program. The final outcome of this potential legislation now rests with a bicameral conference committee.

While attempts at reform at the national level were unsuccessful, state and local governments have increased their regulatory activity in the domain of immigration. In 2007, about 1 600 pieces of legislation related to immigration were presented at the state level, three times the previous year’s total. The main areas of legislative change related to the issuance of drivers’ licenses to undocumented foreigners, access to benefits, and employment. Some states have increased sanctions and enforcement for employment of undocumented workers, while others have attempted to extend benefits and access.

### For further information...

[www.dhs.gov/ximgtn/](http://www.dhs.gov/ximgtn/)

[www.foreignlaborcert.doleta.gov/](http://www.foreignlaborcert.doleta.gov/)

[www.dol.gov/compliance/laws/comp-ina.htm](http://www.dol.gov/compliance/laws/comp-ina.htm)

## Flow data on foreigners

Migration flows (foreigners) National definition	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level ('000)
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
Inflows	2.7	3.0	3.8	4.2	2.8	3.5	1 266.3
Outflows	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Migration inflows (foreigners) by type Permit based statistics (standardised)	Thousands		% distribution		Inflows of top 10 nationalities as a % of total inflows of foreigners		
	2005	2006	2005	2006			
Work	114.0	71.4	10.2	5.6			
Family (incl. accompanying family)	782.1	890.4	69.7	70.3			
Humanitarian	143.0	216.5	12.7	17.1			
Free movements	-	-	-	-			
Others	83.3	88.0	7.4	7.0			
Total	1 122.4	1 266.3					
Temporary migration	2000	2005	2006	Annual average			
				2000-2006			
<i>Thousands</i>							
International students	284.1	237.9	273.9	251.2			
Trainees	1.5	1.8	2.4	1.6			
Working holiday makers	236.8	275.2	310.0	263.7			
Seasonal workers	30.2	31.9	37.1	32.0			
Intra-company transfers	55.0	65.5	72.6	61.4			
Other temporary workers	226.7	260.8	256.0	248.0			
Inflows of asylum seekers	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level ('000)
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.2	41.1

## Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators

Macroeconomic indicators	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
Real GDP (growth, %)	2.5	3.7	3.1	2.9	4.1	2.7	
GDP/capita (growth, %) – level in US Dollars	1.3	2.5	2.1	1.9	2.9	1.7	37 572
Employment (growth, %) – level in thousands	1.5	2.5	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.1	144 419
Unemployment (% of labour force)	5.6	4.0	5.1	4.6	4.8	5.3	
Components of population growth	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		
					1995-2000	2001-2006	
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
Total	10.3	10.3	9.7	9.6	10.3	9.7	
Natural increase	6.0	5.7	5.8	5.6	5.8	5.7	
Net migration	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.0	4.5	4.1	
Total population	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level ('000)
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
<i>(Annual growth %)</i>							
Native-born	..	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.6	260 344
Foreign-born	..	5.1	2.0	1.9	4.8	3.8	39 055
National	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Foreign	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Naturalisations	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
<i>As a percentage of foreign population</i>							
	..	..	..	..	..	..	702 589
Labour market outcomes	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		
					1995-2000	2001-2006	
<i>Employment/population ratio</i>							
Native-born men	76.0	76.7	73.3	73.8	76.2	73.9	
Foreign-born men	76.9	81.6	81.7	82.9	79.3	81.0	
Native-born women	65.2	67.8	65.3	65.4	66.6	65.9	
Foreign-born women	53.3	57.3	56.4	58.2	56.2	57.1	
<i>Unemployment rate</i>							
Native-born men	6.2	4.5	6.3	5.8	5.6	6.4	
Foreign-born men	7.9	4.5	5.1	4.1	6.1	5.5	
Native-born women	5.3	4.2	5.2	4.8	4.7	5.1	
Foreign-born women	8.2	5.5	5.2	4.9	6.5	6.2	

Notes and sources are at the beginning of the Chapter.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/434637854741>

## HOW TO READ THE TABLES OF PART IV

Annual averages have been calculated for most of the series presented. The averages cover the periods 1995-2000 and 2001-2006. In some cases, depending on the availability of data, they may be calculated for shorter periods.

