

**KENTUCKY LAW UPDATE**



**2025**

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## **Immigration Law Update**

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# IMMIGRATION LAW UPDATE 2025



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# AGENDA

## 1. Immigration 101

- Non-Immigrant v. Immigrant Visas
- Visa Bulletin Backlogs
- Issues facing Non-Immigrant and Immigrant visas

## 2. Birthright Citizenship

## 3. Refugee Resettlement

- Afrikaner Resettlement

## 4. Humanitarian Parole

- Afghans, Ukrainians, and CHNV

## 5. Temporary Protected Status

## 7. ICE Enforcement and Removals

## 8. 287(g) Agreements





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# Disclaimer

This information is up to date as of July 13, 2025. Given the current climate and status of litigation it is likely that this information will not be up to date for very long. Please make sure that any information you are sharing is up to date.



# Visa Types

Visa Type	Who Fits This Visa	Examples
<b>Immigrant Visas</b>	Individuals who want to live permanently in the U.S.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family-based: IR-1, F-1</li> <li>• Employment-based: EB-1, EB-2, EB-5</li> <li>• Diversity Visa</li> </ul>
<b>Non-Immigrant Visas</b>	Individuals visiting temporarily for work, study, or tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism/Business: B-1/B-2</li> <li>• Student: F-1, M-1</li> <li>• Work: E-2, H-1B, L-1</li> </ul>
<b>Work Visas</b>	Individuals coming for specialized work or temporary work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialty Occupations: H-1B</li> <li>• Intra-company Transfers: L-1</li> <li>• Seasonal or Temporary Workers: H-2B</li> </ul>
<b>Exchange Visitor Visas</b>	Individuals involved in exchange programs, such as students or researchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchange Visitor: J-1</li> <li>• Dependents of J-1: J-2</li> </ul>





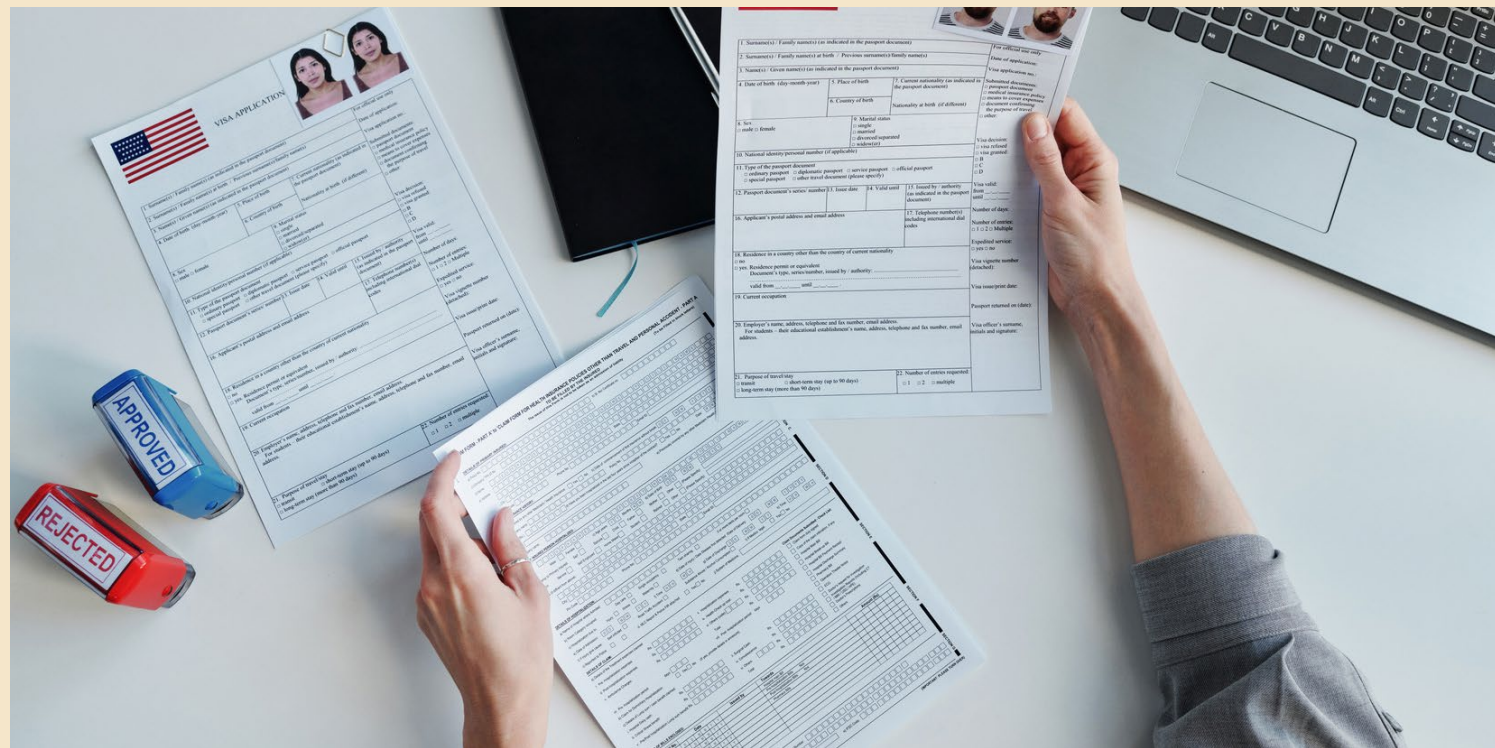
## Immigrant vs. Non-Immigrant Intent

### Immigrant Visa

Grants permanent residency to individuals intending to permanently reside in the United States (citizenship in 5 years).

### Nonimmigrant Visa

Allows temporary entry to individuals for a specific purpose, like tourism, work, or study, with an express intention to return to their home country.



# Immigrant Visa Pathways

Family Based  
Employment Based  
Diversity Visa Lottery





# Family Based Immigration

## Immediate Relatives of U.S. Citizens

Spouses, unmarried children under 21, parents

## Preference Categories

*(subject to visa bulletin)*

- F1 Unmarried sons and daughters who are over 21 of U.S. Citizens
- F2A Spouses and Minor Children of Lawful Permanent Residents
- F2B Unmarried adult children of Lawful Permanent Residents
- F3 Married sons and daughters who are over 21 of U.S. Citizens
- F4 Siblings of U.S. Citizens over 21

# VISA BULLETIN

	ALL OTHER	CHINA	INDIA	MEXICO	PHILIPPINES
F1	15JUL16	15JUL16	15JUL16	22APR05	15JUL12
F2A	01SEP22	01SEP22	01SEP22	01FEB22	01SEP22
F2B	15OCT16	15OCT16	15OCT16	01JAN07	15APR12
F3	01AUG11	01AUG11	01AUG11	01FEB01	01DEC03
F4	01JAN08	01JAN08	08JUL06	15MAR01	01JAN06





# Employment Based Immigration

## EB-1 Priority Workers

This category is for individuals with extraordinary abilities, outstanding professors or researchers, and multinational executives or managers.

