U.S. Unauthorized Immigrant Population Reached a Record 14 Million in 2023

Preliminary data indicates continued growth into 2024 and a decrease in 2025

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How we did this

Pew Research Center conducted this research to understand changes in the unauthorized immigrant population in the United States. The Center has published estimates of the U.S. unauthorized immigrant population for more than two decades.

This report presents estimates of the number of unauthorized immigrants in the U.S. as of July 2023, a revised estimate for 2022, and for previous years back to 1990. **These estimates supersede all previously published Pew Research Center estimates.**

The Center uses a "residual method" to estimate the size the unauthorized immigrant population. The method is similar to those used by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Office of Homeland Security Statistics and nongovernmental organizations, including the Migration Policy Institute and the Center for Migration Studies of New York. Those organizations' estimates are generally consistent with ours. Our estimates also align with official U.S. data sources, including birth records, school enrollment figures and tax data, as well as Mexican censuses and surveys.

Our residual method includes these steps:

1. Estimate the **total number of immigrants** living in the country in a particular year using data from U.S. censuses and government surveys such as the American Community Survey (ACS) and the Current Population Survey (CPS).
2. Estimate the **number of immigrants living in the U.S. legally** using official counts of immigrant and refugee admissions together with other demographic data (for example, death and out-migration rates).
3. Subtract our estimate of **lawful immigrants** from our estimate of the **total immigrant population.** This provides an initial estimate of the **unauthorized immigrant population.**

Our final estimate of the U.S. unauthorized immigrant population, as well as estimates for lawful immigrants, includes an upward adjustment. We do this because censuses and surveys tend to miss some people. Undercounts for immigrants, especially unauthorized immigrants, tend to be higher than for other groups.

More details on how we produced our estimates are in Methodology A: Unauthorized immigrant estimates.

New Census Bureau population estimates, released in December 2024, greatly increased their measure of international migration for mid-2021 to mid-2023. We have incorporated the bureau's revised immigration estimates into the ACS. Our new estimate of the unauthorized immigrant population for 2023 and the updated estimate for 2022 reflect this new information.

More details about the survey data we used in our estimates are in Methodology B: Survey data on immigrants.

The term "unauthorized immigrant" reflects many academic researchers' and policy analysts' standard and customary usage. The DHS Office of Homeland Security Statistics has also used it and similar terms. The term means the same thing as "undocumented immigrants," "illegal immigrants" and "illegal aliens."

To learn who is and who is not included in the unauthorized immigrant population, read "Who are unauthorized immigrants?" later in this report.

More information on concepts used in this report and how we round our population estimates is in Methodology C: Definitions and concepts.

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*Preliminary data indicates continued growth into 2024 and a decrease in 2025*

In the years after the COVID-19 pandemic, U.S. immigration policy changes fueled a sharp rise in both legal and illegal immigration. Lawful admissions jumped, as did encounters at the U.S.-Mexico border between migrants and U.S. authorities.

The number of unauthorized immigrants in the United States reached an all-time high of 14 million in 2023 after two consecutive years of record growth, according to a new Pew Research Center estimate. The increase of 3.5 million in two years is the biggest on record. Data from 2023 is the most recent available for developing a comprehensive and detailed estimate.

The label "unauthorized immigrants" captures a complex array of statuses, including immigrants who entered the U.S. legally. While the label is not perfect, it groups together immigrants living in the country with
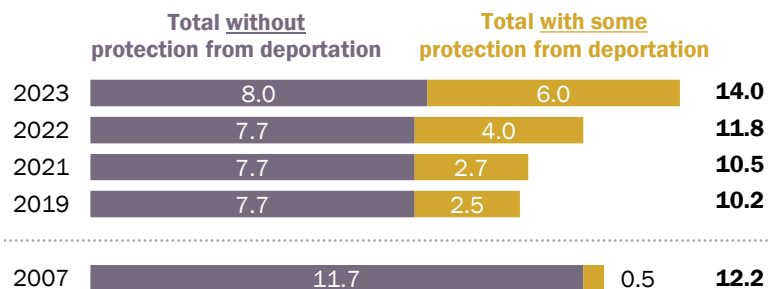
The number of unauthorized immigrants in the U.S. grew sharply from 2021 to 2023 …

U.S. immigrant population without full legal status, in millions
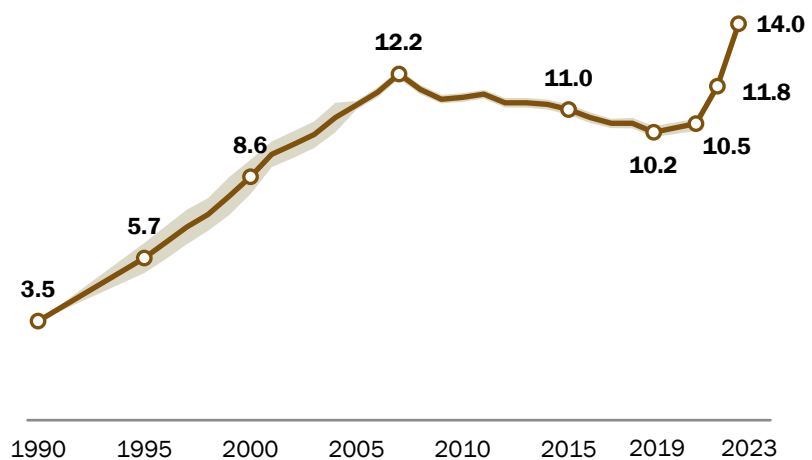
… due to an increase of unauthorized immigrants with some protection from deportation

Unauthorized immigrant population in the U.S., in millions

Note: In the top panel, shading shows the range of the estimated 90% confidence interval. The data points labeled are 1990, 1995, 2000, 2007 (previous peak), 2015, 2019, 2021, 2022 and 2023.
Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented U.S. Census Bureau data (IPUMS).
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impermanent, precarious statuses. The term has been used for decades by researchers who develop estimates of the population and is generally used in this report.

The increase from 2021 to 2023 was driven primarily by growth in the number of unauthorized immigrants who were living in the U.S. with some protections from deportation, such as immigrants paroled into the country and asylum seekers. About 6 million immigrants without full legal status had some protection from deportation in 2023, up from 2.7 million in 2021. In 2007, when the total unauthorized immigrant population was at its previous high (12.2 million), about 500,000 had some protection from deportation.

The total number with temporary protections from deportations increased after 2021 following policy changes made by the Biden administration that allowed many immigrants to arrive in the U.S. with protected status and others to gain protection shortly after arriving.

Unauthorized immigrants with some protection from deportation accounted for more than 40% of those without full legal status in 2023. These protections can be, and in some cases have been, removed by the federal government, sometimes with little notification.

To understand which groups are considered unauthorized immigrants in this analysis, read "Who are unauthorized immigrants?" later in this report.

In 2023, unauthorized immigrants accounted for 27% of all U.S. immigrants, up from 22% in 2021. The group's share of the U.S. population increased from 3.1% to 4.1% during this time.

Changes to the unauthorized immigrant population, 2024-25

Through early 2024, the overall unauthorized immigrant population continued to grow at a record pace, according to a Center review of preliminary and incomplete data sources. After mid-2024, policy decisions spanning the Biden and Trump administrations again changed this population. Growth slowed considerably in the last half of 2024 after the Biden administration stopped accepting asylum applications at the border and paused parole programs.

In 2025, the unauthorized immigrant population has probably started to decline, due in part to increased deportations and reduced protections under the Trump administration.

As of mid-2025, the unauthorized immigrant population likely remains above 2023 levels. Still, we won't know the full impact of these policy shifts until more complete data becomes available.

Learn more about how the unauthorized immigrant population may have changed in 2024-25, according to preliminary, incomplete data.

Overview of this report

This report explores the dynamics shaping the population of immigrants living in the U.S. without full lawful status. It provides a complete estimate and profile for the unauthorized immigrant population in 2023 based on the best data currently available. The report also provides a look at how the population has since changed, sketching out trends based on incomplete data from 2024 and the first half of 2025 – though complete estimates are not yet possible due to these limitations.

The new estimates for 2023 (and revised estimates for 2022) are based on Pew Research Center analysis of Census Bureau data from the American Community Survey (ACS), the most recent data available for a fully detailed estimate of unauthorized immigration. The survey data for these two years has been supplemented to take into account recent Census Bureau revisions of their data on the magnitude of immigration to the U.S.

Read "How we did this" for more.

Which groups of U.S. unauthorized immigrants had deportation protection in 2023?

Several groups of unauthorized immigrants had some protections from deportation in July 2023:

- Asylum applicants (2.6 million)
- Those who entered the U.S. legally after receiving parole (700,000)
- Victims of crimes or violence (700,000)
- Those with Temporary Protected Status (TPS), which is available to migrants in the U.S. from countries facing war, natural disasters or other crises (650,000)
- Enrollees in Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), which is available to those who were brought to the U.S. illegally as children (600,000)

Groups of U.S. unauthorized immigrants with some protection from deportation in 2023

Unauthorized immigrant population in the U.S., 2023
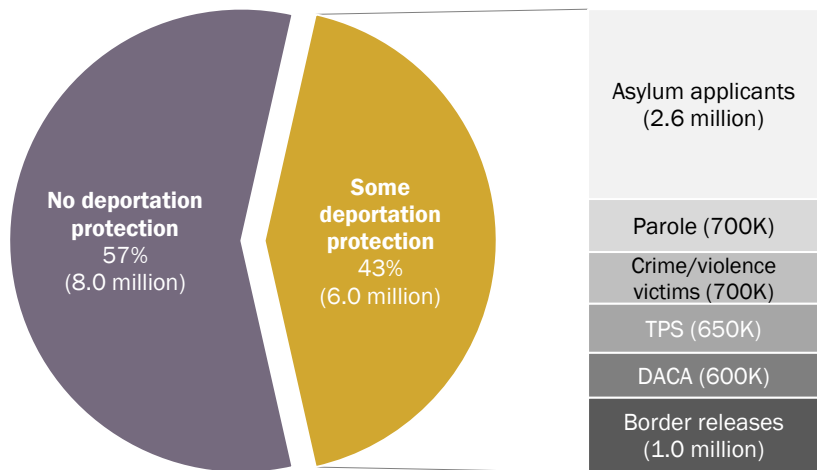
Note: All figures rounded.
Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented U.S. Census Bureau data (IPUMS) and administrative data from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (DHS) and the Executive Office for Immigration Review (DOJ).
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Another 1.0 million migrants encountered by U.S. Border Patrol were released into the U.S., typically with orders to appear in immigration court. These immigrants have some protections from deportation while their cases are resolved, but their protections are more limited.