### Sources and notes

#### **Migration flows of foreigners**

Sources and notes are available in the Statistical Annex (metadata related to Tables A.1.1. and B.1.1.)

#### **Long-term migration inflows of foreigners by type**

The statistics are based largely on residence and work permit data and have been standardised, to the extent possible (cf. [www.oecd.org/els/migration/imo2008](http://www.oecd.org/els/migration/imo2008)).

#### **Temporary migration**

Based on residence or work permit data. Data on temporary workers generally do not cover workers who benefit from a free circulation agreement.

#### **Inflows of asylum seekers**

United Nations High Commission for Refugees.

#### **Macroeconomic and labour market indicators**

##### **Real GDP and GDP per capita**

Annual National Accounts – Comparative tables at the price levels and PPPs of 2000.

##### **Employment and unemployment**

Employment Outlook, OECD, 2007. Some series appearing in the latter have been revised since they were published.

##### **Components of population growth**

Labour Force Statistics, OECD, 2007.

#### **Total population**

##### **Foreign-born population**

National sources and Secretariat estimates (cf.: [www.oecd.org/els/migration/imo2008](http://www.oecd.org/els/migration/imo2008) for more information on methods of estimation). Sources and notes of national sources are provided in the Statistical Annex (see metadata for Tables A.1.4 and B.1.4).

### Foreign population

National sources. Exact sources and notes are given in the Statistical Annex (metadata related to Tables A.1.5 and B.1.5).

### Naturalisations

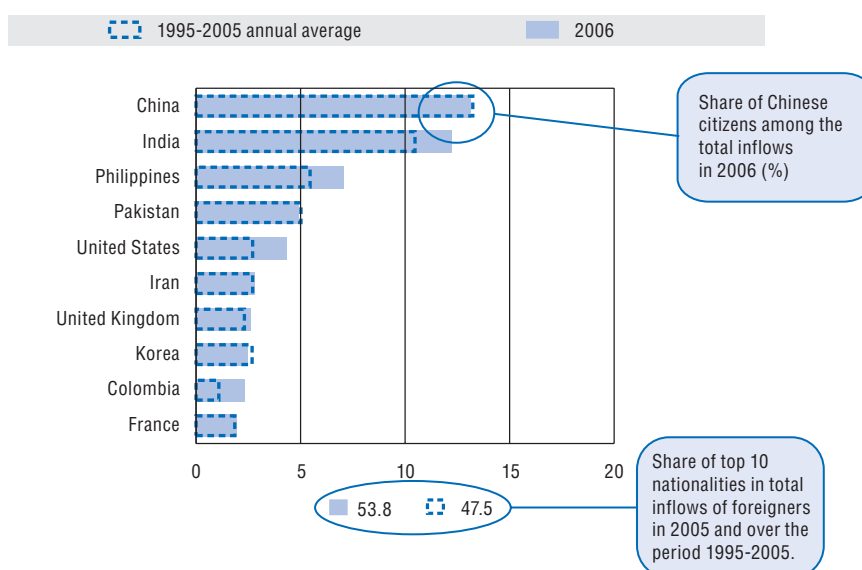
National sources. Exact sources and notes are given in the Statistical Annex (metadata related to Tables A.1.6 and B.1.6).

### Labour market outcomes

European countries: European Union Labour Force Survey (data provided by Eurostat) except for Denmark (Population Register data except since 2005 where data refer to the European Union Labour Force Survey); Australia: Labour Force Survey; Canada: Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics; United States: Current Population Survey, March supplement.