## EB-2 Professionals with Advanced Degrees or Exceptional Ability

This category is for individuals who hold advanced degrees (master's or higher) or possess exceptional abilities in the arts, sciences, or business.

## EB-3 Skilled Workers, Professionals, and Other Workers

This category is for individuals who hold jobs that require at least two years of training or experience. It also includes professionals with bachelor's degrees and some unskilled workers.

## EB-4 Special Immigrants

This category is for a wide variety of special immigrant categories, including religious workers, U.S. government employees abroad, and others.

## EB-5 Immigrant Investors

This category is for foreign investors who invest a significant amount of capital in a U.S. business that creates jobs for U.S. workers.



# VISA BULLETIN

	ALL OTHER	CHINA	INDIA	MEXICO	PHILIPPINES
<b>1st</b>	C	15NOV22	15FEB22	C	C
<b>2nd</b>	15OCT23	15DEC20	01JAN13	15OCT23	15OCT23
<b>3rd</b>	01APR23	01DEC20	22APR13	01APR23	08FEB23
<b>Other Workers</b>	08JUL21	01MAY17	22APR13	08JUL21	08JUL21
<b>4th</b>	U	U	U	U	U
<b>Certain Religious Workers</b>	U	U	U	U	U
<b>5th Unreserved</b>	C	22JAN14	01MAY19	C	C
<b>5th Rural (20%)</b>	C	C	C	C	C
<b>5th High Unemployment (10%)</b>	C	C	C	C	C
<b>5th Infrastructure (2%)</b>	C	C	C	C	C

# EMPLOYMENT BASED FIRST PREFERENCE (EB-1)

	Labor Certification	Offer of Employment	Visa Bulletin
Extraordinary Ability	NO	NO	CURRENT (except India/China)
Outstanding Professor or Researcher	NO	YES	CURRENT (except India/China)
Multinational Executive or Manager	NO	YES	CURRENT (except India/China)

# EMPLOYMENT BASED SECOND PREFERENCE (EB-2)





# EMPLOYMENT BASED THIRD PREFERENCE (EB-3)

## Skilled Workers

- No degree requirement
- At least 2 years work experience

## Unskilled Workers

- No degree requirement
- Less than 2 years work experience

## Professionals

- Bachelor's degree
- Education + Experience CANNOT be substituted



# EMPLOYMENT BASED FIFTH PREFERENCE (EB-5)

Created by Congress in 1990 to stimulate the U.S. economy through creation and capital investment by foreign investors

Create or preserve 10 full-time jobs for U.S. workers

Minimum qualifying investment in the U.S. is \$1,050,000 UNLESS:

Targeted Employment Area:

High Unemployment  
Rural Area = \$800,000



## COMMON STRATEGIES

- F-1/OPT → H-1B
- H-1B → Permanent Employment (EB-2/EB-3)
- L-1 → Permanent Employment (EB-1C)
- E-2 → Investment Based Permanent Residence (EB-5)



# ISSUES FACING NON-IMMIGRANT & IMMIGRANT VISAS

## Additional Scrutiny

- Requests for Evidence
- Notices of Intent to Deny

## Revocation

## Processing Delays



# EXECUTIVE ORDER ON BIRTHRIGHT CITIZENSHIP

## Skilled Workers

Children born in the US to parents holding temporary work visas, like the H-1B skilled-worker visa, would be ineligible for automatic citizenship. This could affect skilled professionals (e.g. H-1B holders) who are here legally and contributing to the economy.

## Workers on Temporary Visas

The order would broadly target individuals legally in the US on various temporary visas, including H-2A (agricultural workers), L-1 (intra-company transferees), and others, by preventing their US-born children from acquiring automatic citizenship.

## Potential Complications for Benefits

Children of individuals on temporary visas, if they do not inherit US citizenship at birth, might inherit their parents' status as temporary legal immigrants. This could make it more difficult for them to access certain benefits and services, although they are unlikely to face deportation.





# BIRTHRIGHT CITIZENSHIP

Under 14th Amendment to the Constitution, anyone born in the United States or its territories and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, regardless of parentage, is a citizen of the United States.

On 1/20/25, President Trump issued **Executive Order (EO) 14160** denying citizenship to persons born from a mother who was unlawfully present in the United States and the father was not a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident (LPR) at the time of said person's birth, or when that person's mother's presence in the United States at the time of said person's birth was lawful but temporary (such as, but not limited to, visiting the United States under the auspices of the Visa Waiver Program or visiting on a student, work, or tourist visa) and the father was not a U.S. citizen or LPR at the time of said person's birth.

On 6/27/25, the U.S. Supreme Court did not reach the merits of the case on this issue but did allow the EO to go into effect in those states not party to the lawsuit, one month from the date of their ruling while the case is litigated. *CASA v. Trump*, 606 U. S. \_\_\_\_ (2025)

On July 11, 2025, Federal District Court Judge Laplante of New Hampshire certified a class and granted a preliminary injunction against the EO. *Barbara v. Trump*, 25-cv-244-JL-AJ (2025).



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# BIRTHRIGHT CITIZENSHIP

## BROADER IMPLICATIONS

**Potential for a Patchwork of Legal Standards:** The Supreme Court's decision to limit nationwide injunctions in this context could lead to inconsistent application of the birthright citizenship executive order across different states. This "patchwork legal landscape" could create confusion and uncertainty for workers and families alike, as birthright citizenship protections may vary depending on location.

**Discouraging High-Skilled Immigration:** The possibility of differing legal standards and uncertainties surrounding birthright citizenship could make the US less attractive to high-skilled workers considering employment with US companies. This could impact industries that rely on immigrant talent, such as the tech sector.