Individuals in these groups are counted as part of the "unauthorized" immigrant population because their deportation protections are temporary and can quickly change. For example, the Trump administration in 2025 has:

- Removed deportation protections and rescinded work permits for about 500,000 parolees from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela.
- Allowed protections to expire for about 350,000 Venezuelans and 350,000 Haitians with TPS.

- Stopped accepting asylum applications from immigrants who enter the country at the U.S.-Mexico border, a move that has been challenged in court.
- Largely stopped releasing immigrants into the U.S. who are encountered at the border.

The vast majority of unauthorized immigrants – more than 12 million in 2023 – either entered the U.S. illegally or overstayed a visa. Another 2 million entered the U.S. legally and were paroled or released into the country. Protection from deportation provided by programs such as DACA, TPS or asylum are only available to immigrants already in the U.S.

What is the composition of the U.S. immigrant population?

As of 2023, unauthorized immigrants represented 4.1% of the total U.S. population and 27% of the foreign-born population.
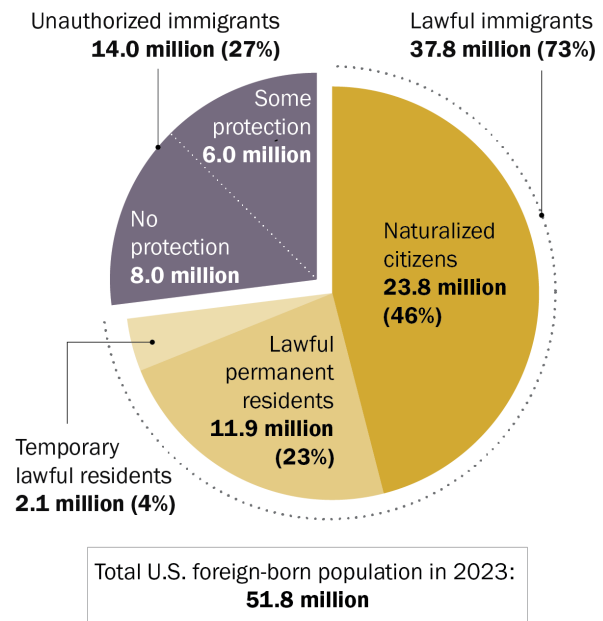
Meanwhile, the *lawful* immigrant population grew steadily from 24.1 million in 2000 to 37.8 million in 2023. The growth was driven by a rapid increase in the number of naturalized citizens, from 10.7 million to 23.8 million. The number of lawful permanent residents largely held steady at 11.9 million. As a result, in 2023, almost half (46%) of all immigrants in the country were naturalized U.S. citizens.

U.S. immigrant population trends

The overall U.S. immigrant population reached an all-time high of more than 53 million in January 2025, accounting for a record 15.8% of the U.S. population. However, growth slowed substantially starting in early 2024, and the number declined by more than 1 million between January and June 2025, according to data from the Current Population Survey.[1] This would be the first sustained drop in the U.S. immigrant population since the 1960s.

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

Foreign-born population estimates, 2023

Unauthorized immigrants
14.0 million (27%)

Lawful immigrants
37.8 million (73%)

Some protection
6.0 million

No protection
8.0 million

Naturalized citizens
23.8 million (46%)

Lawful permanent residents
11.9 million (23%)

Temporary lawful residents
2.1 million (4%)

Total U.S. foreign-born population in 2023:
51.8 million

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, parolees and other groups.
Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented U.S. Census Bureau data (IPUMS).
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[1] The Current Population Survey (CPS) provides up-to-date information on the population every month. While it can be used to track trends in the total immigrant population, the CPS does not have enough information or a large enough sample to estimate the unauthorized immigrant population separately. Refer to "Methodology B: Survey data on immigrants" for more details.

What countries do unauthorized immigrants come from?

The number of U.S. unauthorized immigrants born in countries other than Mexico grew from 6.4 million in 2021 to 9.7 million in 2023.

By contrast, the unauthorized immigrant population born in Mexico grew only a little from 2021 to 2023, returning to its 2019 level of about 4.3 million.

Though Mexico remains the country where the most unauthorized immigrants in the U.S. are from, it accounted for 30% of the nation's unauthorized immigrants living here in 2023. Mexicans represented a majority of unauthorized immigrants in the U.S. through 2016; their share in 2023 was by far the smallest share on record.
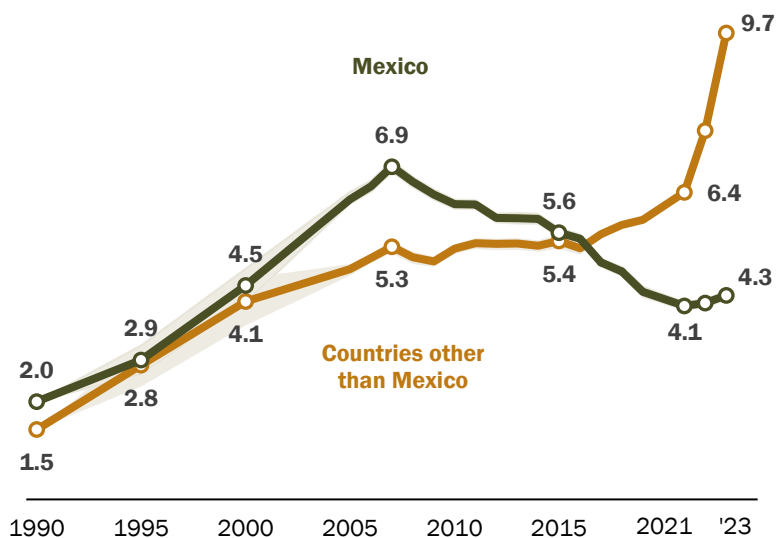
After Mexico, the countries with the largest unauthorized immigrant populations in the U.S. in 2023 were:

- Guatemala (850,000)
- El Salvador (850,000)
- Honduras (775,000)
- India (680,000)

U.S. unauthorized immigrant population from countries other than Mexico grew sharply from 2021 to 2023

Unauthorized immigrant population in the U.S., in millions

Note: Shading shows the range of the estimated 90% confidence interval. The data points labeled are 1990, 1995, 2000, 2007, 2015, 2021 and 2023.
Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented U.S. Census Bureau data (IPUMS).
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In 2023, Venezuela was the country of birth for 650,000 U.S. unauthorized immigrants. This population has seen particularly fast growth, from 55,000 in 2007 to 195,000 in 2021 and 650,000 in 2023.

Other countries have also had large increases in the number of unauthorized immigrants in recent years. Totals from Venezuela, Cuba, Colombia, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Ukraine and Peru all more than doubled from 2021 to 2023.

The number of unauthorized immigrants from Cuba grew from less than 5,000 in 2019 to 100,000 in 2021 and 475,000 in 2023. This increase came after Cubans could no longer enter the U.S. legally without a visa, a change in policy made in 2017 under the Obama administration. Much of the recent growth in unauthorized immigrant populations from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, Venezuela and Ukraine was due to parole programs instituted under President Joe Biden and that were ended by mid-2025.

El Salvador, India, China and the Philippines are the only countries to show no significant change in their U.S. unauthorized immigrant populations between 2021 and 2023 (among countries with more than 150,000 unauthorized immigrants).

World regions

The number of unauthorized immigrants from almost every world region increased since 2021. The largest increases were from South America (1.3 million), Central America (725,000) and the Caribbean (575,000).

The U.S. unauthorized immigrant populations from most world regions grew from 2021 to 2023

U.S. unauthorized immigrant population by region of birth, in thousands

	2023	2021	Change
U.S. total	14,000	10,500	3,500
LATIN AMERICA			
Mexico	4,250	4,050	200
Central America	2,850	2,150	725
Caribbean	1,150	575	575
South America	2,100	825	1,250
OTHER REGIONS			
Asia	1,750	1,650	110
Europe, Canada	1,050	650	425
Middle East-North Africa	250	170	90
Sub-Saharan Africa	475	325	160
Oceania	85	70	-

Note: All numbers are rounded. The change column is calculated from unrounded totals. Only statistically significant changes based on 90% confidence intervals are shown; other measured changes are not statistically different from zero. Asia consists of South, Central and East Asia. The U.S. total includes a residual (not shown) from other nations.
Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented U.S. Census Bureau data (IPUMS).
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Detailed table: Unauthorized immigrant population by region and selected country of birth (and margins of error), 1990-2023 (Excel)
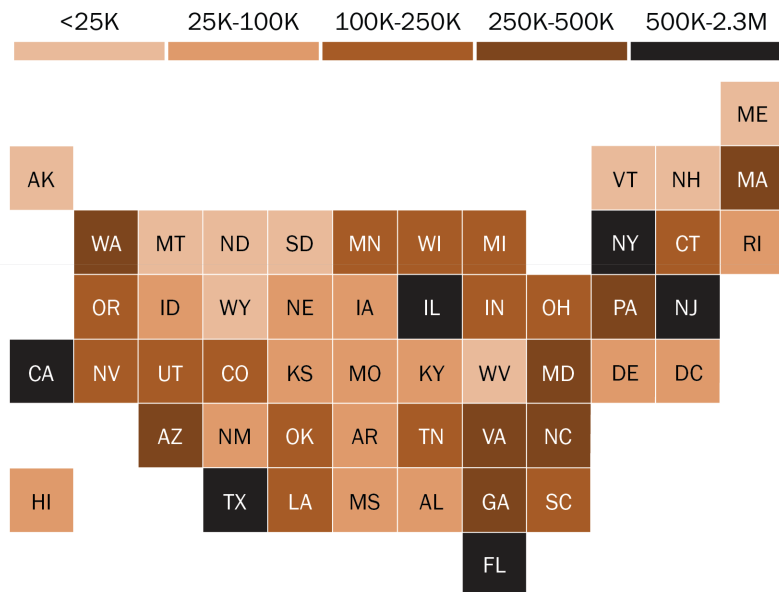
What states do unauthorized immigrants live in?

The six states with the largest unauthorized immigrant populations in 2023 were:

- California (2.3 million)
- Texas (2.1 million)
- Florida (1.6 million)
- New York (825,000)
- New Jersey (600,000)
- Illinois (550,000)

These states have consistently had the most unauthorized immigrants since at least 1980. However, in 2007, California had *1.2 million more* unauthorized immigrants than Texas. Today, it has only about 200,000 more.

The U.S. unauthorized immigrant population has also become considerably less geographically concentrated over time. In 2023, the top six states were home to 56% of the nation's unauthorized immigrants, down from 80% in 1990.