## HOW TO READ THE CHARTS

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## Table of Contents

<b>Editorial: Temporary Labour Migration: An Illusory Promise?</b> . . . . .	17
<b>Introduction</b> . . . . .	21

### Part I

#### RECENT TRENDS IN INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

A. Trends in Migration Flows and in the Immigrant Population . . . . .	28
1. Introduction . . . . .	28
2. Permanent-type immigration . . . . .	29
3. Immigration by category of entry . . . . .	35
4. Unauthorised migration . . . . .	39
5. The continents, regions and countries of origin of immigrants . . . . .	40
6. Temporary migration. . . . .	47
7. The immigrant population – its size and characteristics . . . . .	53
8. Migration of the highly educated . . . . .	57
9. The evolution of the educational attainment of immigrants . . . . .	61
<i>Annex Chart I.A.1. Percentage of native-born and foreign-born with low and high attainment levels, by age, circa 2001</i> . . . . .	65
B. Immigrants and the Labour Market . . . . .	68
1. Introduction . . . . .	68
2. Labour market dynamics in OECD countries: the contribution of immigrant employment. . . . .	68
3. The sectoral and occupational distribution of immigrants. . . . .	72
4. Integration of immigrants into the labour market in OECD countries . . . . .	74
5. A first glance at wage differentials between immigrants and native-born across the OECD. . . . .	78
<i>Annex Table I.B.1. Labour market situation of foreign- and native-born populations in selected OECD countries, 1995, 2000 and 2005-2006.</i> . . . . .	87
<i>Annex Table I.B.2. Labour market situation of foreigners and nationals in selected OECD countries, 1995, 2000 and 2005-2006</i> . . . . .	90
C. Migration Policy Development . . . . .	93
1. Introduction . . . . .	93
2. Structural and institutional reforms in the development and delivery of policy. . . . .	93
3. International agreements between countries . . . . .	96
4. The implications of EU legislation . . . . .	96
5. Border control and illegal migration . . . . .	100
6. Policies with respect to labour migration . . . . .	103



7. Integration, residence and citizenship policies . . . . .	108
8. Developments in humanitarian policies . . . . .	114
9. International students . . . . .	116
10. Conclusion. . . . .	119
Notes . . . . .	121
Bibliography . . . . .	122

## Part II

**MANAGEMENT OF LOW-SKILLED LABOUR MIGRATION**

Introduction . . . . .	126
1. Low-skilled labour migration . . . . .	126
2. Managed labour migration for the low-skilled? . . . . .	133
3. Current unmanaged pathways . . . . .	147
Conclusion . . . . .	151
Notes . . . . .	153
Bibliography . . . . .	155
Annex II.A1.1. Temporary work permit programmes for low-skilled workers . . . . .	158
Annex II.A1.2. Labour market tests in different OECD countries . . . . .	159

## Part III

**RETURN MIGRATION: A NEW PERSPECTIVE**

Introduction . . . . .	162
Main findings . . . . .	162
1. Measuring return migration . . . . .	164
2. The determinants of return migration: from theory to practice. . . . .	177
3. Immigration policies and their impact on return migration . . . . .	187
4. Return migration and the development of the origin country . . . . .	197
Conclusion . . . . .	202
Notes . . . . .	204
Bibliography . . . . .	207
Annex III.A1. Inflows and outflows of foreigners in selected OECD countries . . . . .	213
Annex III.A2. Inflows and outflows of migrants from Australia, Belgium, Sweden, Austria and Japan, various nationalities. . . . .	215
Annex III.A3. Main voluntary assisted return programmes in selected OECD countries . . . . .	217