**Creation of a Potentially Undercitizenized Class:** Critics of the executive order argue that denying birthright citizenship to certain children born in the US would create a second-class status for these individuals, potentially limiting their access to opportunities and hindering their full integration into society.



# BIRTHRIGHT CITIZENSHIP

## IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Legality of Trump's executive order on birthright citizenship is still being litigated.

Most legal scholars believe the order to be unconstitutional, conflicting with the Fourteenth Amendment.

The Supreme Court has not yet ruled on the underlying constitutional challenge to the executive order itself.

While the order could take effect in some states due to the Supreme Court's ruling on nationwide injunctions, legal challenges are ongoing, and the ultimate outcome remains uncertain.





# REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

Refugee resettlement to the U.S. was suspended on January 20, 2025 via executive order

- Thousands of refugees with approved cases and booked flights were barred from entering the U.S. as a result

*Pacito v. Trump* filed February 10, 2025

- Judge Jamal Whitehead to appoint a third party neutral arbiter to review which refugees are “injunction protected” on a case-by-case basis while lawsuit pends in court
- Judge Whitehead also to outline standards for resettlement consistent with Ninth Circuit’s “strong reliance interest” criteria comparable to Plaintiff Pacito

As of July 13, 2025:

- The indefinite refugee ban remains in effect
- Refugees stranded abroad have received little to no formal communication about their cases
- Secretaries of State and Homeland Security were to provide a report on whether to resume refugee processing by April 20, 2025, but it is still unclear whether it was submitted by the deadline, what it contains, and whether it will be made public





# AFRIKANER RESETTLEMENT

- First White South African (“Afrikaner”) refugees arrived in the U.S. last month
- Refugee resettlement in the U.S. has only resumed for approx. 100 of these Afrikaner refugees, as well as 160 “injunction protected” refugees
- The Department of State has received nearly 50,000 inquiries from White South Africans about refugee status
- No Afrikaners have been resettled in Kentucky



# HUMANITARIAN PAROLE

- Humanitarian Parole is granted to a foreign national (who is otherwise inadmissible) to temporarily enter the United States due to an emergency and urgent humanitarian reason or significant public benefit
- Can work lawfully for the duration of your parole
- Does not allow for:
  - Access to public benefits unless specified by Congress
  - Family reunification
  - Permanent status
- Recent categorical parole programs: Afghan Evacuees, U4U, CHNV, CAM, and CBP One App



# Cuban, Haitian, Nicaraguan, and Venezuelan Program (CHNV)

## Eligibility

- Nationals of Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, or Venezuela and their immediate relatives
- Who have a supporter in the U.S. (Form I 134A)
- Can pay their own ticket to the U.S.
- Have been vaccinated against Covid, polio, and measles
- Have passed security and background checks



## HUMANITARIAN PAROLE





# Cuban, Haitian, Nicaraguan, and Venezuelan Program (CHNV)

- President Trump signed an executive order on January 20, 2025 to end “all categorical parole programs.”
- In March, DHS Secretary Noem formally announced immediate termination of CHNV program  
*Challenged in court and a federal judge ordered pause of blanket parole termination pending further review*
- On May 30, 2025, the Supreme Court issued a ruling permitting the Trump administration to proceed with the sweeping revocation of humanitarian parole status of nearly 500,000 Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans who entered the U.S. via the CHNV parole program
- This has left many parolees without status and vulnerable to deportation while the issue is litigated in the lower courts (*Svitlana Doe v. Noem*)



## HUMANITARIAN PAROLE





# UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN

- A UAC is a minor (under age 18) who arrives in the U.S. or at the border without a parent or guardian, or whose parent is criminally charged in the U.S, and is without legal status
- On February 18, 2025, Department of the Interior ordered federally-funded organizations to stop providing legal representation to UACs; reversed three days later
- On February 23, 2025, ICE issued a memo instructing personnel to conduct a national search for UACs for deportation purposes and creating new requirements for UAC sponsorship
- On March 21, 2025, Trump administration orders the termination of funding for legal representation for UACs, but a U.S. District judge set a temporary restraining order on the termination on April 1, 2025 ordering the return of funds
- On May 22, 2025, Trump administration filed a motion to terminate *Flores* settlement agreement which sets the standards for treatment of immigrant juveniles in custody

# TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS

Designation Requirements – 8 USC 1254(b)

The Attorney General MAY  
provide temporary protected  
status to nationals from a  
foreign country if:

- There is an ongoing armed conflict in that country
- There had been an earthquake, flood, drought, epidemic, or other environmental disaster, it temporarily disrupts living conditions, and the country has requested designation
- There “exist extraordinary and temporary conditions in the foreign state that prevent aliens who are nationals of the state from returning to the state in safety.”

During a designated period, individuals who are TPS beneficiaries or who are found preliminarily eligible for TPS upon initial review of their cases (prima facie eligible):

Are not removable from the United States

Can obtain an employment authorization document (EAD)

May be granted travel authorization

# TPS DESIGNATED COUNTRIES

Country	Designation Date	Continuance Residence in US Since:	Current Status
Afghanistan	05/20/2021	09/20/2023	Will be terminated July 14, 2025
Burma	05/25/2021	03/21/2024	Designated through Nov. 25, 2025
Cameroon	06/07/2022	10/05/2023	Will be terminated August 4, 2025
El Salvador	03/09/2001	02/13/2001	Designated through Sept. 9, 2026
Ethiopia	12/12/2022	04/11/2024	Designated through Dec. 12, 2025
Haiti	08/04/2024	06/03/2024	Designated through Feb 3, 2026 (pending litigation)
Honduras	01/05/1999	12/30/1998	Designated through July 5, 2025. Auto-extension through January 5, 2026 (possibly?)
Lebanon	11/27/2024	10/16/2024	Designated through May 27, 2026



# TPS DESIGNATED COUNTRIES

Country	Designation Date	Continuance Residence in US Since:	Current Status
Nepal	06/24/2015	06/24/2015	Will be terminated August 5, 2025.
Nicaragua	01/05/1999	12/30/1998	Designated through July 5, 2025. Auto-extension through January 5, 2026. (possibly?)
Somalia	09/16/1991 (09/18/2024)	07/12/2024	Designated through March 17, 2026
South Sudan	11/03/2011	09/04/2023	Designated through May 3, 2025. Auto-extension through Nov. 3, 2025.
Sudan	04/19/2022 (10/20/2023)	08/16/2023	Designated through Oct. 19, 2026
Syria	04/01/2024 (03/29/2012)	01/25/2024	Designated through Sept. 30, 2025
Ukraine	10/20/2023 (04/19/2022)	08/19/2022	Designated through Oct. 19, 2026
Venezuela	03/09/2021 (10/03/2023)	03/08/2021 (10/03/2023)	See next slide.
Yemen	09/04/2024 (09/03/2015)	07/02/2024	Designated through March 3, 2026

## VENEZUELAN TPS

Venezuela TPS (2021): terminated September 10, 2025

Venezuela TPS (2023): terminated April 7, 2025. However, those with approval prior to February 5, 2025 with a validity date of October 2, 2025 will keep that status pending litigation.