U.S. unauthorized immigrant population by state, 2023

Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented U.S. Census Bureau data (IPUMS).
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States where the unauthorized immigrant population grew the most

The unauthorized immigrant populations grew in 32 states from 2021 to 2023. The four states with the biggest growth were:

- Florida (+700,000)
- Texas (+450,000)
- California (+425,000)

▪ New York (+230,000)

Eight additional states had their unauthorized immigrant populations increase by 75,000 or more: New Jersey, Illinois, Georgia, North Carolina, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Ohio.

Oregon is the only state with a population of more than 100,000 unauthorized immigrants where this group did not increase compared with 2021.

Even with these increases in recent years, six states had smaller unauthorized immigrant populations in 2023 than in 2007, the previous peak – Arizona, California, Nevada, New Mexico, New York and Oregon.

Detailed table: *[Unauthorized immigrant population for states (and margins of error), 1990-2023 (Excel)](#)*

Detailed table: *[Unauthorized immigrants and characteristics for states, 2023 (Excel)](#)*

How many households include unauthorized immigrants?

A record 7.5 million U.S. households included unauthorized immigrants in 2023. They represented 5.6% of 133 million households nationwide. Overall, a total of 26 million people – including about 14 million unauthorized immigrants – lived in these households.

▪ In 88% of these households, either the householder or their spouse was an unauthorized immigrant.
▪ Almost 70% of these households are considered "mixed status," meaning that they also contained U.S.-born residents or lawful immigrants. Most of the U.S.-born residents are children of unauthorized immigrants.

The share of households that include an unauthorized immigrant varies considerably across states. Nevada (10%) had the highest share in 2023, followed by California, Texas, Florida and New Jersey (9% each). In Montana, West Virginia and Vermont, about 1% of households included an unauthorized immigrant.

How many children in the U.S. have unauthorized immigrant parents?

About 4.6 million children under 18 born in the U.S. lived with an unauthorized immigrant parent in 2023, up from 4.0 million in 2021 and below the previous high of 4.9 million in 2016. As of 2023, these children accounted for about 75% of all minor children living with an unauthorized immigrant parent.
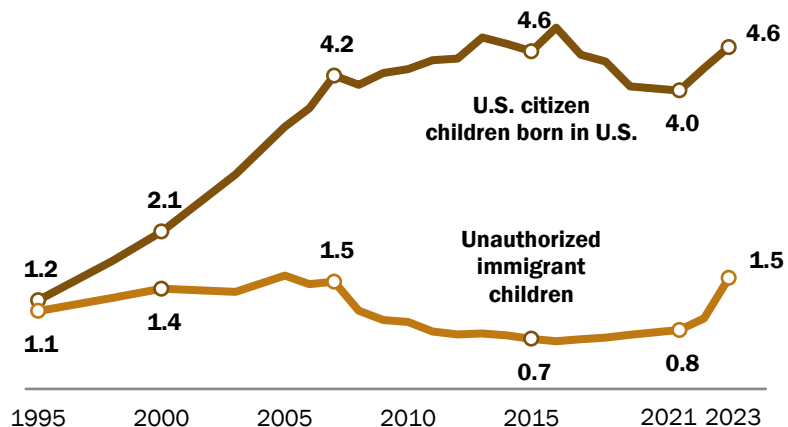
(In 2023, about 300,000 babies were born in the U.S. to an unauthorized immigrant, up from about 200,000 in 2021.)

In addition, about 1.5 million children under 18 were unauthorized immigrants in 2023. This group nearly doubled since 2021, and much of the rapid growth in the overall unauthorized immigrant population was due to families arriving in the U.S. with their foreign-born children. The 2023 total matches the previous high in 2005.

Most children living with an unauthorized immigrant parent are U.S. citizens who are born in the U.S.

Number of children who live with a parent who is an unauthorized immigrant, in millions

4.2   4.6   4.6

U.S. citizen children born in U.S.

4.0

2.1

1.2   1.5   Unauthorized immigrant children   1.5

1.1   1.4   0.7   0.8

1995   2000   2005   2010   2015   2021   2023

Note: Children are those under age 18. The data points labeled are 1995, 2000, 2007, 2015, 2021 and 2023.
Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented U.S. Census Bureau data (IPUMS).
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Another 1.4 million adults born in the U.S. lived with at least one parent who is an unauthorized immigrant in 2023, compared with 1.2 million in 2021 and only about 200,000 in 2005.[2]

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[2] The total number of U.S.-born adults with an unauthorized immigrant parent is actually larger than 1.4 million because only those still living with their unauthorized immigrant parent(s) can be identified in our data.

How long have unauthorized immigrants lived in the U.S.?

A record number of unauthorized immigrants have been in the U.S. for a relatively short time due to the rapid growth in the overall unauthorized population since 2021. In 2023, more than 4.2 million unauthorized immigrant adults had been in the U.S. for less than five years, up from 1.8 million in 2021. The 2023 figure is more than double the number in any year from 2010 to 2019.

A similar number of unauthorized immigrant adults – 4.3 million – had lived in the U.S. for 18 years or more in 2023. This is up slightly from 2021, when the total was 4.1 million.

The number of unauthorized immigrants in the U.S. for less than 5 years grew sharply from 2021 to 2023

Unauthorized immigrant population in the U.S., in millions

Note: The data points labeled are 1995, 2000, 2007, 2015, 2021 and 2023.
Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented U.S. Census Bureau data (IPUMS).
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Another 3.8 million unauthorized immigrant adults had lived in the U.S. for 5 to 17 years in 2023, roughly the same as in 2021.

How many unauthorized immigrants are in the labor force?

The number of unauthorized immigrants in the U.S. workforce grew from 7.8 million in 2021 to a record 9.7 million in 2023.

Unauthorized immigrants represented 5.6% of the U.S. workforce in 2023, a new high. The previous peak was 5.4% in 2007.

Since 2003, unauthorized immigrants have made up 4.4% to 5.6% of all U.S. workers, a relatively narrow range.

The share of the U.S. workforce made up of unauthorized immigrants is higher than their 4.1% share of the total U.S. population. That's because the unauthorized immigrant population includes relatively few children or elderly adults, groups that tend not to be in the labor force.

The number of unauthorized immigrants in the U.S. workforce grew from 2019 to 2023

Unauthorized immigrants in the U.S. civilian labor force, in millions
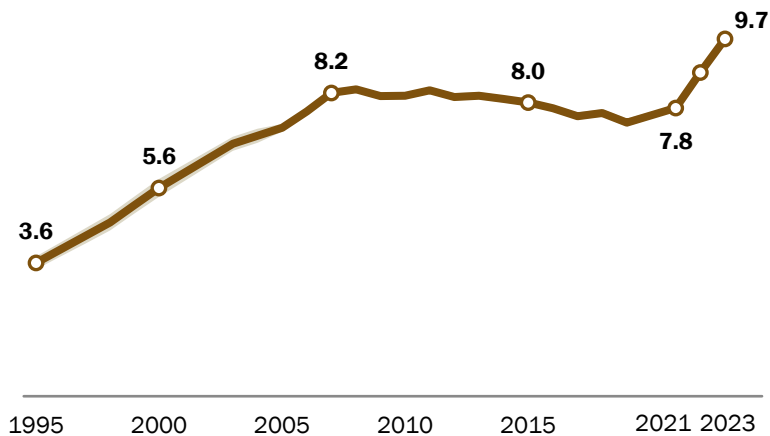
Note: The civilian labor force includes those working or looking for work. Shading shows the range of the estimated 90% confidence interval. The data points labeled are 1995, 2000, 2007, 2015, 2021 and 2023.
Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented U.S. Census Bureau data (IPUMS).
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Detailed table: *[Unauthorized immigrants in the labor force for states, 2023 (Excel)](#)*

The share of unauthorized immigrants in the workforce varied across states in 2023. Nevada (9%), Florida (9%), New Jersey (9%), Texas (9%), California (8%), Maryland (7%) and Massachusetts (7%) had the highest shares, while 1% or less of workers in Maine, Vermont, West Virginia and Montana were unauthorized immigrants.

What types of jobs do unauthorized immigrants have?

Unauthorized immigrants work in essentially every sector of the economy. The industries with the highest shares of unauthorized immigrants in their workforce in 2023 were construction (15%), agriculture (14%), leisure and hospitality (8%), other services (7%), and professional/business services (7%).

The major occupations with the highest shares of unauthorized immigrants were farming (24%), construction (19%) and service occupations (9%). There are no occupations where unauthorized immigrants represent a majority of workers. But in some detailed occupations, unauthorized immigrants represented 25% to about 40% of all workers in 2023. Most of these jobs are in the construction sector.

Note: *The remaining two sections of this report provide a look ahead to what has happened since 2023, as well as additional context and details about the primary analysis above.*

What has happened to the unauthorized immigrant population since 2023?

The nation's unauthorized immigrant population is dynamic. The estimate of 14 million unauthorized immigrants in the United States as of July 2023 is based on the U.S. Census Bureau's 2023 American Community Survey (ACS), the most recent version available. Since 2023, the population has continued to change. But surveys and other federal government data sources only give us a rough idea of what has happened to the unauthorized immigrant population in 2024 and 2025. Still, these sources do hint at some changes since July 2023.

Administrative data from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) provides counts through November 2024 of entries of certain migrants that are considered part of the unauthorized immigrant population, specifically releases at the border and the entry of some parolees. DHS also has data on admission of lawful immigrants (LPRs) through December 2024. These two sources can track changes in the lawful foreign-born population and a large part of the unauthorized immigrant population.

The Census Bureau's monthly Current Population Survey (CPS),[3] used to measure unemployment, provides information on the size of the immigrant population. However, its sample is not large enough and the survey does not have the data needed to develop an estimate of the unauthorized immigrant population that is comparable to the ACS-based estimates. Still, a consistent series of monthly CPS data is available for July 2023 to December 2024 to track changes in the immigrant population. Similarly, the monthly CPS is also available for January 2025 through June 2025. But because of some methodological changes in the survey, the 2025 estimates cannot be compared directly with the 2024 estimates.

The U.S. unauthorized immigrant population likely continued to increase rapidly through at least mid-2024, reaching new highs, according to available government data. Growth continued in the second half of 2024 at a much slower pace and may have stopped entirely as inflows dropped dramatically due to Biden administration policy changes (described below).

From January to June 2025, the unauthorized immigrant population likely declined, possibly by as much as 1 million. However, as of July 2025, the unauthorized immigrant population almost

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[3] The monthly CPS does not provide enough data to develop a precise estimate of the unauthorized immigrant population. The monthly CPS has only about 3% as many cases as the annual ACS. Moreover, the monthly CPS does not have all of the variables we use in our estimation process.

surely remains higher than in July 2023, when we estimated that the population stood at 14 million. As more data is released, more precise estimates for 2024 and 2025 will be possible.