## Part IV

**RECENT CHANGES IN MIGRATION MOVEMENTS AND POLICIES**

## (COUNTRY NOTES)

How to read the tables of Part IV . . . . .	224		
How to read the charts . . . . .	225		
Australia . . . . .	226	Lithuania . . . . .	258
Austria. . . . .	228	Luxembourg . . . . .	260
Belgium . . . . .	230	Mexico. . . . .	262
Bulgaria . . . . .	232	Netherlands. . . . .	264
Canada . . . . .	234	New Zealand . . . . .	266
Czech Republic . . . . .	236	Norway . . . . .	268
Denmark . . . . .	238	Poland . . . . .	270
Finland . . . . .	240	Portugal . . . . .	272
France . . . . .	242	Romania. . . . .	274
Germany . . . . .	244	Slovak Republic. . . . .	276
Greece . . . . .	246	Spain. . . . .	278
Hungary . . . . .	248	Sweden . . . . .	280
Ireland. . . . .	250	Switzerland . . . . .	282
Italy . . . . .	252	Turkey. . . . .	284
Japan. . . . .	254	United Kingdom . . . . .	286
Korea . . . . .	256	United States . . . . .	288

**STATISTICAL ANNEX**

Introduction . . . . .	291
Inflows and outflows of foreign population. . . . .	293
Inflows of asylum seekers . . . . .	314
Stocks of foreign and foreign-born population . . . . .	322
Acquisition of nationality . . . . .	353
Inflows of foreign workers . . . . .	366
Stocks of foreign and foreign-born labour . . . . .	370
<b>List of Sopemi Correspondents . . . . .</b>	<b>392</b>
<b>List of OECD Secretariat Members involved in the preparation of this report . . . . .</b>	<b>394</b>

## List of Charts, Tables and Boxes

### Part I

### RECENT TRENDS IN INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

#### Charts

I.1.	Permanent-type inflows, standardised statistics, 2006 . . . . .	32
I.2.	Contribution of net migration and natural increase to population growth, 2006 . .	34
I.3.	Permanent-type immigration by category of inflow, 2006, standardised data . . .	36
I.4.	Change in inflows of migrants by country of origin, selected OECD countries, 1995-2005 and 2006. . . . .	42
I.5.	The foreign-born population in OECD countries, 2000-2006. . . . .	54
I.6.	Stock of foreign and foreign-born populations in selected OECD countries, 2006	55
I.7.	Expected net change in the working-age population over the period 2005-2020, at 2001-2005 net migration levels, as a percentage of the population in 2005. . . .	56
I.8a.	Difference between the percentage of foreign-born and of native-born persons with less than upper secondary education, 25-34 years old compared to 55-64 years old . . . . .	62
I.8b.	Difference between the percentage of foreign-born and of native-born persons with tertiary education, 25-34 years old compared to 55-64 years old . . .	62
I.9.	Employment growth of total and foreign-born population, 1996-2009 . . . . .	68
I.10.	Immigrants' share in net change in employment, 1996-2002, 1996-2006 . . . . .	70
I.11.	Evolution in the employment rate of the foreign-born and gap with native-born, 2001-2006. . . . .	77
I.12.	Unemployment rate of immigrants relative to the native-born, 2006 . . . . .	78
I.13.	Median wage of immigrants relative to the native-born, 2005-2006 . . . . .	81
I.14.	Median wage and employment of immigrants relative to the native-born. . . . .	82
I.15.	Median wage by education level for native-born and foreign-born. . . . .	83
I.16.	The impact of differences in educational attainment on the wages of immigrants . . . . .	84
I.17.	Wage levels of immigrants compared to native-born, by duration of residence . .	85

#### Annex

I.A.1.	Percentage of native-born and foreign-born with low and high attainment levels, by age, circa 2001. . . . .	65
--------	---	----

#### Tables

I.1.	Inflows of foreign nationals, 2003-2006 . . . . .	29
I.2.	Immigrant inflows to OECD countries by region or continent of origin, 2006 . .	40
I.3.	Top 20 countries of origin in 2006 for immigrant inflows into OECD countries and change since 2000. . . . .	41
I.4.	Inflows of temporary labour migrants, selected OECD countries, 2003-2006 . . . . .	49
I.5.	Inflows of asylum seekers in OECD countries, 2000-2006, trends and levels . . . . .	50
I.6.	International and/or foreign students in OECD countries, 2000 and 2005 . . . . .	52
I.7.	Impact of the country-of-origin mix and of immigrant qualifications on the percentage of immigrants with tertiary attainment, circa 2001 . . . . .	58
I.8.	Share of the foreign-born in total population, labour force and employment, 15-64 years old . . . . .	69
I.9.	Components of change in the growth of employment among immigrants . . .	72