# ICE ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

- As of June 15, 2025, the latest detention data showed 56,397 immigrants were held in detention
- CNN reports that less than 10% of those detained were charged with violent crimes whereas 75% had no record beyond traffic or immigration violations
- Expansion of expedited removal, summary removal proceeding adjudicated by low level immigration officer and not a judge



## Total Detained Population by Criminal History (ICE Arrests Only, 6/15/2025)

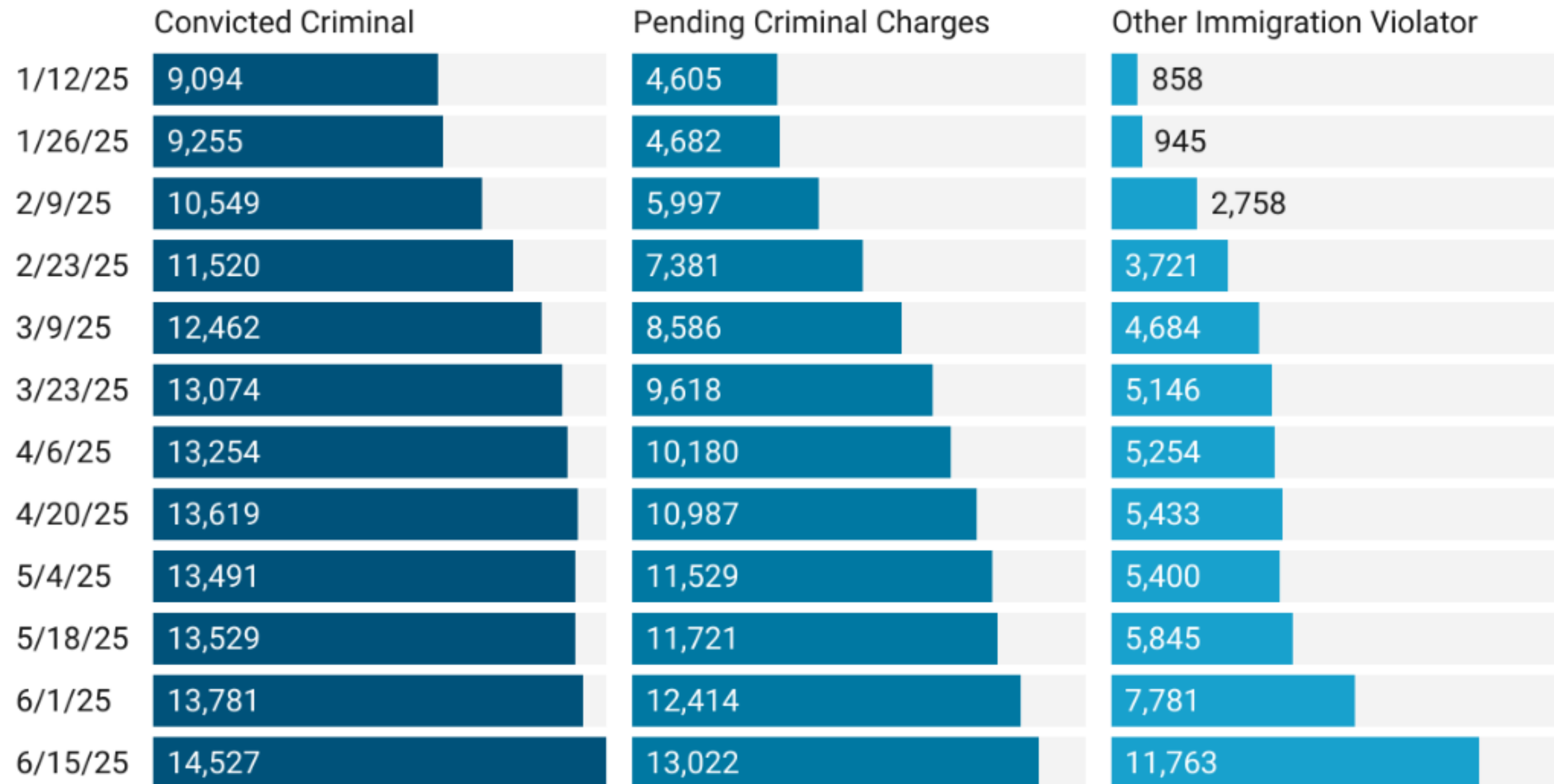


Chart: Austin Kocher • Source: ICE • Created with Datawrapper

## NO SENSITIVE LOCATIONS MEMO

- In January, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) did away with their long standing Sensitive Locations Memo. It is no longer policy to avoid enforcement in hospitals, schools, churches, and other sensitive locations.
- In practice, this means that ICE has been seen in many county courthouses around Kentucky as well as in immigration courts around the country.

## 287(G) AGREEMENTS IN KY

- What is 287(g)?
- Federal program that allows state and local law enforcement officers to collaborate with the federal government to enforce federal immigration laws
- There are three possible agreements
  - Jail Enforcement Model
  - Warrant Service Officer Model
  - Task Force or Hybrid Model



## 287(G) AGREEMENTS IN KY

- As of January 1, 2025, there were no 287(g) agreements in Kentucky
- As of July 11, 2025, Bracken County, Bullitt County, Daviess County, Grayson County, Heritage Creek Police Dept (Jefferson County), Kenton County, Lyon County, Marshall County, Oldham County, Scott County, and Union County all have 287(g) Agreements in place.

# RESOURCES



*\*We are happy to share our resources.  
Please e-mail us for a list.*

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## WHAT THE DATA SAYS ABOUT IMMIGRANTS IN THE U.S.

Stephanie Kramer and Jeffrey S. Passel

Pew Research Center, August 21, 2025

Reprinted from <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2025/08/21/key-findings-about-us-immigrants/>.