The sections below provide the details behind these conclusions.

Immigrant inflows, 2023-24

From July 2023 through June 2024, more than 2.1 million immigrants were released or paroled into the U.S. These groups are considered a part of the unauthorized immigrant population. The largest group, U.S. Border Patrol releases, accounted for more than 1.1 million new arrivals of unauthorized immigrants. Another 1 million were paroled into the U.S. at the southwestern border and through the CHNV (Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, Venezuela) and U4U (Uniting for Ukraine) parole programs. (Read "Who are unauthorized immigrants?" for more on these groups and programs.)

When making a new estimate of the unauthorized immigrant population, we cannot simply add these new immigrants to the previous estimate.[4] However, the large inflows imply continued, rapid growth past our 14 million estimate for mid-2023.

After July 2024, there was a dramatic slowdown in these measured inflows. About 400,000 migrants were released or paroled into the U.S. from July to December 2024, a reduction of more than 60% in average monthly entries from the previous year. The main reduction came from a change in practice by the Border Patrol, which released many fewer migrants into the U.S., about 60,000, during these six months, compared with more than 1.1 million during the preceding 12 months. In addition, the Biden administration stopped admitting migrants under the CHNV parole program in August 2024. Only about 35,000 were admitted after July 2024, which was about 10% of the total from the previous 12 months. By November 2024, there were no CHNV paroles.

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[4] Growth of any population is a function of both inflows and outflows. Some unauthorized immigrants leave the country every year, some become lawful immigrants and some die. These factors need to be taken into account in any estimate of change in a population.

Unauthorized immigrants arriving in the U.S. between July 2023 and December 2024 with some or no protections from deportation

	Jul 2023-Dec 2024	Jul 2023-Jun 2024	Jul 2024-Dec 2024
Total	2,525,000	2,125,000	390,000
U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) releases at southwest border	1,225,000	1,150,000	60,000
Office of Field Operations (OFO) paroles at southwest border	820,000	555,000	265,000
Cuban, Haitian, Nicaraguan, Venezuelan (CHNV) paroles	370,000	335,000	35,000
Uniting for Ukraine (U4U) paroles	110,000	75,000	30,000

Note: All numbers rounded to nearest 5,000.
Source: USBP releases, OFO and CHNV paroles from Office of Homeland Security Statistics, Department of Homeland Security, Immigration Enforcement and Legal Processes Monthly Tables – November 2024. U4U paroles are Pew Research Center estimates.
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Data on admissions of these groups is not currently available for 2025.[5]

The Census Bureau estimated total net immigration for July 2023-June 2024 at 2.8 million, based in part on the releases and paroles just noted. This figure represents a notable increase over the migration estimates for 2021-22 (1.7 million) and 2022-23 (2.3 million). Since legal immigration did not increase markedly over recent years, the large estimated inflow for 2023-24 was almost entirely attributable to unauthorized immigration, continuing the trend seen in our estimates of this population for 2021-23.

Foreign-born population, 2023-24

The U.S. foreign-born population grew from 48.5 million in July 2023 to 51.6 million in March 2024, according to the monthly CPS – an unprecedented increase of 3 million immigrants in nine months. Much of this growth was driven by the admission of unauthorized immigrants with temporary deportation protections. The monthly data paired with the inflow estimates noted

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[5] The table used for these estimates can be found at https://ohss.dhs.gov/topics/immigration/immigration-enforcement/monthly-tables. The most recent table released (as of August 11, 2025) provides data through November 2024, https://ohss.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/2025-01/2025_0116_ohss_immigration-enforcement-and-legal-processes-tables-november-2024.xlsx.

earlier imply rapid growth in the unauthorized immigrant population at least through March 2024.

After this increase, the foreign-born population hardly changed in the last nine months of 2024. By December 2024, the foreign-born population of 51.8 million was only 125,000 larger than in March 2024. The slowdown in growth is consistent with the large drop in arrivals (inflows) during the second half of the year. This pattern suggests that the unauthorized immigrant population grew very little by the end of 2024 after the large increase through the first part of the year, and it may even have declined very slightly from an earlier peak in 2024.

Foreign-born population, 2025

Although monthly CPS data is available for 2025, it cannot be used to measure change in the foreign-born population from 2024 into 2025 because the Census Bureau revised its method for estimating the U.S. population.[6] However, the CPS can be used to track the size of the immigrant population from month to month in 2025 and going forward.

In January 2025, the CPS measured the foreign-born population at 53.3 million, or 15.8 percent of the U.S. population – both all-time highs. Since then, the CPS data shows a decline during the first six months of 2025, especially after March. By June 2025, the foreign-born population was 51.9 million, a drop of about 1.5 million from the peak in January.

The CPS does not tell us the sources of the decline, but most of the drop is likely due to a fall in the unauthorized immigrant population. The federal government has started to increase deportations, and some immigrants – both unauthorized and lawful – have left the U.S. on their own. It is also possible that some of the population decline is due to technical reasons such as a decrease in response rates to the survey.

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[6] The monthly CPS for 2024 uses the 2023 version of the U.S. Census Bureau population estimates, while the monthly CPS for 2025 uses the revised 2024 version of population estimates, which incorporate higher levels of immigration. Read "Methodology B: Survey data on immigrants" for a description of the Census Bureau estimates of immigration and more details.

Who are unauthorized immigrants?

The U.S. unauthorized immigrant population includes any immigrants *not* in the following groups:

1. Lawful permanent residents (green card holders)
2. Refugees formally admitted to the United States
3. People granted asylum
4. Former unauthorized immigrants granted legal residence under the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act
5. Naturalized U.S. citizens who entered under categories 1-4 (above)
6. Temporary legal residents under specific visa categories, such as those for foreign students, guest workers and intracompany transfers.

Read Methodology A: Unauthorized immigrant estimates for more details.

Many immigrants included in Pew Research Center's estimate of "unauthorized" immigrants have specific immigration statuses that protect them from deportation. In some cases, as described below, unauthorized immigrants have received permission to live or work in the U.S. As of July 2023, about **6 million immigrants had protections.** They are included in the Center's estimate of 14 million unauthorized immigrants. These protected immigrants account for about 40% of our 2023 national estimate.

Although these immigrants may be protected from deportation, their status could change if immigration policy shifts. Other organizations and the federal government also include these immigrants in their estimates of the U.S. unauthorized immigrant population.

Types of temporary permissions

Unauthorized immigrants can receive temporary permission to be in the U.S. in the following ways:

Asylum applicants

Individuals who have applied for asylum and are awaiting a ruling are not legal residents but cannot be deported until their asylum claim is adjudicated. There are two kinds of asylum claims:

- **Defensive asylum:** Applications are filed by individuals facing deportation or removal from the U.S. These are processed by the Justice Department's Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR). An estimated 1.3 million immigrants had pending defensive asylum applications as of July 2023.

- **Affirmative asylum:** Applications are filed by people not in deportation proceedings. These are processed by the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). An estimated 1.2 million individuals were awaiting decisions on more than 900,000 applications as of mid-2023.

Temporary Protected Status (TPS)

About 650,000 unauthorized immigrants had TPS in July 2023. This status provides protection from deportation to individuals who cannot safely return to their country because of civil unrest, violence or natural disaster. Most also have permission to work in the U.S. Some recipients from El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua have had TPS for over 20 years. If conditions in the home country improve, TPS can be allowed to expire or revoked.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

DACA offers protection from deportation and work permits to individuals who were brought to the U.S. as children before 2007. As of July 2023, there were an estimated 610,000 active DACA beneficiaries, mostly from Mexico. By March 2025, this had dropped to 525,000.

Humanitarian parole into the U.S.

Immigrants outside the United States who are not otherwise eligible for admission can apply for admission to the U.S. on a temporary basis "for urgent humanitarian reasons of significant public benefit." Parolees undergo a clearance process, generally have sponsors and can apply for work authorization. Parole is for a set period of time and can be revoked.

President Joe Biden authorized four parole programs that significantly increased the number of immigrants coming to the U.S. after 2021, adding to the unauthorized immigrant population:

Operation Allies Welcome (OAW): This parole program for Afghan nationals who could not get other kinds of visas to enter the U.S. started on Aug. 29, 2021, after the U.S. evacuation from Afghanistan. In total, about 88,500 Afghan nationals were admitted and received work authorization under the OAW program between July 31, 2021, and Sept. 30, 2023. Some have since applied for asylum and some for TPS. Their status had been renewed, though the Trump administration has proposed ending the program.

Uniting for Ukraine (U4U): This program started in April 2022 to allow Ukrainians fleeing the Russian invasion to come to the U.S. on a temporary basis. By mid-2023, about 130,000 Ukrainians had been paroled into the U.S. under U4U, a total that grew to 240,000 by the end of 2024.

Parole processes for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans and Venezuelans (CHNV): This program allowed individuals from these four countries to apply for admission while outside the U.S. because of conditions in their home country. Before being accepted, applicants needed to have a U.S.-based sponsor, pass a background check and pay for travel to the U.S. They were then allowed to enter the U.S. for two years; these paroles could be extended. Admissions began for Venezuelans in October 2022 with the other three nations added in January 2023. The program admitted up to 30,000 migrants each month.

By July 2023, about 160,000 immigrants had come to the U.S. under CHNV parole. The Biden administration stopped accepting new applications in August 2024, and by November 2024 no new CHNV parolees were admitted. All told, about 530,000 migrants came with CHNV parole. The Supreme Court upheld the Trump administration's decision to revoke CHNV's deportation protection in May 2025.

Office of Field Operations (OFO) paroles: In late 2020, U.S. Border Control (USBP) saw a major rise in migrant encounters, with the number more than doubling to greater than 70,000 per month; by mid-2021, they had tripled to about 210,000 per month. To ease pressure on border facilities, the Border Patrol, through the OFO, began paroling immigrants into the United States. Humanitarian paroles by OFO averaged less than 2,000 per month from January 2017 through March 2022. Numbers jumped to more than 20,000 through early 2023 and to about 45,000 per month through the end of 2024. The computer app CBP One, activated by USBP in January 2023, enabled migrants to make appointments in advance.

Individuals paroled into the U.S. by OFO have temporary protection from deportation for two years and can apply for work authorization, asylum and other immigration statuses. By mid-2023, about 340,000 immigrants had temporary protection from deportation through OFO paroles; by the end of 2024, this number almost tripled to 980,000.