I.10. Employment of foreign-born by sector, 2005-2006 average . . . . .	73
I.11. Employment of foreign-born by occupation, 2005-2006 average . . . . .	74
I.12. Change in the employment rate of the foreign-born population by gender, 2001-2006 . . . . .	75
I.13. Median wage of immigrants relative to the native-born, by country of origin and gender . . . . .	83
I.14. Median wage of persons with tertiary education, immigrants compared to native-born, by origin of education and gender . . . . .	84

#### Annexes

I.B.1. Labour market situation of foreign- and native-born populations in selected OECD countries, 1995, 2000 and 2005-2006 . . . . .	87
I.B.2. Labour market situation of foreigners and nationals in selected OECD countries, 1995, 2000 and 2005-2006 . . . . .	90

#### Boxes

I.1. The international comparability of immigration data . . . . .	30
I.2. Labour force developments in countries undergoing demographic decline . .	31
I.3. Emigration at a glance in selected OECD countries. . . . .	33
I.4. The employment impact of the introduction of free-circulation regimes on labour migration from countries not covered by the regimes . . . . .	37
I.5. Overview of migration to and from selected “potential” new OECD countries .	44
I.6. Data sources and methodological issues in comparing cross-country wages of foreign- and native-born populations. . . . .	79
I.7. Distribution of the wages of immigrants and native-born. . . . .	80
I.8. Developments in EU immigration policy . . . . .	97
I.9. A comparison of the Australian and UK points systems. . . . .	104

### Part II

## MANAGEMENT OF LOW-SKILLED LABOUR MIGRATION

#### Charts

II.1. Percentage of foreign-born among low-educated labour force, by age, circa 2000 .	129
II.2. Percentage of foreign-born among low-educated labour force, 1995-2006 . . . . .	129
II.3. Low-educated foreign-born workers as a percentage of all workers by occupation, 2006 . . . . .	131

#### Tables

II.1. The low-educated in the total and foreign-born labour force, by age, 2006. . . . .	128
II.2. Labour force participation rate and unemployment rate of low-educated by place of birth, 2006 . . . . .	130
II.3. Inflows of temporary migrant workers, selected OECD countries, 2003-2006. . . .	134
II.4. Working holiday-makers in selected OECD countries, 1999-2006. . . . .	137

#### Annexes

II.A1.1. Temporary work permit programmes for lower skilled workers . . . . .	158
II.A1.2. Labour market tests in different OECD countries . . . . .	159

**Boxes**

II.1. Spanish labour migration authorisation system . . . . .	140
II.2. GATS Mode 4 and international service providers . . . . .	144

*Part III***RETURN MIGRATION: A NEW PERSPECTIVE****Charts**

III.1. Various cases of return migration . . . . .	165
III.2. Timing of migration for an individual and observational equivalence. . . . .	165
III.3. Indirect estimation method of immigrants' exits from the destination country . . . . .	168
III.4. Evolution of the cohort of immigrants who entered the Netherlands in 1993, by duration of stay . . . . .	169
III.5. Method for estimating returns using a census in the origin country. . . . .	170
III.6. Retention rates of immigrants after 3 and 5 years of residence for selected European countries, population aged 15 and older . . . . .	174
III.7. Distribution of age at return for selected countries . . . . .	175
III.8. Share of immigrants born in Portugal and Spain returning from France to their origin countries, by average age at return . . . . .	176
III.9. Proportion of return migrants by educational attainment among immigrants from Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico . . . . .	177
III.10. Return rates by origin and destination countries, as a function of observed employment rates differentials, circa 2000 . . . . .	180
III.11. Return to education in origin and destination countries and migration status . . . . .	183
III.12. Probability of remaining in the United States by immigration status and duration. . . . .	185
III.13. Probability of remaining in the Netherlands by immigration status and duration . . . . .	186
III.14. Percentage of people remaining in Norway in 2006 by reason for immigration and year of entry, non-Nordic persons. . . . .	186
III.15. Probability of remaining in Canada by visa class and duration . . . . .	186
III.16. Number of forced returns in selected OECD countries, yearly average for the periods indicated and last available year, 2001-2007 . . . . .	190
III.17. Educational attainment of return migrants compared to that of the total population. . . . .	198
III.18. Occupations of return migrants compared to those of the total population. . . . .	199

