

United States

US immigrant admissions for lawful permanent residents in 2011 increased by 1.9% from the previous year, to 1 062 000. 482 000, or about 46%, were new arrivals. The foreign-born population residing in the United States in 2011 was 40.4 million, 13% of the population. Individuals born in Mexico accounted for 29%, followed by China (5.5%), India (4.6%) and the Philippines (4.5%). Together, these four countries account for approximately one-third of all immigrant admissions every year over the past decade. The share of Asians among total admissions increased from 33% to 43% over the last decade, while the share of North American immigrants fell from 38% in 2002 to 31% in 2011. The number of family and employment-based migrants as well as asylees fell in 2011 over the previous year while the number of refugees and diversity-visa immigrants rose.

Family-sponsored immigration accounted for 688 000 immigrants, or about 65% of all legal immigration to the United States, while 139 300 immigrants (13%) were employment-based. Each year 140 000 visas are reserved for permanent employment-based immigration, which includes accompanying family members.

The diversity programme accounted for 4.7% of total lawful permanent resident inflow. The per-country limit of diversity visas in 2011 was 3 500.

The refugee ceiling remained at 80 000 in 2011. 56 400 refugees were physically admitted. 113 000 refugees, admitted at least one year previously, changed their status to that of permanent immigrant. The leading countries of origin for refugees in 2011 were Burma, Bhutan, and Iraq, with the number of Iraqi refugees dropping from 18 000 in 2010 to 9 400 in 2011.

25 000 individuals were granted asylum status in 2011, and 55 400 asylees who had been in that status for more than one year were granted lawful permanent residence.

1.3 million non-immigrant visas were issued to Mexican nationals in 2011 (of which 1.14 million were border-crossing cards), followed by China (945 000), Brazil (801 000) and India (554 000), and Colombia (234 000). Over the past five years, the number of temporary visas issued to citizens of China and Brazil more than doubled. 447 000 academic student visas were granted in 2011, an increase of 16% over 2010.

The number of naturalisations, falling since 2008, increased to 694 000 persons in 2011, with Mexican-born persons leading the way.

In January 2011, there were approximately 11.5 million unauthorised residents that entered between 1980 and 2010 in the foreign-born population. Of these, only 14% were estimated to have arrived since 2005, suggesting decreasing inflows.

Mexico remains the leading source of unauthorised migration to the United States with about 59% of the unauthorised population in 2011.

Few immigration measures were enacted into law during the 112th congress, in 2011-12, as a contentious political environment, high levels of unemployment and budgetary constraints narrowed the range of policy options and limited legislation. The US House of Representatives did pass two immigration-related bills, but neither advanced in the Senate.

The Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act re-introduced in Congress did not advance. However, the Obama administration took executive action in June 2012 to provide a temporary relief from removal for many individuals who entered the US unlawfully as children, who would have qualified for the requirements of the DREAM Act. Those granted relief under this Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) – about 200 000 by February 2013 – may apply for work authorisation.

Tensions between the role in immigration policy of the federal government, and the scope of state and local action, remained. In June 2012, the US Supreme Court struck down three of the provisions of a 2010 Arizona law that: criminalised wilful failure to complete or carry an alien registration document; prohibited unauthorised aliens from knowingly applying for, soliciting or performing work in the state; and authorised state officers to arrest without warrant any non-citizen where there was probable cause that the alien has committed any public offense which makes them removable. Similar laws had been passed in other states.

The 113rd Congress has taken up discussion of comprehensive immigration reform in 2013. Comprehensive immigration legislation was one element of President Obama's re-election campaign, and legislative packages presented cover regularisation, changes to temporary and permanent skilled and unskilled economic immigration schemes, as well as employment authorisation verification measures. Competing proposals have been tabled regarding regularisation schemes, with the path to naturalisation a key question. Proposals for changes to economic migration schemes would raise caps and broaden exemptions.

For further information

www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics
http://travel.state.gov/visa/statistics/statistics_1476.html
www.foreignlaborcert.doleta.gov/
www.dol.gov/compliance/laws/comp-ina.htm
www.ice.gov