Releases by U.S. Border Partrol

In response to the growing number of border encounters, USBP increased the total number of expulsions and repatriations, but this did not relieve pressures at the southwest border. While USBP had always released some of the migrants it encountered into the U.S., these numbers increased markedly from 2021 to 2023. Starting in mid-2021, releases averaged about 50,000 per month for the next year, and fell to 15,000 in February 2023. Releases then peaked at more than 190,000 in December 2023 and remained historically high until July 2024. For the remainder of 2024, releases dropped to an average of about 10,000 per month.

These individuals do not have the same level of protection from deportation as migrants paroled into the U.S. They are generally instructed to appear before an immigration judge or report to immigration authorities at a later date. They have a year to apply for asylum or other types of temporary protection. The Biden administration generally did not attempt to deport these individuals so, for our estimates, we assume that individuals released into the U.S. are protected from deportation for slightly more than a year. As of mid-2023, there were about 1 million immigrants in this group.

Victims of crime, human trafficking and abuse

U.S. immigration law includes protections for people who have experienced trafficking, abuse or violence. These individuals can stay temporarily in the U.S. with protection from deportation and often later apply for a green card. They are counted in our unauthorized immigrant population if they have not yet received lawful permanent resident status.

- **T nonimmigrant visa.** For certain victims of human trafficking. These visa holders can remain in the U.S. on a temporary basis for four years and then adjust to lawful permanent resident status. Nearly 25,000 individuals had a T visa or a pending application in mid-2023, according to estimates based on U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) data. By the end of 2024, this group had grown to more than 55,000.
- **U nonimmigrant visa.** For "victims of certain crimes who have suffered mental or physical abuse and are helpful to law enforcement in the investigation or prosecution of criminal activity." A U visa holder can remain in the U.S. for three years and then adjust to permanent resident status. About 450,000 immigrants had a U visa or a pending application for one in mid-2023 and were protected from deportation. As of the end of 2024, there were about 520,000.
- **Special Immigrant Juveniles (SIJ).** For immigrants under 21 years old who are the victims of abuse, neglect or abandonment by their parents. These individuals are protected from deportation while their application is being processed. After approval, they obtain lawful permanent resident status (a green card). Almost 140,000 individuals enrolled in SIJ were waiting for their green cards in mid-2023. This group had grown to more than 220,000 by the end of 2024, due to processing delays and backlogs for admission.
- **Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) green card.** Provides access to green cards for "victims of battery or extreme cruelty" by spouses, former spouses, parents or children who are U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents. Applicants are protected from deportation until their case is decided and those approved are protected until they acquire lawful permanent residence. As of mid-2023, there were about 90,000 immigrants waiting for their case to be heard; by the end of 2024, this number had almost doubled to 170,000.

Summary

There are about 6 million unauthorized immigrants with some degree of protection as of July 2023. The groups with temporary protection from deportation described above total just over 6.2 million individuals. However, some individuals can appear in more than one category. For example, some paroled into the U.S. (say, OAW Afghans) may also acquire another status like TPS. While exact overlap is not known, most newly arrived groups likely do not appear in multiple categories. We estimate about 250,000 migrants are counted more than once. This leaves a total of about 6 million unauthorized immigrants with some degree of protection from deportation.

Acknowledgments

Methodology A: Unauthorized immigrant estimates

This report presents estimates of the number of unauthorized immigrants in the United States as of July 2023 and for previous years back to 1990. **These estimates supersede all previously published Pew Research Center estimates.** Although this report draws largely on U.S. Census Bureau surveys, our estimates generally will not agree exactly with data published by the bureau because we include adjustments for survey omissions and corrections for various types of survey errors and anomalies.

The methods used to produce the estimates of the unauthorized immigrant population and its characteristics are described below (Methodology A). Two other methodology sections describe other parts of the report's methodology. The second (Methodology B) describes the principal data sources used to produce the estimates and modifications made to the underlying surveys. The third section (Methodology C) provides details on how the estimates are rounded and definitions of various concepts used in the report.

Overview

The estimates for the U.S. unauthorized immigrant population presented in this report are based on a residual estimation methodology that compares a demographic estimate of the number of immigrants residing legally in the country with the total number of immigrants as measured by either the American Community Survey (ACS) or the Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) to the March Current Population Survey (CPS). The difference is the estimated number of unauthorized immigrants in the survey, a figure that later is adjusted for omissions from the survey (read below). The basic estimate is calculated as:

Unauthorized Immigrants (U)	=	Survey, Total Immigrants (S)	–	Estimated Lawful Immigrants (L)

The lawful resident immigrant population is estimated by applying demographic methods to counts of lawful admissions covering the period since 1980 obtained from the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Homeland Security Statistics and its predecessors, the DHS Office of Immigration Statistics and the Immigration and Naturalization Service, with projections to current years, when necessary.

Initial estimates are calculated separately for age-gender groups in six states (California, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New York and Texas) and the balance of the country; within these areas, the estimates are further subdivided into immigrant populations from 35 countries or groups of countries by period of arrival in the United States. Variants of the residual method have been widely used and are generally accepted as the best current estimates (e.g., DHS, Migration Policy Institute, Center for Migration Studies of New York, and earlier work at the Center).

The overall estimates for unauthorized immigrants build on these residuals by adjusting for survey omissions in these six states and the balance of the country, subdivided for Mexican immigrants and other groups of immigrants (remainder of Latin America, South and East Asia, and rest of world), depending on sample size and state.

Once the residual estimates have been produced, individual foreign-born respondents in the survey are assigned a specific status (one option being unauthorized immigrant) based on the individual's demographic, social, economic, geographic and family characteristics in numbers that agree with the initial residual estimates for the estimated lawful immigrant and unauthorized immigrant populations in the survey. These status assignments are the basis for most characteristics reported (including, for example, specific countries of birth, detailed state estimates, period of arrival and household-family relationships). A last step in the weighting-estimation process involves developing state-level estimates that account for trends over time in the estimates.

Since the estimates are ultimately based on Census Bureau surveys, the unauthorized immigrant estimate and other population groups represent the number in the country as of the date of the survey. The reference date for the ACS is July 1 for the year of the survey; for the CPS-ASEC, it is March 1 for the survey year. Thus, our unauthorized immigrant population estimates for 2005-2023 represent the number in the country as of July 1 of each year.[7] The 1995-2003 estimates are the number of unauthorized immigrants as of March 1. The 1990 estimates are for Census Day, or April 1, 1990.

Lawful immigrant population

The estimate of the lawful immigrant population ("L" in the estimation equation) is based on official counts of immigrant and refugee admissions. The principal source for the data is the Yearbook of Immigration Statistics published by DHS and its predecessor, the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The main groups of lawful immigrants arriving are:

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[7] No estimates were produced for 2020 because of the lack of suitable survey data from either the ACS or the CPS.

- **Lawful permanent residents** (LPR or green card holders)
  - *New arrivals:* This group is counted as arriving in the year they acquire their green card.
  - *Adjustments of status:* These immigrants are already in the U.S. but have some status other than LPR. They are counted as lawful immigrants only as of the year they acquire their green card but their "year of arrival" is adjusted to an earlier date based on when they first arrived in the U.S.
    - Some LPRs adjusting status have already been counted as lawful immigrants on arriving in the U.S. (e.g., refugees noted below), so they are not added when they adjust status to avoid double-counting them.

- **Refugees:** These immigrants, admitted from abroad because of humanitarian concerns in their home country, are counted as lawful immigrants in their year of admission. Virtually all refugees eventually become LPRs. When they "adjust status" to LPR, they are not counted again.
- **Asylees:** These immigrants, already in the U.S. when they are granted asylum for humanitarian concerns, are also counted as lawful immigrants in their year of admission. They are excluded from the LPR count when they adjust status.
- **Former unauthorized immigrants granted legal residence under the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act:** These immigrants were counted as lawful immigrants when their applications were approved, mainly in the late 1980s. They are overwhelmingly Mexican, and most entered the U.S. before 1980. They are not counted when they adjust status to LPR, but virtually all of them became LPRs before 2000.

Published tables for the DHS Yearbook of Immigration Statistics and some related sources provide the basic data for these groups. The data for arrivals is subdivided by country or region of birth, year or period of arrival, age, sex and state of residence.

For each year, the previous year's population estimate is updated with estimates of mortality and emigration before the new cohort of LPRs is added to get the new population estimate for the lawful immigrant population by age, sex, country of birth, period of arrival and state.

Comparability with previous estimates

The estimates presented here for 1990-2023 are internally consistent and comparable across years and states. The estimates presented in this report supersede all previously published Pew Research Center estimates, especially estimates for the same dates using different data. (Read this methodology from 2018 for a more detailed description of earlier published estimates.)

The estimates in this report use survey data consistent with the censuses of 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2020. For the 2023 estimates and revised 2022 estimates, modifications to the surveys were necessary to bring the data in line with Census Bureau revisions of data for the population and net international migration since 2021. For the 1995-2009 surveys, special weights were developed to align with both the preceding and subsequent censuses. (Read Methodology B for more details.) As such, population figures for these years are not identical to those published from the original surveys.

Status assignments: Lawful and unauthorized immigrants

Individual survey respondents are assigned a status as a lawful or unauthorized immigrant based on the individual's demographic, social, economic and geographic characteristics so that the resulting number of immigrants in various categories agrees with the totals from the residual estimates. The assignment procedure employs a variety of methods, assumptions and data sources.

First, all immigrants entering the U.S. before 1982 are assumed to be lawful immigrants. Then, the ACS and CPS data are corrected for known overreporting of naturalized citizenship on the part of recently arrived immigrants. Specifically, immigrants who have been in the U.S. for less than six years are not eligible to naturalize unless they are married to a U.S. citizen, in which case they can naturalize after three years. Immigrants reporting as naturalized who fail to meet these requirements are moved into the noncitizen category. All remaining naturalized citizens from countries other than Mexico and those in Central America are assigned as lawful immigrants because reporting of citizenship for these groups has been found to be largely accurate in the aggregate.[8] Mexican and Central American immigrants who report being naturalized U.S. citizens are treated the same as noncitizens in the status assignment process. This means that some may be assigned as unauthorized immigrants; the rest remain as naturalized citizens.

Persons entering the U.S. as refugees are identified based on country of birth and year of immigration to align with known admissions of refugees and asylees (i.e., persons granted asylum). Then, individuals holding certain kinds of temporary visas are identified in the survey and each is assigned a specific lawful temporary migration status using information on country of birth, date of entry, occupation, education and certain family characteristics. The specific visa types identified:

- Foreign students (F, M visa)

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[8] Passel, Jeffrey S., Rebecca L. Clark and Michael Fix. 1997. "Naturalization and Other Current Issues in U.S. Immigration: Intersections of Data and Policy." Proceedings of the Social Statistics Section of the American Statistical Association:1997.