*Annexes*

III.A1. Inflows and outflows of foreigners in selected OECD countries. . . . .	214
III.A2. Inflows and outflows of foreigners in selected OECD countries. . . . .	215

**Tables**

III.1. Estimates of re-emigration rates in selected European countries and the United States after 5 years of residence. . . . .	171
III.2. Proportion of return migrants among migrants from selected Latin American countries . . . . .	174
III.3. International social security agreements, 2000 . . . . .	194

*Annex*

III.A3.1. Main voluntary assisted return programmes in selected OECD countries . . . . .	218
--	-----

**Boxes**

III.1. Specialised surveys . . . . .	167
III.2. Estimating return migration from labour force surveys . . . . .	169
III.3. Return for retirement . . . . .	176
III.4. Return to education and return migration . . . . .	183
III.5. Some findings on return rates by entry category of migrants . . . . .	185
III.6. Forced returns . . . . .	190
III.7. The European Return Fund . . . . .	192
III.8. Mobility partnerships and circular migration between the European Union and third countries. . . . .	195

## Part IV

**RECENT CHANGES IN MIGRATION MOVEMENTS AND POLICIES**

Australia:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	227
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	227
Austria:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	229
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	229
Belgium:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	231
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	231
Bulgaria:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	233
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	233
Canada:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	235
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	235
Czech Republic:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	237
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	237
Denmark:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	239
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	239
Finland:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	241
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	241
France:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	243
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	243
Germany:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	245
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	245
Greece:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	247
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	247
Hungary:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	249
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	249
Ireland:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	251
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	251
Italy:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	253
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	253
Japan:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	255
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	255
Korea:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	257
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	257
Lithuania:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	259
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	259
Luxembourg:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	261
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	261
Mexico:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	263
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	263
Netherlands:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	265
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	265
New Zealand:	Flow data on foreigners . . . . .	267
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators . . . . .	267

Norway:	Flow data on foreigners. . . . .	269
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators. . . . .	269
Poland:	Flow data on foreigners. . . . .	271
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators. . . . .	271
Portugal:	Flow data on foreigners. . . . .	273
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators. . . . .	273
Romania:	Flow data on foreigners+. . . . .	275
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators. . . . .	275
Slovak Republic:	Flow data on foreigners. . . . .	277
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators. . . . .	277
Spain:	Flow data on foreigners. . . . .	279
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators. . . . .	279
Sweden:	Flow data on foreigners. . . . .	281
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators. . . . .	281
Switzerland:	Flow data on foreigners. . . . .	283
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators. . . . .	283
Turkey:	Flow data on foreigners. . . . .	285
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators. . . . .	285
United Kingdom:	Flow data on foreigners. . . . .	287
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators. . . . .	287
United States:	Flow data on foreigners. . . . .	289
	Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators. . . . .	289