After more than 50 years of rapid growth, the nation's immigrant population is now in decline.

In January 2025, 53.3 million immigrants lived in the United States – the largest number ever recorded. In the ensuing months, however, more immigrants left the country or were deported than arrived. By June, the country's foreign-born population had shrunk by more than a million people, marking its first decline since the 1960s.

A new Pew Research Center analysis of Census Bureau data finds that, as of June 2025:

- 51.9 million immigrants lived in the U.S.
- 15.4% of all U.S. residents were immigrants, down from a recent historic high of 15.8%.
- 19% of the U.S. labor force were immigrants, down from 20% and by over 750,000 workers since January.

Starting in mid-2024, several policy changes have affected the U.S. immigrant population:

- In June 2024, President Joe Biden [announced new restrictions on asylum applications](#), leading to a [sharp decline in border encounters](#) with immigrants seeking asylum protections.
- In his first 100 days since returning to the White House in January, President Donald Trump took [181 executive actions on immigration](#) to curtail the arrival of new immigrants and deport noncitizen immigrants. The full effects of these policies remain to be seen, but already they are contributing to a declining immigrant population – [especially the unauthorized immigrant population](#).

### How we did this

Pew Research Center conducted this analysis to answer common questions about immigration to the United States and the U.S. immigrant population. The immigrant or foreign-born population consists of people born outside of the United States or its territories who are not U.S. citizens at birth.

Estimates for 2025 are from Pew Research Center tabulations of the Census Bureau's monthly [Current Population Surveys](#), accessed through [IPUMS](#). The Current Population Survey's June 2025 estimate was the most recent available as of July 31. Note that the recent downward trend in the estimated U.S. immigrant population may in part be due to technical reasons such as [declining CPS survey participation among immigrants](#).

Data on characteristics and legal status of U.S. immigrants in 2023 comes from Center analysis of augmented and supplemented 2023 American Community Survey data ([IPUMS](#)). The analysis also includes historical data from decennial censuses.

The estimates presented in this research for 2023 are the [Center's latest](#). The 2023 ACS was supplemented to take into account the Census Bureau's 2024 revisions to their population estimates [based on increased levels of net international migration](#). Read the [methodology](#) of this report for more details.

Comparative data on other countries around the world comes from the United Nations' [migrant stock and overall population estimates](#) for 2024.



Pew Research Center regularly publishes [research on the U.S. immigrant population and international migration trends](#). Here are answers to some key questions about U.S. immigrants, based on the most recent detailed data available. (In some cases, this data is from mid-2023.)

- [How many people in the U.S. are immigrants?](#)
- [Where are U.S. immigrants from?](#)
- [How have immigrants' origins changed in recent years?](#)
- [How have immigration flows changed over the longer term?](#)
- [What is the legal status of immigrants in the U.S.?](#)
- [Who are unauthorized immigrants?](#)
- [Do all lawful immigrants choose to become U.S. citizens?](#)
- [How many immigrants are working in the U.S.?](#)
- [Where do most U.S. immigrants live?](#)
- [How educated are immigrants?](#)
- [How well do immigrants speak English?](#)

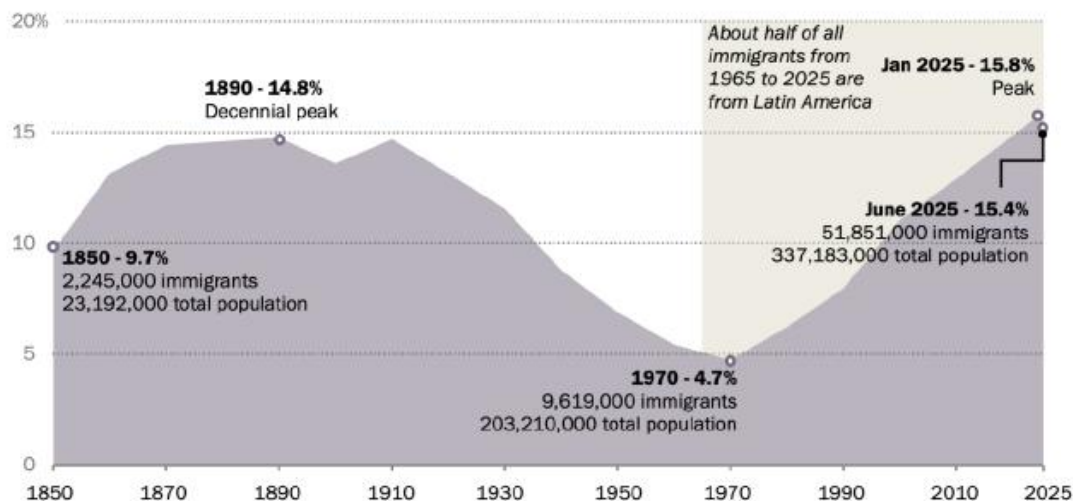
## How many people in the U.S. are immigrants?

As of June 2025, 51.9 million immigrants lived in the U.S., making up 15.4% of the nation's population. This was down from January, when there were a record 53.3 million immigrants in the U.S., accounting for 15.8% of the country's population – the highest percentage on record.

Even as the nation's immigrant population has declined in recent months – a change that may be partly artificial due to a [declining survey response rate](#) among immigrants – the U.S. is home to more immigrants than any other country.

### U.S. immigrant population peaked at nearly 16% in January 2025

*% of U.S. population that is foreign born*



Note: Populations are rounded to the nearest 1,000. Shares are calculated using unrounded population numbers. Data for 2025 represents the civilian, noninstitutional population.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "Historical Census Statistics on the Foreign-Born Population of the United States: 1850-2000," Pew Research Center tabulations of 2010 and 2023 American Community Surveys and 2025 Current Population Surveys (IPUMS).

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

As of 2024, the second-largest immigrant population is in Germany, numbering around 17 million, according to [the latest estimates from the United Nations](#).