- Visiting scholars (J visa)
- Physicians (J visa)
- Registered nurses (H-1A visas)
- Intracompany transfers (L visas)
- "High-tech" guest workers (H-1B visas)
- Diplomats and embassy employees (A visa)
- International organizations (G visas)
- Religious workers (R visas)
- Exchange visitors (J visas)
- Athletes, artists and entertainers (O, P visas)
- Spouses and children within these various categories

Finally, immigrants are screened on the basis of occupations, participation in public programs and family relationships with U.S.-born individuals and lawful immigrants. Some individuals are assigned as lawful immigrants on the basis of these characteristics:

- Refugees and naturalized citizens
- Lawful temporary immigrants
- Persons working for the government or the armed forces
- Veterans or active-duty members of the armed forces, military reserves or National Guard
- Participants in government programs not open to unauthorized immigrants: Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medicare, Medicaid and food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP)
- Persons entering the U.S. before 1982
- Persons with certain occupations that require lawful status or government licensing (e.g., police officers and other law enforcement occupations, lawyers, health care professionals)
- Children of citizens and lawful temporary migrants
- Most immediate relatives of U.S. citizens, especially spouses
- Other family members, especially those entering the U.S. before lawful residents

As a result of these steps, the foreign-born population is divided between individuals with "definitely lawful" status (such as long-term residents, naturalized citizens, refugees and asylees, lawful temporary migrants, and some lawful permanent residents) and a group of "potentially unauthorized" migrants. (Additional details can be found here.)

Cuban immigrants have required special treatment in the status assignments. Before 2017, virtually all Cubans entering the U.S. are lawful residents, even if they are not assigned refugee status, because they are treated differently from other arrivals based on the Cuban Adjustment Act

of 1966. Early versions of the estimates failed to recognize this special status; revised estimates for 1995-2012 correct this oversight. The Obama administration in January 2017 changed policy to treat Cubans the same as other unauthorized entrants. Our estimates for 2018 and later no longer treat Cubans entering the U.S. in 2017 and later differently from other immigrants in the status assignment process.

The number of potentially unauthorized immigrants typically exceeds the estimated number of unauthorized immigrants from the residual estimates by 20%-35% nationally. So, to have a result consistent with the residual estimate of lawful and unauthorized immigrants, probabilistic methods are employed to assign lawful or unauthorized status to these potentially unauthorized individuals. The base probability for each assignment is the ratio of the residual estimate to the number of potentially unauthorized immigrants. These initial probabilities are first adjusted separately for parents living with their children and all others to ensure that an appropriate number of unauthorized immigrant children are selected and then by broad occupation categories.

After this last step in the probabilistic assignment process, there is a check to ensure that the statuses of family members are consistent; for example, all family members entering the country at the same time are assumed to have the same status. The resulting populations for unauthorized immigrants are compared with the residual estimates; if they disagree, the assignment probabilities are adjusted and the random assignments are repeated. The entire process requires several iterations to produce estimates that agree with the demographically derived population totals.

At the end, the final estimates agree with the residual estimates for the six individual states noted earlier and for the balance of the country; for lawful and unauthorized immigrants in each area born in Mexico, Latin America, Asia and the rest of the world (subject to sample size considerations); and for children and for working-age men and women within each category. Finally, the survey weights for the foreign born are adjusted upward for survey omissions (undercount) so the tabulated figures agree with the adjusted analytic, demographic estimates of the total number of lawful immigrants and unauthorized migrants developed in the very first step.

The result of the estimation/status assignment process is a dataset (ACS or CPS) in which each immigrant is assigned a legal status and survey weight that has been adjusted so that the immigrant population agrees with estimated totals for various status groups, regions of birth and states. After a final adjustment to align with state trends, this dataset is used for the estimates published in this report – for specific countries of birth, states, families, and various social and economic characteristics.

State estimates

The initial estimates of unauthorized immigrants for states other than the six largest (California, Texas, Florida, New York, Illinois and New Jersey) arise from the tabulated totals of the individual microdata records assigned as unauthorized immigrants. The overall trends at the state level are assumed to progress somewhat smoothly from one year to the next, though the initial estimates based on status assignments may not behave in exactly that way. Accordingly, the final estimated state totals for any given year take into account estimates for surrounding years; however, only a small number of state estimates generally require significant adjustment based on the trend analysis.

The last step in developing the individual weights for the unauthorized immigrants involves adjusting the initial weights in each state to agree with the totals from the trend analysis. The largest adjustments are in those states where the trend analysis showed a substantial difference between the initial estimates and the trend analysis. Nonetheless, all states are adjusted so that the state totals agree as closely as possible with either the initial estimate or the trend-based estimate. At the same time, the adjustment is done so that the national totals of the state populations agree with the residual estimates for the total unauthorized immigrant population and the totals from each of the four broad regions of birth.

Margins of error

Estimates of the unauthorized immigrant population are computed as the difference between a deterministic, administratively based estimate (i.e., the lawful foreign-born population, or "L" in the equation above) and a sample-based estimate (i.e., the survey total of the foreign-born population, or "S"). Consequently, the margin of error (or variance) for the estimated unauthorized population is the margin of error for "S," the sample-based estimate of the foreign-born population. Thus, the margins of error are generally based on the variance of the foreign-born population entering since 1982.

For all years of the ACS, variances are computed with replicate weights supplied by the U.S. Census Bureau through IPUMS; for earlier CPS data, generalized variance formulas supplied in Census Bureau documentation were used to compute margins of error.

The ranges reported represent a 90% confidence interval around the estimates. They represent the sampling error associated with the survey-based estimate. Other sources of potential error – including the variability associated with the random assignment of statuses, potential errors in the status assignment process and non-sampling error in the surveys – are not represented in the reported margins of error. For this report, statistical tests rely on a 90% confidence level.

Methodology B: Survey data on immigrants

This report presents estimates of the number of unauthorized immigrants in the United States as of July 2023 and for earlier years. As noted earlier in this report, **the estimates presented here supersede all previously published Pew Research Center estimates.**

 The principal survey data used to produce the estimates and modifications made to the underlying surveys is described below (Methodology B). Two other methodology sections describe the other parts of the report's methodology. The first (Methodology A) describes the methods used to produce the estimates of the U.S. unauthorized immigrant population and its characteristics. The third section (Methodology C) provides details on how the estimates are rounded and the definitions of various concepts used in the report.

Overview

Estimates of the size and characteristics of the unauthorized immigrant population rely on official U.S. Census Bureau surveys – the American Community Survey (ACS) and the Current Population Survey (CPS). These surveys provide information on the total foreign-born population and detailed characteristics of immigrants. They, in turn, rely on official Census Bureau population estimates for survey weights and population numbers. This methodology chapter describes the role of the population estimates and how we have incorporated the bureau's normal revisions to these estimates into our estimates of the unauthorized immigrant population.

The estimates of the unauthorized immigrant population for 2005-2019 and 2021-2023 use the ACS, while those for 1995-2003 use the Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) to the March CPS. The estimates for 1990, which cover only state totals and selected countries of birth, use the 1990 decennial census. The estimates for the unauthorized immigrant population that we produce from these surveys are comparable across all years. This allows for tracking trends over time in the size and characteristics of the unauthorized immigrant population.

However, to achieve this consistency, we made modifications to some of the surveys. Each year's surveys, as released by the Census Bureau, agree with population figures they develop for that year. But these population estimates may not be consistent with previous years because of changes in the bureau's methods for estimating population and because of breaks in the population series that occur when the results of a new decennial census are introduced into the population estimates.

This section of the report highlights the causes of specific [discontinuities](#) in the Census Bureau's population estimates which lead to inconsistencies in the population figures from the surveys. It also describes the methods we have used at Pew Research Center to make modifications that allow for comparisons across years. The modifications bring the underlying bureau surveys in line with actual population changes over the more than three decades covered by our estimates of unauthorized immigrants. We focus in some detail on [revisions to the 2022 and 2023 population estimates](#) that affect recent ACS data.

(More details regarding the survey designs and sample sizes of the ACS and CPS are described below.)

Official population estimates and surveys

The Census Bureau regularly issues new estimates of the U.S. population as of July 1. Initial estimates for the nation and states are released in [December of every non-decennial census year](#). The annual estimates are referred to by their "vintage," or the year they are released. For example, the population estimates for July 1, 2024, are released in December 2024 and are called the Vintage 2024 population estimates. Each annual release also updates the previous vintage and includes population estimates for July 1 of every year since the most recent decennial census.

During the ensuing year, the bureau releases additional estimates with more demographic detail (age, sex, race/Hispanic origin) and more geographic detail (counties, cities, places). These estimates are also referred to as "postcensal" population estimates because they update the population from the last decennial census.

The postcensal estimates are used to weight the Census Bureau's surveys. Each year's ACS is consistent with the official population estimates released in the year of the survey. For example, the [2023 ACS is consistent with the Census Bureau's Vintage 2023 population estimates](#) released in December 2023. That is, the [weights in the survey](#) produce population figures from the survey that agree with the Vintage 2023 populations for states and smaller areas subdivided by age, sex, race and Hispanic origin.

Similarly, each year's [March CPS ASEC is weighted](#) to the most recent Census Bureau population estimates, but in this case the weights are from the *previous* year's vintage. So, for example, the weights for the March CPS ASEC for 2003 are based on the Census Bureau's Vintage 2002 population estimates for states and age, sex, race and Hispanic origin groups.

When the Census Bureau updates their postcensal population estimates for the years since the previous decennial census, they almost never update the weights for previous surveys. In most years, the revisions to the time series of population data are fairly small, so any potential updates to the previous surveys would be negligible. However, when revisions to population estimates are large – as they were for Vintage 2024 – the impact on recent surveys can also be big. This was the case for the Vintage 2024 population estimates and the 2022 and 2023 ACS. Large revisions can result in major discontinuities and inconsistencies in estimates of the unauthorized immigrant population that are based on these surveys.

After each decennial census, the bureau assesses the quality of population estimates for the previous decade based on how closely the estimates series matched the census count. The bureau then issues a set of population estimates for the previous decade that are consistent with both the previous decennial census and the new one. These are called "intercensal" population estimates because they align with two censuses. The intercensal population estimates can sometimes result in very large discrepancies from the previous postcensal estimates. However, regardless of the magnitude of any disagreement between postcensal and intercensal population estimates, the Census Bureau has generally *not* updated its surveys and their weights to be consistent with the new intercensal population estimates.