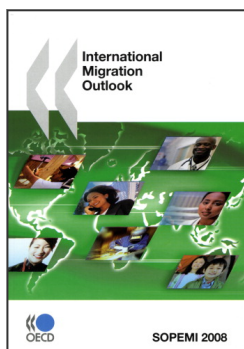


## STATISTICAL ANNEX

<b>Inflows and outflows of foreign population</b> .....	293
A.1.1. Inflows of foreign population into selected OECD countries .....	295
A.1.2. Outflows of foreign population from selected OECD countries .....	296
B.1.1. AUSTRALIA .....	297
B.1.1. AUSTRIA .....	297
B.1.1. BELGIUM .....	298
B.1.1. CANADA .....	298
B.1.1. CZECH REPUBLIC .....	299
B.1.1. DENMARK .....	299
B.1.1. FINLAND .....	300
B.1.1. FRANCE .....	300
B.1.1. GERMANY .....	301
B.1.1. GREECE .....	301
B.1.1. HUNGARY .....	302
B.1.1. IRELAND .....	302
B.1.1. ITALY .....	303
B.1.1. JAPAN .....	303
B.1.1. KOREA .....	304
B.1.1. LUXEMBOURG .....	304
B.1.1. NETHERLANDS .....	305
B.1.1. NEW ZEALAND .....	305
B.1.1. NORWAY .....	306
B.1.1. POLAND .....	306
B.1.1. PORTUGAL .....	307
B.1.1. SLOVAK REPUBLIC .....	307
B.1.1. SPAIN .....	308
B.1.1. SWEDEN .....	308
B.1.1. SWITZERLAND .....	309
B.1.1. TURKEY .....	309
B.1.1. UNITED KINGDOM .....	310
B.1.1. UNITED STATES .....	310
Metadata related to Tables A.1.1, A.1.2 and B.1.1. Migration flows in selected OECD countries .....	311
<b>Inflows of asylum seekers</b> .....	314
A.1.3. Inflows of asylum seekers into OECD countries .....	315
B.1.3. AUSTRALIA .....	316
B.1.3. BELGIUM .....	316
B.1.3. CANADA .....	317
B.1.3. FRANCE .....	317
B.1.3. GERMANY .....	318
B.1.3. NETHERLANDS .....	318
B.1.3. SWEDEN .....	319
B.1.3. SWITZERLAND .....	319
B.1.3. UNITED KINGDOM .....	320
B.1.3. UNITED STATES .....	320
Metadata related to Tables A.1.3 and B.1.3. Inflows of asylum seekers .....	321
<b>Stocks of foreign and foreign-born population</b> .....	322
A.1.4. Stocks of foreign-born population in selected OECD countries .....	324
B.1.4. AUSTRALIA .....	325
B.1.4. AUSTRIA .....	325
B.1.4. BELGIUM .....	326
B.1.4. CANADA .....	326
B.1.4. DENMARK .....	327
B.1.4. FINLAND .....	327
B.1.4. FRANCE .....	328
B.1.4. GREECE .....	328
B.1.4. HUNGARY .....	329
B.1.4. IRELAND .....	329
B.1.4. LUXEMBOURG .....	330
B.1.4. MEXICO .....	330
B.1.4. NETHERLANDS .....	331
B.1.4. NEW ZEALAND .....	331
B.1.4. NORWAY .....	332
B.1.4. POLAND .....	332
B.1.4. PORTUGAL .....	333
B.1.4. SLOVAK REPUBLIC .....	333
B.1.4. SPAIN .....	334
B.1.4. SWEDEN .....	334
B.1.4. TURKEY .....	335
B.1.4. UNITED KINGDOM .....	335
B.1.4. UNITED STATES .....	336
Metadata related to Tables A.1.4 and B.1.4. Foreign-born population .....	337