Recent trends in migrant flows and stocks

UNITED STATES

Migration flows (foreigners) National definition	2000	2005	2010	2011	Average		Level ('000)
					2001-05	2006-10	2011
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
Inflows	3.0	3.8	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.7	1 062.0
Outflows	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Migration inflows (foreigners) by type	Thousands		% distribution		Inflows of top 10 nationalities as a % of total inflows of foreigners		
Permit based statistics (standardised)	2010	2011	2010	2011	United States		
Work	67.0	65.3	6.4	6.1			
Family (incl. accompanying family)	772.4	762.2	74.1	71.8			
Humanitarian	136.3	168.5	13.1	15.9			
Free movements	..	..	..	..
Others	66.3	65.5	6.4	6.2			
Total	1 041.9	1 061.4	100.0	100.0			
Temporary migration	2005	2010	2011	Average			
<i>Thousands</i>							
International students	237.9	385.2	447.4	325.9			
Trainees	1.8	1.8	2.1	2.6			
Working holiday makers	88.6	118.2	97.4	128.3			
Seasonal workers	31.9	55.9	55.4	53.7			
Intra-company transfers	65.5	74.7	70.7	76.1			
Other temporary workers	266.1	217.6	235.0	251.2			
Inflows of asylum seekers	2000	2005	2010	2011	Average	Level	
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.1	60 587
Components of population growth	2000	2005	2010	2011	Average	Level ('000)	
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
Total	10.3	8.9	7.5	7.2	9.0	8.5	2 250
Natural increase	5.7	5.7	5.2	5.0	5.7	5.8	1 558
Net migration	4.6	3.2	2.3	2.2	3.3	2.6	692
Stocks of immigrants	2000	2005	2010	2011	Average	Level ('000)	
<i>Percentage of the total population</i>							
Foreign-born population	10.7	12.1	12.9	13.0	11.6	12.6	40 382
Foreign population	6.3	7.2	6.9	6.8	7.0	7.1	21 057
Naturalisations	2000	2005	2010	2011	Average	Level	
<i>Percentage of the foreign population</i>							
	4.1	2.9	2.9	3.2	2.7	3.5	694 193
Labour market outcomes	2000	2005	2010	2011	Average	Level	
<i>Employment/population ratio</i>							
Native-born men	77.2	73.3	68.2	68.4	74.1	71.4	
Foreign-born men	82.0	81.7	77.4	78.1	80.8	80.2	
Native-born women	68.4	65.3	62.2	61.9	66.3	64.5	
Foreign-born women	57.7	56.4	57.4	56.7	57.1	58.3	
<i>Unemployment rate</i>							
Native-born men	4.5	6.3	10.9	9.8	6.5	7.9	
Foreign-born men	4.5	5.1	10.0	8.9	5.8	7.0	
Native-born women	4.2	5.2	8.7	8.5	5.2	6.0	
Foreign-born women	5.5	5.2	9.5	9.5	6.5	6.5	
Macroeconomic indicators	2000	2005	2010	2011	Average	Level	
<i>Annual growth in %</i>							
Real GDP	4.2	3.1	2.4	1.8	2.4	0.7	
GDP/capita (level in USD)	3.0	2.1	1.5	1.1	1.4	-0.2	48 043
Employment (level in thousands)	2.5	1.8	-0.5	1.2	0.7	-0.3	140 821
<i>Percentage of the total labour force</i>							
Unemployment	4.0	5.1	9.6	9.0	5.4	7.1	

Notes and sources are at the end of the chapter.

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SOURCES AND NOTES OF THE COUNTRY TABLES OF CHAPTER 5

Migration flows of foreigners

OECD countries and the Russian Federation: sources and notes are available in the Statistical annex (Metadata related to Tables A.1, B.1 and A.2).

Bulgaria: Number of new permanent and long-term residence permits granted (*Source*: Ministry of the Interior); Lithuania: Arrivals and departures of residents (*Source*: Department of Statistics of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania); Romania: Permanent residence changes (*Source*: Romanian Statistical Yearbook).

Long-term migration inflows of foreigners by type (standardised inflows)

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

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 (www.unhcr.org/statistics).

Components of population growth

Belgium, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania and Romania: Eurostat. Other OECD countries and the Russian Federation: Population and Vital Statistics, OECD, 2011.

Total population

Foreign-born population

National sources and Secretariat estimates (cf. www.oecd.org/migration/foreignborn for more information on methods of estimation). Sources and notes of national sources are provided in the Statistical annex (see Metadata related to Tables A.4 and B.4).

Foreign population

National sources. Exact sources and notes for the OECD countries are given in the Statistical annex (Metadata related to Tables A.5 and B.5).

Lithuania: Residents' Register Service (Ministry of the Interior); Romania: Ministry of the Interior.

Naturalisations

National sources. Exact sources and notes for the OECD countries are given in the Statistical annex (Metadata related to Tables A.6 and B.6). Bulgaria and Lithuania: Ministry of the Interior.

Labour market outcomes

European countries: Labour Force Surveys (Eurostat); Australia, Canada, Chile, Mexico: Labour Force Surveys (annual averages); United States: Current Population Survey, March supplement.

Macroeconomic and labour market indicators**Real GDP and GDP per capita**

Annual National Accounts – Comparative tables at the price levels and PPPs of 2005 (OECD).

Employment and unemployment

OECD Employment Outlook 2012, OECD, 2012.



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