To address these inconsistencies, Pew Research Center has developed updated survey weights that are used in our estimates of the U.S. unauthorized immigrant population. The Center has reweighted some of the bureau's surveys to take into account the intercensal and revised postcensal population estimates. The unauthorized immigrant estimates for 1995 and 1998 are based on reweighted March CPS ASEC surveys consistent with the 1990-2000 intercensal population estimates. The unauthorized immigrant estimates for 2003 (CPS-based) and for 2005-2009 (ACS-based) are based on reweighted surveys consistent with the 2000-2010 intercensal population estimates. We have also modified the 2022 and 2023 ACS to take into account the large revisions to net international migration in the Vintage 2024 population estimates. (The revisions to the pre-2010 surveys are described in detail in the methodology of this previous report.)

Census Bureau's revised estimates of net immigration, 2021-2024

When the Census Bureau issued new Vintage 2024 population estimates for 2020-2024, the estimates included a *significantly higher estimate of net immigration* after July 2021 than had been included in previous population estimates. These revised population estimates more accurately reflect the level of immigration to the U.S. for those years.

However, these revisions meant that our published 2022 estimates of the unauthorized immigrant population (based on the Vintage 2022-weighted ACS) were lower than what was implied by the new Census Bureau population estimates. Similarly, if we based our 2023 estimates of the unauthorized immigrant population on the already-released 2023 ACS (weighted to the Vintage 2023 estimates), these would be lower than what was implied by the Vintage 2024 population estimates of international migration.

For July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022, the bureau's Vintage 2024 estimate for net international migration was almost 1.7 million, an increase of 700,000 over the previous Vintage 2023 (and 2022) estimates for that year. These revised net immigration estimates were based on administrative data sources for immigrants admitted under humanitarian programs not previously part of the bureau's population estimates. Virtually all of the additional immigrants added as a result of the Census Bureau's adjustment are included in what we define as our unauthorized immigrant population. As a result of the bureau's revised population estimates, we updated our estimate of the unauthorized immigrant population to 11.8 million in 2022, up from our original estimate of 11.0 million that used the bureau's original ACS figures.

For the next year (July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023), the bureau's new net immigration estimate of 2.3 million was *another 1.2 million higher* than the previous published estimate. The total U.S. population for July 1, 2023, in the Vintage 2024 population estimates was 336.8 million. In contrast, the total population for the same year (as measured by the 2023 ACS) was 334.9 million. The difference of about 1.9 million was almost all attributable to immigration during 2021-2023 that the unadjusted 2023 ACS did not capture. In other words, *nearly the entire revision was due to migrants that would be considered unauthorized*.

Modifications to 2023 ACS

The Center's approach to making the 2023 ACS consistent with the Census Bureau's Vintage 2024 population estimates involves creating copies of certain existing households in the microdata (called "replicates") and making adjustments to individual weights for other individual cases in the survey. The households and individuals selected for replication and adjustment depend on the respondents' countries of birth and year of entry to the U.S. plus their state of residence. The first step in the process involves developing "targets" for the adjustment, or an estimate of how many people need to be added to ensure that the population totals for the immigrant population and states in the augmented 2023 ACS dataset are equal to the Vintage 2024 population estimates.

Adjustment targets

The Census Bureau's revised methodology for the Vintage 2024 population estimates added certain humanitarian immigrants to the net international migration estimate for two years that the Census Bureau uses for its estimates: July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022 (designated here as CY21-22) and July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023 (or CY22-23). At the time Pew Research Center implemented these adjustments (January-February 2025), the information available was limited to the total population for each year and components of demographic change, particularly net immigration for census years, for the U.S. and states. The targets for the adjustments are: (1) the difference between net international migration for CY21-23 from Vintage 2024 minus Vintage 2023; and (2) any remaining difference in total population. The first represents additional immigrants to be added to the population, and the second component, which is very small, is change in the U.S.-born population.

The Census Bureau's documentation does not provide further information on the countries of birth for the additional immigrants, nor their race/ethnicity. It *does* provide information on the type of immigrants added. So, we constructed estimates of the countries of origin for the additional immigrants from the original sources:

- **Refugees:** Refugee admissions from U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, collected by the State Department, Refugee Processing Center by state and country of birth.
- **U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) releases:** Reported number of migrants released at the southwest border from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Homeland Security Statistics (OHSS) for major countries of birth.
- **Office of Field Operations (OFO) paroles:** Reported number of migrants paroled at the southwest border from DHS OHSS for major countries of birth.
- **Other paroles:** These include CHNV paroles from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela from DHS OHSS by country of birth, as well as Pew Research Center estimates of Ukrainians admitted under the Uniting for Ukraine (U4U) program and Afghanis admitted under the Operation Allies Welcome (OAW) program.

The total of the targets for major countries of birth and regions is adjusted to agree with the total first derived from the Census Bureau's population estimates. Only the refugees in these estimates are lawful immigrants; all others are part of what we define as the unauthorized immigrant population.

Selection of cases for replication and adjustment

As a first step in making the necessary adjustments, we made preliminary status assignments to identify individual ACS respondents as lawful temporary migrants, refugees and potential unauthorized immigrants. For replication, we selected households including only recently arrived immigrants (post-2020) who were refugees or potential unauthorized immigrants. These households could also include U.S.-born children born after the parents' arrival in the U.S. Not all of these households were replicated, as the selection was guided by the national targets by status and country/region of birth and the state targets.

Some additional recently arrived individuals and families in other households were also selected for a separate weight adjustment (i.e., not replication). The weight adjustments for these immigrants were limited to a factor in the range of 0.6 to 1.4 so as not to distort the relationship of the adjusted weights to other household members.

After the initial set of replications and adjustments, we checked the alignment of the newly weighted ACS respondents with the target totals for states and for countries and regions of birth. A final set of adjustments, generally small, was made. The resulting reweighted ACS data for immigrants added to the 2023 ACS agreed with the Census Bureau's estimates of additional net international migration for CY21-23 in the Vintage 2024 population estimates.

Final adjustments

To align with the Vintage 2024 estimates totals for states in 2023, some relatively small adjustments were still required to the native population. In some states, adjustment required reducing the U.S.-born population slightly, but most of the final adjustments added more people. We selected individual respondents with relatively large ACS weights and made adjustments of less than 5% to individual weights.

Use of the supplemented 2023 ACS dataset

The result of the modification and adjustment is a 2023 ACS dataset with records for individuals and households that reproduces the state totals in the Census Bureau's Vintage 2024 population estimates for 2023. The new dataset has an immigrant population that is larger than in the original 2023 ACS by exactly the additional immigrants added by the Census Bureau through their Vintage 2024 revisions for each state. We used this dataset to estimate the size of the unauthorized immigrant population included in the ACS following the methods described in Methodology A.

Next, we assigned immigrant status – lawful temporary resident, lawful permanent resident and unauthorized immigrant – to individual respondents using the methods described in Methodology

A. Then, the estimates were adjusted for omissions from the ACS by adjusting the individual weights in the dataset. This final dataset is the "augmented 2023 ACS" and is the source for the 2023 estimates published in this report.

Modifications to 2022 ACS

The modifications to the 2022 ACS followed roughly the same procedures as for the 2023 ACS. Recently arrived immigrant households were selected for replication; individual immigrant respondents had their weights adjusted; and individual U.S.-born respondents had small adjustments to align with state targets for additional net international migration and the total population. The two main differences from 2023 were the calculation of population targets for adjustment and the nature of the dataset in which the adjustments were made.

The original 2022 ACS used weights based on the Vintage 2022 population estimates. So, the calculation of targets for revised state population totals involved comparing the Vintage 2024 population estimates for states *in 2022* with the Vintage *2022* population estimates for states. Similarly, the additional immigration total needed was the difference of the Census Bureau's revised estimate of net international migration for CY21-22 (only) minus the Vintage 2022 estimate for this figure, by state.

Because we had already constructed a modified dataset for the 2022 ACS with immigration statuses already assigned, we could select households for replication and individuals for weight adjustment that conformed to the statuses implied by the Census Bureau's adjusted immigration levels. Specifically, most of the adjustment went to individuals and households assigned as unauthorized immigrants in our 2022 ACS dataset; the remainder went to individuals who were identified as refugees in 2022. After the adjusted data set was aligned with the target totals, we applied the adjustments for undercount following the same procedures we had used in developing our original estimates. The augmented dataset for the 2022 ACS was used to produce updated estimates for 2022 published in this report.

Design of the ACS and CPS-ASEC

The ACS is an ongoing survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau that represents the U.S. population as of July 1 of each year. The survey collects detailed information on a broad range of topics, including country of birth, year of immigration and citizenship – the information required for the residual estimates. The ACS has a continuous collection design with monthly samples of almost 300,000 households. The initial sample has been slightly more than 3.5 million addresses

each year since 2012.[9] Initial nonresponse addresses are then subsampled for further interviews. The final sample has been almost 2 million addresses since 2021 and exceeded 2.3 million addresses for several years in the 2010s.

The ACS began full-scale operation in 2005, covering only the U.S. household population. Since 2006 it has covered the entire U.S. population. ACS data is released by the Census Bureau in September and October for the previous year. For this report, public-use samples of individual survey records from the ACS are tabulated to provide the data used in the estimation process. The public-use file is a representative 1% sample of the entire U.S. (including more than 3 million individual records for each year since 2008 – 3.4 million in 2023). The public-use data employed in these estimates was obtained from IPUMS-USA.

The other survey data source used for residual estimates comes from March Supplements to the CPS. The CPS is a monthly survey currently of about 60,000 U.S. households conducted jointly by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Census Bureau. The March CPS Supplement has a greatly expanded questionnaire that collects detailed information on income sources, participation in a range of government programs and health insurance coverage. The March sample is also expanded over the regular monthly CPS by including additional households with children, Hispanics and specific race groups. The CPS was redesigned in 1994 and, for the first time, included the information required for the residual estimates (i.e., country of birth, date of immigration and citizenship). The CPS universe covers the U.S. civilian noninstitutional population. The March Supplement data from the CPS is released by the Census Bureau in September for the previous March. The public-use files for the CPS ASEC include all households that participated in the survey.

The CPS ASEC sample, while large compared with many surveys, is much smaller than the ACS. From 1995 through 2000, the sample was around 50,000 households. Beginning with 2001, the March Supplement sample was expanded significantly to more than 75,000 households through 2011. Before the ACS was fully implemented in 2005, the March CPS was the principal option for making estimates of the size of the unauthorized immigrant population.