A.1.5. Stocks of foreign population in selected OECD countries .....	338
B.1.5. AUSTRIA.....	339
B.1.5. BELGIUM.....	339
B.1.5. CZECH REPUBLIC.....	340
B.1.5. DENMARK .....	340
B.1.5. FINLAND .....	341
B.1.5. FRANCE .....	341
B.1.5. GERMANY .....	342
B.1.5. GREECE.....	342
B.1.5. HUNGARY .....	343
B.1.5. IRELAND.....	343
B.1.5. ITALY .....	344
B.1.5. JAPAN.....	344
B.1.5. KOREA.....	345
B.1.5. LUXEMBOURG .....	345
B.1.5. NETHERLANDS .....	346
B.1.5. NORWAY .....	346
B.1.5. POLAND .....	347
B.1.5. PORTUGAL.....	347
B.1.5. SLOVAK REPUBLIC .....	348
B.1.5. SPAIN .....	348
B.1.5. SWEDEN.....	349
B.1.5. SWITZERLAND .....	349
B.1.5. UNITED KINGDOM .....	350
Metadata related to Tables A.1.5 and B.1.5. Foreign population .....	351
<b>Acquisition of nationality</b> .....	353
A.1.6. Acquisition of nationality in selected OECD countries.....	354
B.1.6. AUSTRALIA .....	355
B.1.6. AUSTRIA.....	355
B.1.6. BELGIUM.....	356
B.1.6. CZECH REPUBLIC.....	356
B.1.6. DENMARK .....	357
B.1.6. FINLAND .....	357
B.1.6. FRANCE .....	358
B.1.6. GERMANY .....	358
B.1.6. ITALY .....	359
B.1.6. JAPAN .....	359
B.1.6. KOREA .....	359
B.1.6. LUXEMBOURG .....	360
B.1.6. NETHERLANDS .....	360
B.1.6. NEW ZEALAND .....	360
B.1.6. NORWAY .....	361
B.1.6. POLAND .....	361
B.1.6. PORTUGAL.....	362
B.1.6. SLOVAK REPUBLIC .....	362
B.1.6. SPAIN .....	363
B.1.6. SWEDEN.....	363
B.1.6. SWITZERLAND .....	364
B.1.6. UNITED STATES .....	364
Metadata related to Tables A.1.6 and B.1.6. Acquisition of nationality .....	365
<b>Inflows of foreign workers</b> .....	366
A.2.1. Inflows of foreign workers into selected OECD countries .....	367
Metadata related to Table A.2.1. Inflows of foreign workers.....	368
<b>Stocks of foreign and foreign-born labour</b> .....	370
A.2.2. Stocks of foreign-born labour force in selected OECD countries.....	371
B.2.1. AUSTRALIA .....	371
B.2.1. AUSTRIA.....	372
B.2.1. CANADA.....	372
B.2.1. DENMARK .....	373
B.2.1. FINLAND .....	373
B.2.1. GREECE.....	374
B.2.1. MEXICO.....	374
B.2.1. NEW ZEALAND .....	375
B.2.1. SWEDEN.....	375
B.2.1. UNITED KINGDOM .....	376
B.2.1. UNITED STATES .....	376
Metadata related to Tables A.2.2 and B.2.1. Foreign-born labour force .....	377

A.2.3. Stocks of foreign labour force in selected OECD countries . . . . .	378
B.2.2. AUSTRIA . . . . .	379
B.2.2. BELGIUM . . . . .	379
B.2.2. CZECH REPUBLIC . . . . .	380
B.2.2. DENMARK . . . . .	380
B.2.2. FINLAND . . . . .	381
B.2.2. FRANCE . . . . .	381
B.2.2. GERMANY . . . . .	382
B.2.2. GREECE . . . . .	382
B.2.2. HUNGARY . . . . .	383
B.2.2. IRELAND . . . . .	383
B.2.2. ITALY . . . . .	384
B.2.2. JAPAN . . . . .	384
B.2.2. KOREA . . . . .	385
B.2.2. LUXEMBOURG . . . . .	385
B.2.2. NETHERLANDS . . . . .	386
B.2.2. NORWAY . . . . .	386
B.2.2. PORTUGAL . . . . .	387
B.2.2. SLOVAK REPUBLIC . . . . .	387
B.2.2. SPAIN . . . . .	388
B.2.2. SWEDEN . . . . .	388
B.2.2. SWITZERLAND . . . . .	389
B.2.2. UNITED KINGDOM . . . . .	389
Metadata related to Tables A.2.3 and B.2.2. Foreign labour force . . . . .	390



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