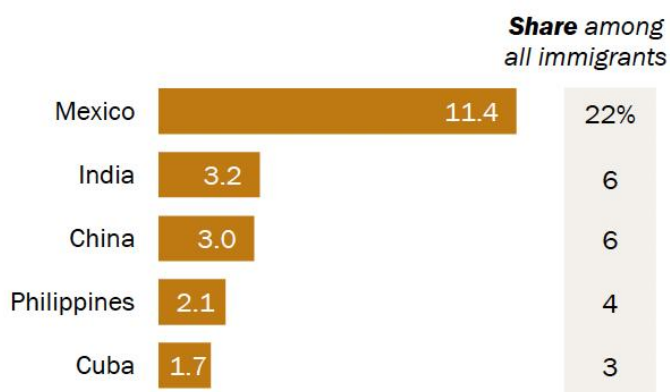
While the U.S. is home to the largest *number* of immigrants, dozens of countries (including Germany) have a higher *proportion* of immigrants in their populations than the U.S. does. In neighboring Canada, for example, immigrants account for 22% of the population. And in the United Arab Emirates, about three-quarters of all residents were born elsewhere.

### Where are U.S. immigrants from?

As of mid-2023 – the latest year for which detailed data is available – more than 11 million U.S. residents were born in Mexico, representing 22% of all immigrants nationally. The second-largest immigrant group was from India (3.2 million, or 6%), followed by China (3 million, or 6%), the Philippines (2.1 million, or 4%) and Cuba (1.7 million, or 3%).

### Mexico is by far the most common birthplace for U.S. immigrants

*Top 5 countries of birth for immigrants living in the U.S. in 2023, in millions*



Note: China includes Hong Kong but not Taiwan.

Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented U.S. Census Bureau data (IPUMS).

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER**

About half of all U.S. immigrants (52%, or 26.7 million people) were born in Latin America. In addition to the millions of migrants from Mexico and Cuba, more than a million hail from El Salvador (1.6 million), Guatemala (1.4 million), the Dominican Republic (1.4 million), Colombia (1.2 million), Honduras (1.1 million) and Venezuela (1.1 million).

After Latin America, Asia is the second-largest region of birth for U.S. immigrants. In 2023, around a quarter of all immigrants (27%, or nearly 14 million people) were born in Asia.

As of 2023, there were about 11 million immigrants from every other world region combined, accounting for 22% of the U.S. foreign-born population: 10% were born in Europe, 5% in sub-Saharan Africa, 4% in the Middle East-North Africa region, and 2% in Canada or another North American country (a category that includes Bermuda and some smaller countries).

### **How have immigrants' origins changed in recent years?**

An unprecedented number of immigrants – more than 11 million – arrived in the U.S. between 2020 and 2025. That included more than 3 million in 2023 alone, the largest annual total ever recorded, according to a Center analysis of government data sources.

Alongside this increase, immigrants' origin regions have also shifted, with a growing share coming from South America and Europe and a declining share coming from Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

Between 2021 and 2023, 20% of newly arrived immigrants were from South America, up from 13% in the period between 2015 and 2019. Another 12% of new arrivals between 2021 and 2023 were from Europe or Canada, up from 9% in the earlier period.

At the same time, 24% of new arrivals between 2021 and 2023 were from South and East Asia, down from 29% in 2015-19. And 5% of new arrivals between 2021 and 2023 involved people from sub-Saharan Africa, down from 8% in 2015-19.

Mexico was the largest origin country for immigrants who arrived between 2021 and 2023. About 11% of immigrants who came to the U.S. during this period were born in Mexico. Rounding out the top five countries of origin for immigrants who arrived during this period were India (8%), Venezuela (7%), Cuba (6%) and Colombia (5%).

Throughout this period, unauthorized immigrants accounted for most new immigrant arrivals, with many coming from Central and South America.

### **How have immigration flows changed over the longer term?**

Since 1965, more than 76 million immigrants have come to the U.S.



### 3 great waves of immigration to the United States

Era and region	Total	%	Largest countries	Total	%
<b>Modern era (1965-2025)</b>	<b>76,300,000</b>	<b>100</b>			
Latin America	37,950,000	50	Mexico	18,400,000	24
South/East Asia	20,050,000	26	China*	4,525,000	6
Europe, total	8,900,000	12	India	4,400,000	6
Middle East-N. Africa	3,150,000	4	Philippines	2,850,000	4
Sub-Saharan Africa	3,050,000	4	Cuba	2,200,000	3
Canada**	1,600,000	2	Former USSR	2,200,000	3
All other	1,650,000	2	Korea	2,100,000	3
			El Salvador	1,825,000	2
			Vietnam	1,725,000	2
			Dominican Rep.	1,675,000	2
<b>Southern/Eastern Europe wave (1890-1919)</b>	<b>18,244,000</b>	<b>100</b>			
Europe, total	16,134,000	88	Italy	3,764,000	21
North/West Europe	4,757,000	26	Austria-Hungary	3,690,000	20
South/East Europe	11,377,000	62	Russia & Poland	3,166,000	17
Canada	835,000	5	United Kingdom	1,170,000	6
Latin America	551,000	3	Germany	1,082,000	6
South/East Asia	315,000	2	Ireland***	917,000	5
Africa/Middle East	332,000	2			
Other/Not specified	77,000	<0.5			
<b>Northern Europe wave (1840-1889)</b>	<b>14,314,000</b>	<b>100</b>			
Europe, total	12,757,000	89	Germany	4,282,000	30
North/West Europe	11,700,000	82	Ireland***	3,209,000	22
South/East Europe	1,058,000	7	United Kingdom	2,586,000	18
Canada	1,034,000	7	Norway-Sweden	883,000	6
Latin America	101,000	1			
South/East Asia	293,000	2			
Africa/Middle East	5,000	<0.5			
Other/Not specified	124,000	1			

\* Includes Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macao.

\*\* Includes other North America.

\*\*\* Includes Northern Ireland.

Note: Population figures are rounded to the nearest 25,000 for 1965-2025 and the nearest 1,000 for earlier waves. Shares based on unrounded numbers. Estimates for 1965-2025 include legal and unauthorized immigrants; for 1840-1919, only legal admissions.

Source: For 1965-2025, Pew Research Center estimates based on 1980, 1990 and 2000 decennial censuses; 2005-2023 American Community Surveys (IPUMS); and 2025 monthly Current Population Surveys through June (IPUMS). For 1840-1919, refer to the Center's 2015 report "Modern Immigration Wave Brings 59 Million to U.S., Driving Population Growth and Change Through 2065."

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Before then, [U.S. immigration law](#) favored immigrants from Northern and Western Europe and mostly barred immigration from Asia. The 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act opened up immigration from

Asia and Latin America. The Immigration Act of 1990 further increased legal immigration and allowed immigrants from more countries to enter the U.S. legally.