Because of the much larger sample size in the ACS (more than 3.4 million sample cases in 2023, including more than 425,000 foreign-born cases) than in the March CPS (146,000 sample cases in 2023 with about 21,000 foreign-born cases), the ACS-based estimates should be considered more accurate than the CPS-based estimates. The ACS-based estimates are much more precise as well –

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[9] The 2020 ACS data collection was significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Data for 2020 are not comparable with other years. The Census Bureau recommends not using the 2020 ACS for comparisons.

meaning that the sample variability and margins of error are much smaller in ACS-based estimates.

Methodology C: Definitions and concepts

This report presents estimates of the number of unauthorized immigrants in the United States as of July 2023 and for earlier years. **These estimates supersede all previously published Pew Research Center estimates.** This appendix provides details on how the estimates are rounded and definitions of various concepts used in the report.

This methodology section is the third of three. Two others describe other parts of the report's methodology. The first (Methodology A) describes the methods used to produce the estimates of the unauthorized immigrant population and its characteristics. The second section (Methodology B) describes the principal survey data used to produce the estimates and modifications made to the underlying surveys.

Rounding of population estimates

All estimates for unauthorized immigrant populations are presented as rounded numbers to avoid the appearance of unwarranted precision in the estimates. The rounding conventions for unauthorized immigrant estimates, dependent somewhat on data sources, are:

Scale and source	Rounded to ...
Greater than 10,000,000	Nearest 100,000
1,000,000-10,000,000	Nearest 50,000
250,000-1,000,000	Nearest 25,000
100,000-250,000	Nearest 10,000
ACS-based 5,000-100,000	Nearest 5,000
CPS-based 10,000-100,000	Nearest 5,000
ACS-based <5,000	Shown as <5,000
CPS-based <10,000	Shown as <10,000

Note: ACS is the American Community Survey; CPS is the Current Population Survey, both from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Estimates for 1990 are based on the 1990 decennial census and use rounding conventions based on the American Community Survey (ACS). These same conventions are used to round the 90% confidence interval limits, presented as "Range (+ or -)," with one exception: limits that round to less than 5,000 are rounded to the nearest 1,000. For state- and national-level data on the total population or total foreign-born population, figures are rounded to the nearest 10,000.

Unrounded numbers are used for significance tests, for plotting charts and for computations of differences and percentages. Where differences are reported, they are computed from unrounded estimates and then rounded. Because each figure is rounded separately, the rounded estimates may not add to rounded totals. Similarly, percentages computed from rounded numbers may differ from the percentages shown in this report.

Countries and regions of birth

The estimates presented in this report are based on Census Bureau data from the American Community Survey (ACS) and Current Population Survey (CPS). Accordingly, the countries of birth we report are limited to those for which survey data is provided. Defining regions of the world and, in some cases, specific countries using the various data sources requires grouping areas into identifiable units and "drawing lines" on the world map. We have defined our geographic groups using the United Nations and DHS definitions, plus Census Bureau groupings for racial groups (e.g., Asian and Middle Eastern-North African). Countries and areas as reported by the ACS (IPUMS) and the CPS are grouped into the regions used in this report as. Note that the list below uses the country names directly from the IPUMS and CPS codes and may differ from geographic naming and grouping conventions used in other Pew Research Center publications:

Mexico – Reported separately because of its prominence in migration flows to the U.S.

Central America – Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Central America

Caribbean – Antigua-Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, St. Kitts-Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Trinidad & Tobago, U.S. Virgin Islands, Caribbean not specified, West Indies not specified, Americas not specified

South America – Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela, South America not specified

Canada-North America – Bermuda, Canada, North America

Europe – Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Azores, Belgium, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Belarus, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, England, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Holland, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldavia, Montenegro, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Norway, Poland, Portugal,

Republic of Georgia, Romania, Russia, Scotland, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom, USSR, Yugoslavia, Europe not specified

Asia – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burma, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, North Korea, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Asia not elsewhere classified (n.e.c.), East Asia not specified

Middle East-North Africa (MENA) – Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Yemen Arab Republic, Middle East, North Africa not specified

Sub-Saharan Africa – Cameroon, Cape Verde, Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa (Union of), South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Africa not specified or n.e.c., Eastern Africa not specified or n.e.c., Other Africa, Western Africa not specified

Oceania and other – American Samoa, Australia, Fiji, Guam, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, New Zealand, Northern Mariana Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Elsewhere, Other n.e.c.

This list represents only those countries and areas identified in the microdata for the ACS (from IPUMS) and the CPS; it does not include all countries. For the CPS, individuals originally reported as born "Elsewhere" were assigned specific countries of birth to ensure that all foreign-born respondents are classified by country or region of birth. The assignment process uses reported countries of birth of respondents' parents, other family members and information on race and Hispanic origin.

Not all individuals born in these areas outside the 50 states and the District of Columbia are part of the foreign-born or immigrant population. Some of the areas above are U.S. territories, and people born in those areas are U.S. citizens. In addition, individuals born outside the U.S. and its territories are citizens at birth if they have a U.S.-citizen parent. This group is known as "born abroad of American parents" and is not part of the foreign-born population.

Specific countries of birth

For this report, several specific countries are combined for both geopolitical reasons and reporting in the surveys. China, Hong Kong and Taiwan are combined and reported as "China" because of

potential inconsistencies between the administrative data sources and the surveys and because of concerns over consistency of reporting on the part of respondents. "Korea" includes responses of Korea, North Korea and South Korea; the vast majority of Korean immigrants in the U.S. are from South Korea. "Dominican Republic" includes persons born in the Dominican Republic and a very small number reported as born in Dominica. Most of the respondents in the latter group appear to have been miscoded.

When data are reported for the "Former USSR," the total includes persons reporting Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldavia, Republic of Georgia, Russia, Ukraine, USSR and Uzbekistan. The remaining republics of the former USSR are not identified separately in the datasets. Reports of Czechoslovakia, Czechia and Slovakia are combined as "Czechoslovakia." The "United Kingdom" includes persons reporting England, Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Scotland and United Kingdom; other areas of the United Kingdom (such as Wales) are not reported separately in the datasets.

A small number of unauthorized immigrants are from Oceania and from a residual "Other" category shown in ACS data. The total of the residual "Other" and Oceania is included in the overall national estimates but not shown separately in any tables or figures. Mexico, Central America, Caribbean and South America comprise "Latin America."

Labor force and workers

The labor force includes all people ages 16 and older who are working or looking for work. The ACS and CPS also collect information on respondents' employment status, their occupations and the industries where they work. Occupations are the kind of work people do at their jobs; so, "teacher," for example, is an occupation. Industries are the kind of business conducted by the person's employer; so, a teacher could work in a "university," an "elementary school" or even a company selling insurance.

Some occupation groups are similar to industry categories. For example, many workers with construction occupations work in the construction industry. But the construction industry also employs people in other occupations, such as manager or accountant.

For the analyses of occupations and industries, we exclude people who did not report an occupation or industry. Our analysis of the civilian labor force also excludes people in the military or with a military occupation. These exclusions drop slightly more than 1% of the total labor force of roughly 175 million – 2.0 million are excluded from the occupation analyses and 2.6 million from the industry analyses. About 140,000 unauthorized immigrants, or 1.4% of those in the

workforce, are excluded from this analysis because they do not report an occupation or industry; unauthorized immigrants are generally not eligible to be in the military or to hold military employment, so they are not excluded for that reason. Unemployed people are only excluded if they do not report an occupation or industry, although most do report one.

Occupation and industry category labels

The U.S. Census Bureau has three levels of aggregation each for occupation and industry. At the highest level are 11 classifications for "major occupation" groups (10 for civilians, plus the armed forces). At the next level are 23 "detailed occupation" groups, though eight of them are identical to the "major" groups; the three major occupation groups for management, professional and service occupations are subdivided into 15 smaller, detailed groups. Finally, there are a large number of very specific occupation categories – over 500 in the ACS – that can be grouped into either the "detailed" or "major" groups. So, for example, the code for "aerospace engineers" (1320) is part of the detailed category for "architecture and engineering occupations" which, in turn, is part of the major category of "computer, engineering, and science occupations."

For industries, the highest level has 14 "major industry" groups (13 for civilians and one for the armed forces). At the next level are 22 "detailed industry" groups with seven identical to the "major" groups. Finally, there are almost 270 very specific industry categories in the ACS that can be grouped into either the "detailed" or "major" groups. So, for example, the industry called "retail bakeries" (code 1190) is part of the detailed category for "nondurable goods manufacturing" which, in turn, is part of the major category of "manufacturing."

The analyses presented here use the "major" categories for both occupations and industries. Some data is presented elsewhere for the very specific occupations and industries with the highest concentrations of unauthorized immigrants.

For ease of presentation, the full titles of many occupation and industry categories have been condensed from the Census Bureau's terminology in some figures and text.

The condensed occupation labels are shown as:

Management, business, and financial	Management
Computer, engineering, and science	Professional
Service	…
Sales and related	Sales
Farming, fishing, and forestry	Farming (or Agriculture)

Construction and extraction	Construction
Installation, maintenance, and repair	Maintenance
Production	...
Transportation and material moving	Transportation

The condensed industry labels are displayed as:

Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	Agriculture
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	Mining
Construction	...
Manufacturing	...
Wholesale and retail trade	Wholesale/retail
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	Transport/utilities
Information	...
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	Financial activities
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	Business services
Educational and health services	Education/health
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	Leisure/hospitality
Other services, except public administration	Other services
Public administration	...

References in the text, text charts and tables can be checked against the lists above.

More information on the industry and occupation categories from the Census Bureau and IPUMS can be found here:

https://www.census.gov/topics/employment/industry-occupation/guidance/indexes.html
https://usa.ipums.org/usa/volii/ind2022.shtml
https://usa.ipums.org/usa/volii/occ2018.shtml

Children, adults and spouses

In this report, the term "spouse" encompasses both married couples and unmarried partners, unless otherwise indicated. Because of limitations in reporting family relationships in the ACS,

essentially all unmarried partners include the individual who is called the head of a household with their partner, but not other unmarried couples within the household.

In most uses in this report, "children" are defined as individuals younger than 18 who are not the head or spouse in a family unit. This means that individuals younger than 18 who have their own children or are the spouse/partner of another household member are not included in the child population. "Adults" are people who are not "children," that is, they are 18 years old or older or are a parent/spouse/partner of someone else in the household.

Adult children of unauthorized immigrants are individuals aged 18 and older who live in a household with at least one parent who is an unauthorized immigrant. People (either 18 and older or under 18) who have an unauthorized immigrant parent but do not live with that parent cannot be classified as the child of an unauthorized immigrants because there is no information in the Census Bureau's data linking them with their parents. Thus, the estimates presented here for children of unauthorized immigrants are smaller than the number of people who have an unauthorized immigrant parent.