Immigration flows after 1965 have been larger and come from different and more countries than earlier flows:

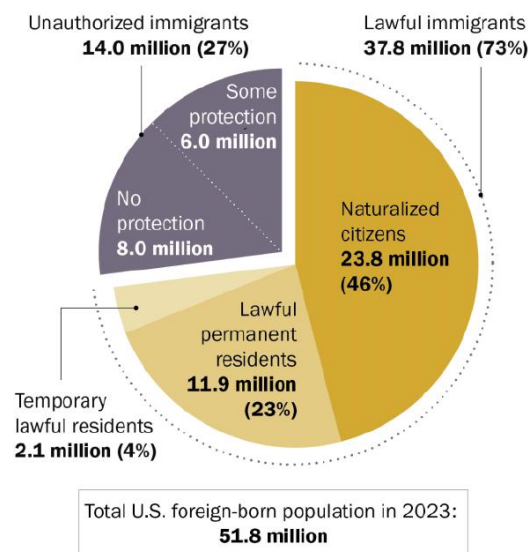
- From 1840 to 1889, about 90% of U.S. immigrants came from Europe, including about 70% from Germany, Ireland and the United Kingdom.
- Almost 90% of the immigrants who arrived from 1890 to 1919 also came from Europe. But their origins were largely different as nearly 60% came from Italy, Austria-Hungary and Russia-Poland.
- Since 1965, about half of U.S. immigrants have come from Latin America, with about a quarter from Mexico alone. About another quarter have come from Asia. Large numbers have come from China, India and the Philippines.

Today, Mexico remains the largest origin country among U.S. immigrants. However, immigration from Mexico has [slowed since 2007](#), and the Mexican-born population in the U.S. [has since dropped](#). The Mexican share of the U.S. immigrant population declined from 29% in 2010 to 22% in 2023.

### What is the legal status of immigrants in the U.S.?

#### Unauthorized immigrants were 27% of the U.S. foreign-born population in 2023

*Foreign-born population estimates, 2023*



Note: These figures differ from published U.S. Census Bureau totals because they are adjusted to account for population undercount. The unauthorized immigrant population includes those with temporary protection from deportation under Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Temporary Protected Status (TPS), as well as pending asylum claims and various other statuses. Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented U.S. Census Bureau data (IPUMS).

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As of 2023, 46% of immigrants were naturalized U.S. citizens. Nearly a quarter (23%) were lawful permanent residents, often referred to as “green card holders,” and another 4% were lawful temporary residents who were permitted to stay in the U.S. for a limited period of time, usually for work or study. The remaining immigrants in the U.S. fell into the “unauthorized” category and constituted 27% of all U.S. immigrants.

### **Who are unauthorized immigrants?**

Unauthorized immigrants are those without full legal status. As of 2023, this population hit a new record high of 14 million. Within this group, [about 6 million](#) (or a little more than 40%) had some form of temporary protection from deportation, with some also having a permit to work in the U.S.

Among the unauthorized immigrants with some deportation protections were 2.6 million asylum applicants; 700,000 people who entered the U.S. legally after receiving parole; 700,000 victims of crime and violence; 650,000 people with [Temporary Protected Status \(TPS\)](#), a program available to immigrants from countries facing war, natural disasters and other crises; and 600,000 immigrants who were brought to the U.S. illegally as children and are enrolled in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.

Another 1 million migrants encountered U.S. Border Patrol before being released into the U.S., typically with an order to appear in immigration court. These immigrants have had more limited protections from deportation while their cases are being resolved.

Immigrants in these groups are included as part of the “unauthorized” population because their deportation protections are temporary and can quickly change. For example, the Trump administration has [rescinded deportation protections](#) and work permits for about 500,000 immigrants from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela who entered the U.S. legally.

The remaining unauthorized immigrants in the U.S. as of 2023 (about 8 million) had neither legal status nor temporary protection from deportation.

This year, policy and enforcement changes likely contributed to a decline in the unauthorized immigrant population between January and June. Border crossings have fallen further, [reaching lows not seen since the 1960s](#). [Immigration arrests and deportations have increased](#). And a growing number of [immigrants have lost deportation protections](#), with some likely [leaving the country voluntarily](#).

### **Do all lawful immigrants choose to become U.S. citizens?**

Immigrants who are lawful permanent residents and [meet other requirements](#) can apply to become U.S. citizens through the naturalization process. During the 2024 fiscal year, [818,500 immigrants](#) became U.S. citizens through naturalization.

[Millions of lawful permanent residents](#) are currently eligible to become U.S. citizens but have not applied for naturalization.



## How many immigrants are working in the U.S.?

Between January and June 2025, the number of immigrants living and working in the U.S. declined. But recent figures by legal status are not yet available.

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### U.S. workers were more likely to be immigrants in 2023 than in 2003

*Civilian labor force, in millions*

	Labor force		Share of labor force		
	2023	2003	2023	2003	Change
U.S. total	174.2	146.6	100%	100%	
U.S. born	141.2	124.5	81%	85%	-4 pct. pts.
Lawful immigrant	23.3	15.2	13%	10%	+3
Unauthorized immigrant	9.7	6.9	6%	5%	+1

Note: All numbers are rounded. Percentage point change calculated using unrounded numbers.

Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented 2023 American Community Survey (IPUMS) and March 2003 Current Population Survey data.

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In 2023, the most recent year with complete data, 33 million immigrants were in the U.S. workforce, including about 23 million lawful immigrants and 10 million unauthorized immigrants.

Nearly one-in-five workers (19%) were immigrants in 2023, up from 15% two decades earlier. This share increased steadily since at least 1995, when they made up 12% of the labor force.

About 2% of adult immigrants, including noncitizens, are currently serving in the military or served in the past.

## Where do most U.S. immigrants live?

In 2023, most of the nation's 51.8 million immigrants lived in just four states. California was home to 11.3 million immigrants, or 28.4% of the national total. Texas had the second-largest immigrant population with over 6 million foreign-born residents, followed by Florida (5.4 million) and New York (5.0 million).

A majority of immigrants lived in only 12 metropolitan areas. The New York City metropolitan area was home to the largest population, accounting for 13% of all immigrants. The Los Angeles and Miami metro areas also had particularly large immigrant populations, with 9% and 6% of all U.S. immigrants, respectively.

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## 20 U.S. metropolitan areas with largest number of immigrants in 2023



Note: Each metropolitan area has more than 500,000 immigrants. Circles are scaled to size of population.  
Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented U.S. Census Bureau data (IPUMS).

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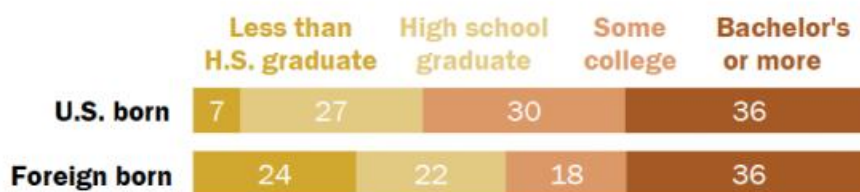
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## How educated are immigrants?

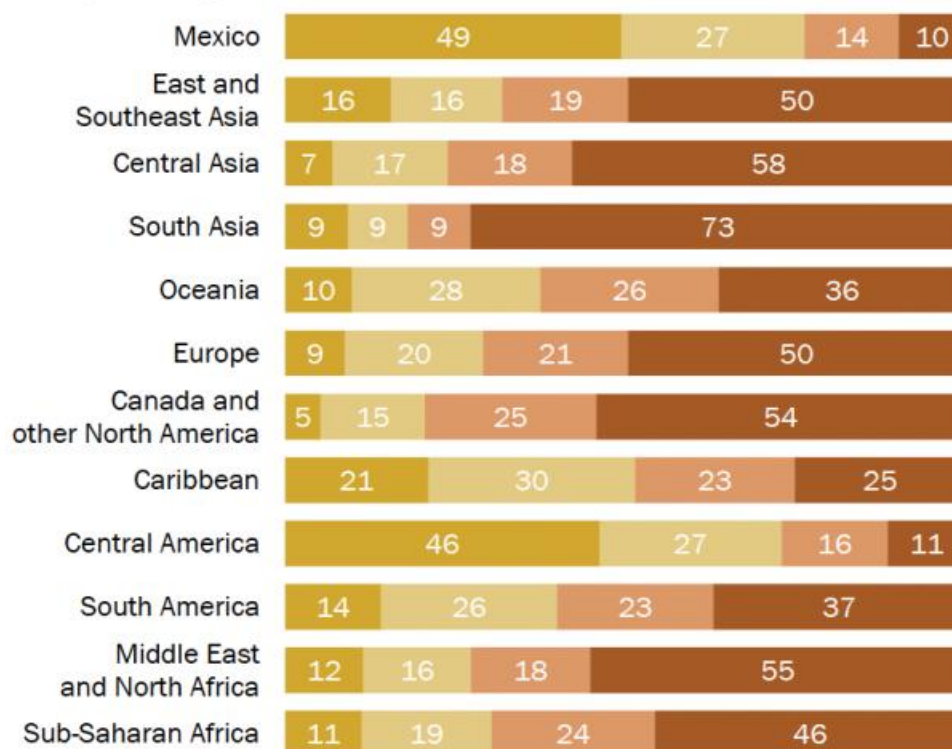
Overall, immigrants in the U.S. had lower levels of educational attainment than their U.S.-born counterparts in 2023.

## Educational attainment among U.S. immigrants, 2023

% among those ages 25 and older



Among the foreign born, those born in ...



Note: "Some college" includes those with an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree. "High school graduate" includes those with a high school diploma or its equivalent, such as a GED certificate.

Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented U.S. Census Bureau data (IPUMS).

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- 24% of immigrant adults ages 25 and older had not completed high school, compared with 7% of the U.S.-born population.
- However, immigrants were as likely as the U.S. born to have a bachelor's degree or higher (36% each).

Educational attainment among immigrants varies widely based on their region of origin:

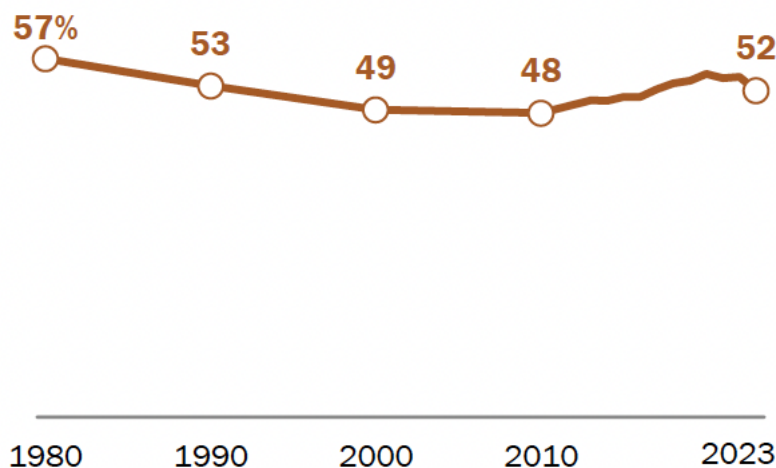
- Only 11% of Central American immigrants hold a bachelor's degree or higher. By comparison, 36% of U.S.-born adults have this level of education.
- Immigrants from Asia, Europe, the Middle East-North Africa region, sub-Saharan Africa and other North American countries are *more* likely than the U.S. born to have at least a bachelor's degree.

### How well do immigrants speak English?

About half of immigrants ages 5 and older (52%) are proficient English speakers, meaning they either speak English very well or speak only English at home.

### As of 2023, about half of U.S. immigrants were English proficient

*% of foreign-born population ages 5 and older who are English proficient*



Note: English proficient are those who speak only English at home and those who, if they speak a language other than English at home, indicate they can speak English at least “very well.”

Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of 1980-2000 decennial censuses and 2010, 2013-2023 American Community Surveys (IPUMS).

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Again, there is a wide range of English proficiency depending on where immigrants were born:

- The overwhelming majority of immigrants from elsewhere in North America (97%) or from Oceania (83%) – primarily Australia and New Zealand – are proficient English speakers.



- Large shares of immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa (75%), South Asia (72%) and Europe (72%) also are English proficient.
- On the opposite end of the spectrum, only about one-in-three immigrants who were born in Central America (31%) are proficient in English.

English proficiency is more common among immigrants who arrived in the U.S. before 2000 than among those who entered the country later. Some 57% of immigrants who came to the U.S. before 2000 are proficient English speakers, compared with 47% who arrived in 2010 or later.

*Note: This is an update of an analysis originally published May 3, 2017.*

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